THE
NEW TESTAMENT
OF OUR
LORD AND SAVIOUR
JESUS CHRIST:

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL GREEK,

WITH

ORIGINAL NOTES AND PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

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PREFACE
TO THE EPISTLES IN GENERAL,
TO
ST. PAUL'S EPISTLES,
AND TO THE
EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE ROMANS.

We now enter upon the epistolary part of the New Testament, concerning which it may be profitable to make some previous remarks. The epistles are letters, written either to individuals, or to particular churches, or to several churches; or they are catholic epistles, that is, circular letters to the churches in general. It is supposed, that they were all written by one or other of the apostles; and, excepting the epistle to the Hebrews, and the epistles ascribed to John, each has the name of an apostle prefixed to it. The apostle Paul's name is affixed to thirteen of them, and the epistle to the Hebrews has generally been ascribed to him: that of Peter to two; those of James, John, and Jude, to one, each. Now, if they were actually written by the apostles, what shadow of reason can there be in the opinion, which numbers maintain, that they are not to be considered as of equal authority with the Gospels? The Gospels, indeed, record the words and actions of Christ; but the human testimony, by which these words and actions were recorded, might even be thought inferior to that of the epistles, for neither Mark nor Luke were apostles; and we have as full proof that the epistles were divinely inspired, as that the Gospels were. Various reasons may be assigned, why many truths should be more obscurely delivered during our Lord's ministry than afterwards, of which he gave several intimations: and where are we to look for the full and explicit declarations of "the whole counsel of God," but in the writings of those whom the Lord Jesus selected as the depositaries of his truths; to whom he gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven; to whom he promised to give the Holy Spirit, "to teach them all things, and lead them into all truth;" and whom he sent, to make known his Gospel, even as the Father had sent him? If the doctrine of the apostles was the unadulterated and entire truth of God, and altogether of divine authority, as they preached *it, why should it not be so when they* committed it to writing? *and if it was not the unadulterated entire truth, but either redundant or defective, then Christianity was corrupted or mutilated, even from the first. It must also be observed, that it is impossible that we can know what the apostles preached, except from what they themselves wrote, or what others wrote concerning them: and can we suppose that their own writings are of less authority than the writings of others on the same subjects? If there be any ground for making this distinction between the Gospels and the apostolical writings, how is the Church "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets?" 'Hence then it follows, that what the apostles have delivered in these epistles, as necessary to be believed or done by Christians, must be as necessary to be believed and practised in order to salvation, as what was personally taught by Christ himself, and is contained in the Gospels.'* (Whitby.)

Most of the epistles, especially those of St. Paul, were written to the Churches, the planting of which is recorded in the Acts of the apostles; and the history so entirely tallies with them, even in the most minute particulars, and evidently without the least design or aim at coincidence, that the more carefully they are examined, and compared with the history, the more will it appear, that both are indisputably genuine. This has been shown clearly, by the learned Dr. Paley, in his Horæ Paulinæ; *and I am decidedly of opinion, that all the genius, sagacity, and care of any number of the most able men, who ever lived, would be absolutely insufficient to forge a history, and a number of epistles, so manifestly frank, artless, and often immethodical; and yet to make the one so completely to confirm the other. If ever books had such* internal *evidence of being genuine, that no reasonable man, after a diligent examination of them, could doubt of it, these are the books. But if the epistles be genuine, they must be inspired, and also prove the divine origin of Christianity. Our Lord not only foretold his own death and resurrection; and that before the destruction of Jerusalem, and in that generation, the Gospel should be* *very extensively preached; but he promised to invest his apostles and disciples with miraculous powers, and especially with the gift of tongues, in order to accomplish this object. 'Now, I desire to know, whether any 'thing of this nature was ever undertaken, or laid, as the foundation of their credit, by any other authors of any 'doctrine or religion? Whether they ever made their own violent death, and resurrection, the foundation of 'their veracity? Or promised the like powers and assistances, after they were risen, to those who should pro- 'mote, or—embrace their doctrine? Or whether that, which no man else durst undertake, was not performed 'effectually by the Lord Jesus Christ?'* (Whitby.)—*To the fulfilment of these promises, the apostles, (especially St. Paul,) in these epistles continually refer, as to facts most certainly known by those, to whom they wrote; and which none could deny or question. They appeal to the Churches, whether themselves had not exercised these miraculous gifts among them, nay, conferred them on others: they argue with them, from these gifts, as to the truth of their doctrine, when heretics perverted it: they appeal to these gifts, as deciding between them and their opposers: they lay down rules for the behaviour of the Churches, in respect of them; and they sharply reprove several instances of misconduct in this particular. Can it then be doubted, that, supposing the epistles genuine, these miraculous gifts were publicly exercised and conferred, and that all knew them to be so? And if this was the fact, was not the promise of Christ fulfilled? Is not Christianity from God? And can it be supposed that the writers, who exercised and conferred these powers in so conspicuous a manner, were left to themselves, without the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, in addressing the Churches on the most important subjects, and transmitting their doctrine to posterity?*

The epistles in general are written in language, which shows that, if genuine, they must have been known by the Churches, to which they were addressed, during the life of the writers: but can it be supposed that such facts were spoken of as undeniable, during the lives of the writers; and yet, no one of their opposers, either heretics or persecutors, (not to say their friends,) knowing that no such facts had taken place, should stand forth, publicly to deny and confute them? It is also undeniable, that most of the epistles were known, at a very early period, to other Churches, as the writings of the apostles whose names they bear. Very soon, translations were made of them into other languages, copious quotations were taken from them, and homilies, or expositions, were made on them. The Churches, with one consent, acknowledged them as the word of God; and neither heretics, schismatics, nor opposers of the Gospel, denied that they were the genuine writings of the apostles, and the standard records of Christianity. But had these epistles, bearing the name of this or the other apostle, been brought forward after their death, when no one, either in the Church specially addressed, or in other Churches, had ever before heard of them, can it be conceived but that they would have been rejected as spurious? It is evident the claim would have been absurd, and the imposture manifest. Had they not been known during the life of the writers, at what time, or in what manner, could it have been possible to have palmed them on the Church; and to have obtained them the credit of apostolical writings?

The epistle to the Hebrews, not bearing the name of St. Paul; that of James, which it seems at that time, as well as in later ages, was supposed irreconcileable with the doctrine of St. Paul; the second epistle of Peter, which probably was written just before his martyrdom, and was not generally known till after his death; and the second and third epistles of John, in which he only styles himelf "the elder;" were not for some time received by the Churches as genuine; but this shows the scrupulous caution of the primitive Christians in this respect and further inquiry, together with internal evidence, at length obtained the admission of them into the sacred canon. Yet very many writings, which in some places, and for a time, were admitted as apostolical and divine, were afterwards, on fuller investigation rejected, and most of them have sunk into oblivion.

The epistolary part of the New Testament, while it more fully shows the accomplishment of the ancient prophecies concerning the establishment of the Messiah's kingdom, than even the historical part had done, contains also many remarkable prophecies, several of which have already received as remarkable an accomplishment; but some still remain to be fulfilled. (Notes, Rom. xi. 2 Thes. ii. 1—12. 1 Tim. iv. 1—3. 2 Tim. iii. 1—5. 2 Pet. ii. iii.) *This also constitutes an irrefragable proof that they were written by inspiration of that God, who sees the end from the beginning.*

Finally, it will appear, as we proceed, that the writers of these epistles speak of themselves, and of each other, as authoritatively delivering the truth and will of God to mankind. Even the exceptions, as they are supposed to be in a few instances, more undeniably establish the general rule: for why should an apostle intimate that he only gave his own opinion, and not a divine and authoritative injunction, in a particular case, unless conscious, and unless demanding his readers to allow, that in all other cases he spake as moved by the Holy Ghost? But if they advanced such claims, what alternative is there, between admitting them in their full extent, or decidedly rejecting them? That is, What alternative is there, between receiving the apostolical epistles as the infallible word of God, and the standard of truth and duty, or wholly rejecting them as bold impostures? Had no such claims been advanced, it might have been allowed that they were good men, right upon the whole, yet erroneous in some *things: (and then where shall we have a divine standard of Christianity?) But as the case is, either they are infallibly right, their doctrine divine, their writings the standard by which all other doctrines must be tried, or they claim for themselves, and each other, what they had no right to claim. I would be very cautious, in venturing on this ground; but I am fully persuaded, that more injury is done to the cause of truth by a half-hearted allowance, that the epistles, (or other parts of Scripture,) are genuine, authentic, and instructive, but possibly in some things erroneous, than by all the open attacks of infidels. For these plausible statements leave us no standard of truth and duty; no way of discriminating between true doctrine and heresy; no divinely appointed exhibition of the Christian religion, with which all other exhibitions must be compared, and admitted, or rejected, as they agree or do not agree with it.*

The peculiar doctrines of the Gospel are here more explicitly stated and explained, and their practical tendency more argumentatively *shown, than in the historical books. The distinguishing truths there laid down have been kept in view through the whole of the preceding exposition: and it will, therefore, be unnecessary formally to answer those, who have endeavoured to reconcile this part of the Scripture with systems of a contrary nature and tendency. It may, however, be proper to say, that the author has considered, with some attention, both Dr. Taylor's key to the epistle to the Romans, and the eminent Mr. Locke's comment on several of the epistles: but, deeply convinced that both of these publications "darken counsel by words without knowledge," he can only on some incidental matters deduce instruction from them. In general, if the various terms, used in Scripture concerning Israel as a nation, be in the same, or nearly the same, sense to be applied to Christians under the New Testament, where is the type and the antitype? Where is the true Israel, as distinguished from Israel after the flesh? And where are we to learn either the character, privileges, or duties, of true believers?*

Several of the epistles were written on special occasions, but others were not. These special occasions, however, were of that nature, that they gave the most favourable opportunity for explaining doctrines, enforcing precepts, and giving admonitions and counsels of the greatest importance to the Church of Christ in every age. Nor has any thing ever yet been devised, more suited to render "the word of God of no effect," than the notion, that we have little or nothing to do with this and the other part of Scripture, and can conclude nothing general from it, because it was written on a particular occasion. We begin with the epistles of the apostle Paul, who wrote, as well as laboured, more abundantly than all his brethren. Fourteen of his epistles are reserved for our instruction. In all his writings we perceive evident proofs of a sound judgment, a talent for close reasoning, a lively imagination, and fervent affections: sometimes, yet not so often as many have supposed, he induces a measure of obscurity by long parentheses. All his abilities and endowments, however, were directed and superintended by the Spirit of inspiration. The epistle to the Romans is placed first, though some others were written before it: but it was addressed to the Christians who resided in the capital city of that great empire, which then lorded it over the whole known world; and the epistle itself is one of the longest and most comprehensive of all that were written by the apostle. It is not known when, or by whom, the Gospel was first preached at Rome; but it is conjectured that it was carried thither by some of those Jews who were converted at the day of Pentecost, (Acts ii. 10.) *Paul, however, had not yet visited that city; but, as the apostle of the Gentiles, he deemed it proper to use this method of establishing the believers in the faith; and of giving them such a comprehensive view of the Christian religion, as might put them upon their guard against false teachers of various descriptions. This epistle is the only part of the scripture, in which divine truth is delivered in a systematical method: and it is a proper model for any one, who intends to compile a body of divinity. After the introduction, the apostle opens his subject, (as it is reasonable to begin such systematical treatises,) by showing man's relations and obligations to God his Creator, and his apostacy from his worship and service: he proceeds to prove the universal sinfulness of both Gentiles and Jews, and the impossibility of any man's justifying himself before God by his own obedience. Having brought the world in guilty, and deserving of wrath, he proceeds to state the method of our salvation by the mercy of God, through the redemption of his Son, and the way of justification by faith in his blood. This he proves, illustrates, and exemplifies very fully: he next proceeds to show that this way of justification is closely connected with sanctification and evangelical obedience: he then states the believer's experience and conflicts; and displays his character, hopes, and privileges: and, at length, he leads our reflections back to the source of these blessings, in the eternal election, and sovereign love and mercy of God. Having thus stated, proved, and answered objections to his doctrine, and discussed several questions respecting the calling of the Gentiles and the rejection of the Jews, he applies the whole discourse by a varity of practical exhortations, precepts, and instructions, enforced by evangelical motives. And having touched upon some particulars suited to the circumstances of those times, he concludes with affectionate salutations, cautions, and prayers, and with ascribing glory to God our Saviour. The order in which the epistles were written, and the date of each, will probably be given at a subsequent period of the work.*

CHAPTER I.

The apostle shows his apostolical office, and the great subject of his ministry, 1—5. *He salutes the Christians at Rome,* 6, 7; *thanking God, on their account, and praying for them; especially that he might come and preach among them,* 8—15. *The Gospel is the power of God to salvation, and shows the only way of justification,* 16, 17. *Sinners are exposed to the wrath of God, for acting in opposition to the light afforded them,* 18—22. *A dreadful description of the Gentile world, as given up, by the just displeasure of God, to vile idolatries and iniquities,* 23—32.

PAUL, [a] [b] a servant of Jesus Christ, [c] called *to be* an apostle, [d] separated unto [e] the gospel of God,

2 (Which [f] he had promised afore by his prophets in [g] the holy scriptures,)

3 Concerning [h] his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, [i] which was made of the seed of David [k] according to the flesh;

4 And * declared *to be* [l] the Son of God with power, [m] according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead;

5 By whom [n] we have received grace and [o] apostleship, † for [p] obedience to the faith, [q] among all nations, [r] for his name;

6 Among whom [s] are ye also [t] the called of Jesus Christ;

7 To [u] all that be in Rome, [x] beloved of God, [y] called *to be* saints: [z] Grace to you and [a] peace, from [b] God our Father, [c] and the Lord Jesus Christ.

a Acts xiii. 9. xxi. 40. xxii 7. 13. xxvi. 1. 14
b 9. xv. 16. xvi. 18 John xii. 26. xiii 14—16 xv. 15 20. Acts xxvii. 23 2 Cor. iv. 5 Gal i. 10. Phil i 1. ii 11. iii. 6, 7. Tit. i 1. Jam i. 1. 2 Pet. i 1. Jude 1. Rev. i 1. xxii 6. 9.
c 5. xi 13. Acts ix 15 xxii. 14, 15. 21. xxvi 16—18 1 Cor. i. 1. ix. 1. 16—18. xv. 8—10 2 Cor. i. 1. xi 5. xii. 11. Gal i. 1. 11—17 Eph i 1. iii. 5—7 iv. 11. Col i. 1. 25. 1 Tim i. 1. 12 ii. 7. 2 Tim i 11. Tit i 1. Heb. v 4
d Lev. xx 24—26. Num xvi 9, 10 Deut. x 8 1 Chr. xxiii. 13. Is xlix. 1 Jer. i. 5. Acts xiii. 2—4. 1 Tim i. 15, 16 Heb vii. 26.
e 9. 16 xv. 16. 29. xvi. 25. Mark xvi. 15, 16. Luke ii. 10, 11. Acts xx. 24. Eph. i. 13. 1 Thes. ii. 2 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14. 1 Tim i 11.
f *See on.* Luke xxiv. 26, 27. Acts x. 43. xxvi 6 Rev xxii 6.
g ii. 1. Ps. cxix. 140. Dan. x. 21. 2 Tim iii 15, 16. 2 Pet. i. 20, 21.

h 9. viii. 2, 3 29—32. Ps. ii. 7. Matt. iii. 17. xxvi. 63. xxvii. 43 Luke i. 35. John i. 34. 49. iii. 16—18. 35, 36. v. 25. x. 30. 36. xx. 28 31. Acts iii 13. viii. 37. ix. 20. 1 Cor. i. 9. Gal iv. 4. Col. i. 13—15. 1 Thes. i 10. 1 John i. 3 iii. 8. 23 iv. 9, 10. 15. v 1. 5. 10—13. 20. Rev. ii 18.
i 2 Sam. vii. 12—16 Ps lxxxix. 36, 37. Is ix. 6, 7. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6 xxxiii 15—17. 26. Am. ix. 11. Matt. i. 1. 20—23. ix. 27. xii. 23 xv 22. xxii. 42—45. Luke i. 31—33 69. ii. 4—6. John vii 42. Acts ii. 30. xiii. 22, 23 2 Tim ii. 8 —— k viii. 3. ix. 5. Gen. iii. 15. John i 14. Gal. iv. 4. 1 Tim. iii 16 1 John iv. 2, 3. 2 John 7 —— * Gr. *determined* —— l 3 John ii. 18—21 Acts ii. 24. 32. iii. 15. iv. 10—12. v. 30—32 xiii. 33—35 xvii. 31. 2 Cor. xiii 4. Eph i. 19—23. Heb. v 5, 6 —— m Luke xviii 31—33 xxiv. 26, 27. Heb. ix 14. 1 Pet. i. 11. 2 Pet i. 21. Rev. xix 10. —— n xii. 3. xv. 15, 16. John i. 16 1 Cor. xv. 10. 2 Cor. iii. 5, 6 Gal i. 15, 16. Eph. iii. 2—9 1 Tim i. 11, 12. —— o Acts i. 25. 1 Cor. ix. 2 Gal ii. 8, 9. —— † Or, *to the obedience of faith.* —— p xv. 18, 19 xvi. 26 Acts vi. 7 2 Cor. x. 4—6. Heb. v. 9 —— q iii. 29. 30. xi. 12, 13. xv 9—13 16 Gen. xxii 19. Ps xxii 27. lxvii 2 lxxii. 17. Mat. xxviii. 19. Mark xvi. 15, 16 Luke xxiv. 46, 47 Acts ix. 15. xxii. 21. xxvi 17, 18. —— r Mal. i. 11 14. Acts xv 14 Eph i. 6. 12 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10. —— s Eph. i. 11 Col. i. 6. 21. —— t viii. 28—30. ix. 24. 1 Cor i. 9. Gal. i. 6. 1 Thes. ii. 12. 2 Thes. ii 14 2 Tim. i. 9. Heb iii. 1. 1 Pet ii. 9. 21. v. 10. 2 Pet. i. 10 Rev. xvii 14 —— u Acts xv. 23 1 Cor. i. 2 2 Cor i. 1. Phil i. 1. Col. i. 2. Jam i. 1. 1 Pet i 1, 2. Jude 1. Rev. ii 1. 8 12. 18. 29 iii 1. 7. 14 22 —— x ix. 25. Deut. xxxiii 12. Ps lx. 5. Cant. v 1. Col. iii 12. 1 Tim. vi. 2 —— y 6 Col. iii. 15. 1 Thes. iv. 7. 1 Pet. i 15. 2 Pet i. 3. —— z 1 Cor i 3. 2 Cor. i 2 Gal. i. 3. Eph. i. 2 Phil. i 2. Col. i. 2. 1 Thes i 1. 2 Thes. i. 2. 1 Tim. i. 2 2 Tim. i. 2 Tit. i 4. Philem. 3. 1 Pet. i. 2. 2 Pet. i. 2 2 John 3. Jude 2 Rev i. 4, 5. —— a v. 1. xiv. 17. xv. 13. 33 Ps cxxii. 6 Is. lv. 12. lvii. 19 21 Zech vi. 13. Luke ii. 14. x. 5, 6. xix. 38. 42. John xiv. 27. xvi 33. Acts x. 36. Eph. ii. 14. 1 Thes v. 23. 2 Thes. iii. 16. Heb. xiii 20 —— b Matt. v 16. vi 8, 9. John xx. 17. Gal. i. 4 Phil. iv. 20. 1 Thes. i. 3. 2 Thes. i. 1. 1 John iii. 1. —— c Acts vii. 59, 60. 1 Cor. xvi 23 2 Cor xii. 8—10 xiii 14. Gal vi. 18. Eph. vi. 23 24 Phil. iv. 13. 23. 1 Thes. iii. 11—13. v. 28. 2 Thes. ii. 16, 17. iii. 16. 18. 2 Tim. iv. 22 Philem. 25. Rev. xxii. 21.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1—4. According to the custom of those times, the apostle began this epistle by prefixing his name and distinguishing title. The Christians at Rome would receive this letter from Paul, who was also called Saul, and had been a persecutor of the Church, but who now regarded it as his honour and happiness to be the servant of Jesus Christ, and to be called his apostle; having been separated and appointed by the choice and effectual calling of God, to preach his Gospel to the world, and to spend his life in promoting it. This doctrine was no novel invention, but the fulfilment of the promises made in the sacred Scriptures by the prophets; and it respected the Son of God, even Jesus the Saviour, the promised Messiah, the Prophet, Priest, and King of the Church, whom all believers acknowledged and obeyed as their Lord. He was descended from David according to the flesh, or in his human nature: but he had also been declared, and determined, to be the Son of God by that divine power, which raised him from the dead. The expression, "according "to the Spirit of Holiness," has been generally interpreted to signify, "according to his divine nature;" but it is not used in this sense in any other place, nor does it naturally convey that idea. Others therefore explain it of the conception of Jesus, by the Holy Spirit, on which account he was called the Son of God: but this does nothing more than state what he was "according to the "flesh," or in his human nature: whereas the apostle seems to have intended to show his divine nature, as the "only begotten Son of the Father;" and the *antithesis*, as well as the context, evidently requires this. Our Lord indeed wrought all his miracles by the Spirit of God, which was "given to him without measure:" but the apostle plainly speaks of "the Spirit of holiness," in immediate connexion with the demonstration, that Jesus was the Son of God, which arose from his resurrection from the dead. Now, the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on the witnesses of his resurrection, and all the stupendous effects which followed, both in respect of them, and of those on whom they laid their hands, were a divine attestation to their testimony; and thus Jesus, who was crucified for declaring that he was the Son of God, was "determined "to be the Son of God with power, by his resurrection;" according to the demonstration of that event, arising from the divers powers, signs, and miracles, which the Spirit of God enabled the apostles and primitive Christians to perform. (*Note, Heb.* ii. 3, 4.) It may also be observed, that the Holy Spirit had foretold by the prophets, that the Messiah would be the Son of God, as well as the Son of David; and also that he would be put to death, and rise again, and enter into his glory. When, therefore, the Lord Jesus, having been put to death as a deceiver and blasphemer, arose from the dead, "ascended on high, "and gave gifts to men," especially by pouring out the Holy Spirit on his apostles and disciples, according to the predictions of holy men, from the beginning, "who spake "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" he, in both respects, was "declared to be the Son of God with power, "by his resurrection from the dead, according to the "Spirit of holiness.' (*Notes, Acts* ii. 22—36. *Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5—7. From this glorious Saviour, Paul declared

8 First, [d] I thank my God [e] through Jesus Christ for you all, [f] that your faith is spoken of throughout [g] the whole world.

9 For [h] God is my witness, [i] whom I serve * with my spirit in [k] the gospel of his Son, [l] that without ceasing [m] I make mention of you always in my prayers;

10 Making [n] request, if by any means now at length I might have [o] a prosperous journey [p] by the will of God, to come unto you.

11 For [q] I long to see you, [r] that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, [s] to the end ye may be established;

12 That is, [t] that I may be comforted together † with you, [u] by the mutual faith both of you and me.

13 Now [x] I would not have you ignorant, brethren, [y] that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, ([z] but was let hitherto,) [a] that I might have some fruit ‡ among you also, [b] even as among other Gentiles.

14 I am [c] debtor both to the [d] Greeks and to the Barbarians, [e] both to the wise and [f] to the unwise.

d vi. 17. 1 Cor i. 4. Eph. i. 16. Phil. i. 3–5. Col i. 3, 4. 1 Thes. i. 2, 3. iii. 9. 2 Thes i 3. 2 Tim. i. 3–5. Philem. 4, 5. 2 John 4. 3 John 3, 4. e Eph. iii. 21. v. 20. Phil. i. 11. Heb. xiii. 15. 1 Pet. ii. 5. iv. 11. f xvi. 19. 1 Thes. i 8, 9. g Matt. xxiv. 14 Luke ii. 1. Acts xi. 28. h ix. 1. Job xvi. 19. 2 Cor. i. 23. xi. 10, 11, 31. Gal i. 20. Phil. i. 8. 1 Thes. ii. 5–10. 1 Tim. ii 7. i Acts xxvii. 23. Phil ii. 22. Col. i. 28, 29 2 Tim. i 3.——* Or, *in my spirit*. John iv. 23, 24. Acts xix 21. 1 Cor xiv. 14, 15 Phil. iii. 3.——k Mark i. 1. Acts iii. 26. 1 John v. 9–12.——l 1 Sam. xii. 23 Luke xviii 1. Acts xii. 5. Eph. vi. 18. 1 Thes. v. 17. 2 Tim i. 3.——m Eph i 16–19. iii. 14, &c. Phil i 4. 9–11. Col. i 9–13. 1 Thes. i. 2. Philem. 4.——n xv. 22–24. 30–32. Phil iv 6 1 Thes ii. 18 iii. 10, 11. Philem. 22. Heb. xiii. 19 ——o Acts xix. 21. xxvii. xxviii ——p Acts xviii. 21. xxi. 14. 1 Cor iv. 19. Jam. iv. 15 ——q Gen. xxxi. 30. 2 Sam xiii. 39 xxiii 15 2 Cor. ix. 14. Phil. i. 8. ii. 26 iv. 1.——r xv. 29. Acts viii. 15–19. xix. 6. 1 Cor. xii. 1–11. 2 Cor. xi. 4. Gal. iii. 2–5. Eph. iv. 8–12.

s xvi. 25. 2 Chr. xx. 20. Acts xvi. 5 2 Cor. i. 21. 1 Thes. iii 2 13. 2 Thes ii. 17. iii. 3. Heb xiii 9 1 Pet. v. 10. 12. 2 Pet i. 12. iii. 17, 18. t xv. 24. 32. Acts xi. 23 2 Cor. ii. 1–3. vii. 4–7. 13. 1 Thes. ii. 17–20 iii. 7–10 2 Tim i. 4. 2 John 2. 4. 3 John 3, 4. † Or, *in you*. u Eph. iv 5. Tit. i. 4. 2 Pet. i. 1. Jude 3. x xi. 25 1 Cor. x. 1. xii. 1. 2 Cor. i 8. 1 Thes. iv. 13 y xv. 23–28. Acts xix. 21. 2 Cor. i. 15, 16. z xv. 22. Acts xvi. 6, 7. 1 Thes. ii. 18 2 Thes. ii. 7.——a Is. xxvii. 6. John iv. 36. xii. 24. xv. 16. Col. i. 6. ‡ Or, *in you*.——b xv. 18–20. Acts xiv. 27. xv 12. xxi. 19. 1 Cor. ix 2. 2 Cor. ii. 14. x 13–16. 1 Thes. i. 9, 10. ii. 13, 14 2 Tim. iv. 17.——c viii. 12 xiii. 8. *Gr.* Acts ix. 15. xiii 2–4. xxii 21. xxvi 17, 18. 1 Cor ix. 16–23. 2 Tim ii. 10.——d Acts xxviii 4. 1 Cor. xiv. 11. Col. iii. 11.——e 22. xi. 25. xii. 16. xvi. 19 Matt. xi. 25. Luke x. 21. 1 Cor i 19–22. ii 13. iii. 18, 19. 2 Cor. x. 12. xi. 19 Eph v. 15–17. Jam. iv. 17, 18. f Prov. i. 22. viii. 5. Is. xxxv. 8 1 Cor. xiv. 16. 23, 24. Tit. iii. 3.

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that he had received mercy and grace, as well as an appointment to the apostolical office; that he might be employed as his instrument, in bringing sinners of all nations to "the obedience of faith," by accepting of the Redeemer's mercy, and becoming subject to his authority, for the honour of his name in their salvation, worship, and service. Among this happy and favoured company, were the persons to whom he sent this epistle; for they too had been called by the Gospel to profess themselves the disciples of Jesus, to bear his name, and to trust and serve him. As Paul was the apostle of the Gentiles, he considered himself peculiarly interested in their welfare, though they had not been converted by his ministry; he had therefore written this epistle to them: and he addressed it, not to the citizens of Rome in general, but to all those, who had been called to be, and were denominated, saints, or holy, separate, and sanctified persons, partakers of divine grace, and devoted to the service of God; and who were thus evidenced to be beloved by him, interested in his mercy and plenteous redemption, renewed in a measure to his holy image in which he delights, and constituted heirs of his everlasting kingdom. These the apostle saluted, by wishing them "grace and peace:" grace to sanctify their souls, and peace to comfort their hearts and consciences. Of these blessings, the sum of all happiness, he ardently desired that every professed Christian at Rome might participate: and that they all might continually have an accession made to that measure which they had already obtained, as springing from the free mercy of God, the reconciled Father of all believers, and coming to them through the Person, merits, and mediation, of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the customary apostolical salutation; and it is most undeniably a prayer, or act of worship, in which Christ is addressed in union with God the Father. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8—12. The apostle next assured "the saints at "Rome," that, though personally a stranger to them, he heartily thanked his God and Father, through Jesus Christ, for the mercy which he had shown to them all; as their faith in Christ, and its happy effect upon their conduct, were spoken of in every part of the world. Wherever he went, he heard the commendation of the believers at Rome; and their good conduct was the more noticed, by reason of the renown of that city, and the temptations with which they were surrounded. He could therefore confirm what he was about to say, by solemnly calling to witness that God, whom he worshipped and served, not only with constant and persevering diligence, but with inward fervency, zeal, and devotion, according to the discovery of his glory made in the Gospel, and also by promoting that doctrine, which respects his Son as the great Author and Subject of it. This glorious God was witness that he prayed for them all, on every occasion, without intermission, or neglect; and he especially besought the Lord that he would enable him to go among them, if after so long a time, and many disappointments, he might be favoured with a prosperous journey to come unto them, by the will and appointment of God. For he ardently desired to see and converse with them, that he might impart to them some of those spiritual gifts, (which were generally conferred by imposition of the apostles' hands,) in order to their establishment in the faith. And this he desired, in order that he might share the comfort bestowed on them, and rejoice in ministering to their joy; as well as in conferring with them concerning the nature, object and effects of that faith, which was held both by them and him. St. Paul doubtless meant to remind the Romans of his apostolical character and authority, as sanctioning his doctrine, by which he intended to guard them especially against the judaizing teachers: yet he aimed to do this in as unassuming and affectionate a manner as he could, that he might give no disgust to any person, or furnish false teachers with any handle against him. Some think that the Christians at Rome had received supernatural gifts, but it does not appear that any apostle had been there: Paul, however, expected that these gifts would be more abundantly imparted, when he should go among them, and that they would be thus fortified against such as attempted to pervert them, as well as against the fear of persecution. It has been seen how his prayers for a prosperous journey to Rome were answered, by his being sent thither as a prisoner. (*Marg. Ref.*)

15 So, [g] as much as in me is, [h] I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

16 For [i] I am not ashamed of [k] the gospel of Christ: [l] for it is the power of God unto salvation, [m] to every one that believeth; [n] to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

17 For therein is [o] the righteousness of God revealed [p] from faith to faith: as it is written, [q] The just shall live by faith.

g xii. 13 I Kings viii. 16. Mark xiv. 2. 2 Cor. viii. 12.
h Is vi. 8 Matt. ix. 38 John iv. 34. Acts xxi. 13 1 Cor iv 18. ix. 17. 2 Cor. x. 16, 17
i Ps xl. 9, 10. lxxi. 15, 16. cxix. 46. Mark viii 38 Luke ix. 26. 1 Cor. vi. 2 2 Tim. i 8, 12 16. 1 Pet iv. 16.
k xv. 19 29. Luke ii 10, 11 1 Cor. ix. 12 18. 2 Cor. ii 12 iv. 4 *Gr.* ix 13. Gal. i. 7. 1 Tim. i 11.——l x. 17. Ps. cx. 2. Is. liii. 1. 1 Cor. i. 18—24. ii. 4. xiv 24, 25 2 Cor. ii. 14—16. x 4, 5. Col i. 5, 6 1 Thes i 5, 6. ii 13 Heb. iv. 12 ——m iii. 22. 26. ix. 33. x 4 11. Mark xvi 16. John iii 15, 16 36 vi. 35 40. 47. vii. 38, 39. xi. 25, 26. Gal. iii. 22 1 Pet ii. 6. 1 John v 10—13 ——n ii. 9, 10. iii 29, 30. iv. 9—12. ix 24 x 12 xv. 8, 9. Luke ii 30—32. xxiv. 47. Acts xi. 18. xiii. 46, 47. xviii. 5, 6. xx 21 xxvi. 20. xxviii. 17—28. Gal ii 15 16. iii. 28. Eph ii. 11—17. Col. iii. 11.——o iii. 21. x 3, 4. Is xlv. 24, 25. xlvi. 13. li. 8. liv. 17. lxi. 10. Jer. xxiii 6 Dan. ix 24. 1 Cor. i. 30. 2 Cor v 21. Gal v. 5. Phil. iii. 8, 9 2 Pet i. 1 ——p iii. 3 Ps lxxxiv. 7. John i. 16. 2 Cor. iii. 18. 2 Thes. i. 3. Tit. i. 1, 2 ——q Hab. ii. 4 Gal. iii. 11 Heb. x. 38. xi. 6, 7.

18 ¶ For [r] the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all [s] ungodliness and [t] unrighteousness of men, [u] who hold the truth in unrighteousness.

19 Because [x] that which may be known of God is manifest * in them: for God hath shewed *it* unto them.

20 For [y] the invisible things of him [z] from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, [a] *even* his eternal power and [b] Godhead; † so that [c] they are [d] without excuse:

r 17. ii. 5, 6. iv. 15 Num. xxxii. 14. Deut. xxix. 20—28. 2 Kings xxii. 13 Jer. iv. 8. Lam. ii 22. Ez. vii 19. Zeph. i. 18. John iii. 36. Acts xvii. 30, 31. Gal iii. 10. Eph. v 6. Col. iii. 6. Rev. vi. 16, 17. xix. 15.
s v. 6 1 Tim i 9. Tit. ii. 1, 2 2 Pet. ii. 5, 6. iii 7. Jude 4. 15 18
t 29. ii 8, 9 vi. 13. Deut. xxv. 16. Is. iii. 10. 11. lv 7. Ez. xviii. 4. 1 Cor. vi. 9. 2 Thes. ii. 12. 2 Pet ii. 13—15. 1 John i. 9.
u 19. 28. 32 ii 3. 15—23 Luke xii. 46, 47. John iii. 19—21. Acts xxiv. 24, 25. 2 Thes. ii. 10. 1 Tim iv. 6.——x 20. Ps. xix. 1—6. Is. xl. 26. Jer. x. 10—13. Acts xiv. 16, 17. xvii. 23—30. * Or, *to them.*——y John i. 18. Col. i 15, 16. 1 Tim. i. 17. vi. 16. Heb. xi. 27 ——z 19. Deut iv. 19. Job xxxi 28. Ps viii 3, 4. xxxiii 6—9. civ 5—31. cxix. 90, 91 cxxxix. 13—16. cxlviii. 3—12 Matt. v 45 ——a xvi. 26. Gen. xxi. 33. Deut xxxiii 27. Ps xc. 2. Is. ix. 6. xxvi 4 xl. 26, 1 Tim i 17. Heb ix. 14.——b Acts xvii. 29 Col. ii. 9 ——† Or, *that they may be,* &c ——c ii. 1. 15. John xv. 22. *Marg.*——d *See on,* Acts xxii. 1. *Gr.*

V. 13—16. The apostle next showed, that he had repeatedly purposed to come to Rome; but that he had been hindered hitherto by his multiplied engagements, and by the opposition made to his endeavours. Indeed, he was exceedingly desirous to have some fruit to his ministry among the Romans, as well as among the other Gentiles: for, as he had been converted in a most extraordinary manner, and intrusted with a dispensation of the Gospel, he thought himself bound to do every thing that he possibly could, to promote the salvation of men in general, especially among the Gentiles. This was a debt, which he owed both to the civilized Greeks, or Romans, and to the rude barbarians; and indeed to the learned and unlearned of every nation, from the *wise* philosopher to the untutored labourer. With this view of his obligation, he was ready, according to his ability and opportunity, to preach the Gospel at Rome also: though, in that haughty and magnificent capital, he might encounter more contempt and opposition than in other places; and though his address might be less suitable to the fastidious taste of its refined inhabitants. For however the noble, the learned, or the proud, might despise the doctrines of the Gospel, and especially that of salvation by faith in the merits of a Jew, who had been crucified as a deceiver by his own countrymen, yet St. Paul was in no wise ashamed of it, but was ready to glory in his belief of it before all men, as he knew that the power of God attended, and was displayed by that doctrine, for the salvation of every believer from the power of his corrupt passions and habits, from the bondage of Satan, from the love of the world, and the fear of men, and from all sin and misery; so that, whilst Jewish rabbies and pagan philosophers had tried in vain to reform men's lives, the despised Gospel of Christ, wherever it had been preached, had been rendered extensively successful for that purpose. This had first been evidenced among the Jews, in the conversion and holy lives of multitudes, who had before been of very bad characters; and afterwards it had produced similar effects among the Gentiles, vast numbers of whom had been turned from their immoralities and idolatries to the holy worship and service of the true God. "It is the power of God unto salvation." 'To whom? To all that believe. Now it is 'plain, that it is not merely the power of God manifested 'in outward miracles that is there spoken of; for miracles were wrought upon, and in the presence both of 'them that believed not, and them that did believe. The 'power of God there spoken of, is a power felt only by 'them that believe: so that, whatever the enemies of the 'free grace of God may suggest, it cannot be meant of 'those extraordinary manifestations of power in healing 'men's bodies, &c. but of that inward teaching and drawing of the Father, of which the prophets foretold, that 'it would be bestowed in a large manner in Gospel-times.' (*Dr. Maclaurin.*)

V. 17. (*Marg. Ref.*) In the Gospel God hath revealed, not only the righteousness of his perfect character and government, and the righteousness required by his holy law, but *that* also which he has appointed, provided, and introduced, for the justification of sinners before him; and which might be called "the righteousness of God," for other reasons, but especially because it consisted of the perfect obedience unto death of that glorious person, who is "God manifested in the flesh." 'This phrase, 'in St. Paul's style, doth always signify the righteousness 'of faith in Christ Jesus dying, or shedding his blood for 'us. This righteousness consists not in our sanctification, 'but in our justification, or our absolution from our sins 'past, through faith in the blood of Christ, shed for the 'remission of our sins.' (*Whitby.*) 'Therein is the 'righteousness, which is of the free grace of God, through 'Jesus Christ, revealed to be wholly of faith.' (*Locke.*) The references, if duly considered, will prepare the reader to expect something still more *appropriate* in this most remarkable expression, and a far higher privilege to believers, than these concessions, which however are of no small importance, point out to us. This righteousness is revealed "from faith to faith;" it is altogether of faith, from first to last, and without any respect to other distinctions; and the faith which receives it is capable of continual augmentation: or it is revealed, from the *faithfulness* of God in his word, to *the faith* of the believer; according to the doctrine of the prophet, that the truly just, or righteous, man should live, or be accepted and saved, by faith, and not by works. (*Note, Hab.* ii. 4.)

e 19. 28. John iii. 19.
f xv. 9. Ps. l 23. lxxxvi 9. Hos. ii. 8. Hab. i. 15, 16. Luke xvii. 15—18 2 Tim. iii. 2. Rev. xiv. 7 xv. 4.
g Gen. vi. 5. viii. 21. 2 Kings xvii 15. Ps. lxxxi. 12 Ec. vii 29. Is. xliv. 9—20. Jer ii. 5. x. 3—8. 14, 15. xvi. 19. Eph. iv. 17, 18. 1 Pet. i. 18.——h xi. 10. Deut. xxviii. 29. Is. lx. 2. Acts xxvi. 18. 1 Pet. ii. 9.

21 Because that, [e] when they knew God, [f] they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; [g] but became vain in their imaginations, and [h] their foolish heart was darkened.

22 [i] Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools;

23 And [k] changed the glory of the incorruptible God into [l] an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.

i xi. 25 Prov. xxv. 14 xxvi. 12. Is. xlvii. 10. Jer. viii. 8, 9. x. 14. Matt. vi. 23. 1 Cor. i 19—21. iii. 18, 19.
k 25. Ps. cvi. 20. Jer. ii. 11.
l Deut. iv 15—18. v. 8 Ps. cxv. 5—8. cxxxv. 15—18 Is. xl. 18. xliv. 13. Ez. viii. 10. Acts xvii. 29. 1 Cor. xii. 2. 1 Pet. iv. 3. Rev. ix. 20.

V. 18—20. ‘In vain does the evangelical doctrine exhort men to seek righteousness and salvation in Christ alone, apprehended by faith, unless all men be previously convicted as guilty of unrighteousness; which the apostle now begins to prove, concluding at the twentieth verse of the third chapter.’ (*Beza.*) The apostle here opens his main subject; and begins to show, that all men need the salvation of the Gospel, because none can obtain the favour of God, or escape his wrath by their own works. For, however ignorant persons might imagine that their supposed virtues would atone for their vices, yet, in fact, the wrath of God had been revealed from heaven, against every kind and degree of ungodliness and unrighteousness; in respect “of all who hold the truth in unrighteousness.” This revelation had been especially made by the holy law of God and the Old Testament dispensation, and had now been more generally published and fully explained by the Gospel: (*Marg. Ref.*) and though some extenuation might be admitted, in respect of those who had not been favoured with “the oracles of God,” yet all men were found guilty, and exposed to this “revealed wrath,” for “holding the truth in unrighteousness,” or acting in opposition to their knowledge, and the conviction of their own consciences. All were acquainted with many leading truths concerning moral duties; but their depravity *imprisoned* those truths, and so restrained them from duly influencing their conduct. All might have known far more than they did, had they not hated the light through love of sin. Indeed, to this day, no man, of any sect or nation, perfectly lives up to his own principles: all do what they know to be wrong, and omit what they know to be their duty. So that the plea of ignorance cannot be admitted, *in its full latitude*, in favour of any but idiots; for all rebel against that light, not only which they might have obtained, but which they actually possess. This general principle the apostle proceeded to illustrate by the state of the Gentile world. The Pagans had not the light of revelation: but the works of creation preached to them; and that “which might be known of God,” was made manifest even among them; for God had showed it to them from age to age, ever since the world was created. Even the wonderful formation of their own bodies and souls, as well as the various objects all around them, proclaimed these truths: so that, being endued with rational powers, they could not have failed of knowing him, as their Creator, Benefactor, and Governor, and in respect of many of his attributes, had it not been for the depravity of their hearts. Indeed, God himself dwelleth in light inaccessible, and his essential glory must be invisible to mortal eye: yet “his eternal power and Godhead” are so clearly reflected from, and discernible in, the works which he hath made, that his eternal and underived existence, his omnipotence, and other perfections, must be known from the beauty, excellency, variety, and immensity of his creatures, by all intelligent beings, except as their minds are debased and alienated from him by sin. Thus, even idolaters and Gentiles are left without excuse; and their ungodliness and unrighteousness are evinced to be the effect of their depraved dispositions, rather than of their want of information. They all might have known more of God than they did, had they been properly disposed; and some of them, when they had discovered the vanity of the popular idolatries, and acquired some just notions of God and his worship, continued to act in opposition to their knowledge, from worldly motives. Thus “they imprisoned the truth in unrighteousness:” it is vain to attempt an excuse for them; and the divine verdict brought in against them, accords with the plainest dictates of justice and equity. *Revealed.* (18.) ‘The words of St. Paul to the Athenians give light to these here to the Romans.’ (*Locke.*) *Note, Acts* xvii. 30, 31. *Ungodliness* denotes the idolatry, irreligion, profaneness, and ingratitude to God, of mankind in general; and *unrighteousness*, their injustice, oppression, cruelty, and base conduct towards each other; the former may refer to the first table of the law; the latter to the second: yet by both they rebelled against God, and deserved his wrath. *Being understood*, &c. (20.) Or, “If they are minded they are seen.” ‘The invisible things of God lie within the reach and discovery of men's reason and understanding; but yet they must exercise their faculties and employ their minds about them.’ (*Locke.*) (*Notes*, 28—32. *Prov.* xvii. 16. *Marg. Ref.*)

V. 21—23. ‘Men of their own accord rushed into idolatry, to understand and condemn which they might have had light enough within, if they had not voluntarily extinguished it, partly by negligence, and partly by wickedness; on which account the apostle says, that “they detained the truth in unrighteousness.”’ (*Beza.*) Idolatry was first introduced, and became general and perpetual in the world, through man's carnal aversion to the holy character, worship, and service of the true God. The posterity of Noah had some knowledge of Jehovah; but they revolted from his service, and refused to glorify him as God, by their adoration, love, and obedience; neither were they thankful for the bounties of Providence, but abused them by intemperance, and forgot the Giver. Thus impiety and iniquity made way for idolatry, which was become almost universal when God called Abraham. From that time the same causes produced the same effects, in every part of the world. Indeed some of the philosophers of Greece and Rome had acquired a little indistinct knowledge of the being and perfections of the One supreme God; and they speculated on subjects of this kind with some acuteness and plausibility: yet they “glorified him not as God,” either by their avowed ado-

24 Wherefore [m] God also gave them up to uncleanness, [n] through the lusts of their own hearts, [o] to dishonour their own bodies [p] between themselves;

25 Who [q] changed [r] the truth of God [s] into a lie, and worshipped and served [t] the creature * more than the Creator, [u] who is blessed for ever. Amen.

26 For this cause God [x] gave them up unto [y] vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

m Ps lxxxi 11.12 Hos iv 17, 18. Matt xv 14 Acts vii.42 xiv. 16. xvii 29, 30 Eph. iv 18, 19. 2 Thes ii 10,11.
n vi. 12. Eph. ii. 3. 1 Thes iv 5. Jam i 14, 15. iv. 1–4. 1 Pet. i. 14. ii 11. iv. 2, 3 2 Pet ii. 18. 1 John ii 15, 16. Jude 18.
o 1Cor. vi. 13 18. 1 Thes iv 4. 2 Tim ii. 20–22
p 27 Lev. xviii. 22
q 23.
r 18. 1 Thes. i. 9. 1 John v 20.
s Is. xliv 20 Jer x. 14 15. xiii. 25. xvi. 19. Am. ii. 4 Jon. ii. 8. Hab ii 18.——t 23. Matt. vi. 24. x. 37. 2 Tim. iii 4. 1 John ii. 15, 16 ——* Or, *rather.*——u ix 5. Ps. lxxii. 19. cxlv. 1, 2. 2 Cor. xi. 31. Eph iii. 21. 1 Tim. i. 11. 17.——x *See on,* 24.
y Gen. xix 5 Lev. xviii. 22–28. Deut. xxiii. 17, 18. Judg. xix. 22. 1 Cor. vi. 9. Eph. iv. 19 v. 12. 1 Tim. i. 10. Jude 7.

27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves [z] that recompense of their error which was meet.

28 And even [a] as they did not like to † retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over [b] to ‡ a reprobate mind, to do those things which are [c] not convenient;

29 Being [d] filled with all unrighteousness, [e] fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder,

z 23, 24.
a 18. 21 Job xxi. 14, 15. Prov. i. 7. 22. 29. v. 12, 13. xvii. 16. Jer. iv. 22 ix. 6. Hos. iv. 6. Acts xvii 23. 32. Rom. viii 7, 8. 1 Cor. xv. 34. 2 Cor. iv. 4–6. x. 5. 2 Thes. i. 8. ii. 10–12. 2 Pet. iii 5.
† Or, *acknowledged.*
b Jer. vi 30 2Cor. xiii. 5–7. 2Tim iii. 8 Tit. i. 16.
‡ Or, *mind void of judgment*
c Eph. v. 4. Philem. 8.
d iii. 10–19. Job xv. 16 Jer. xvii. 9. Matt. xv. 19. Mark vii 21, 22. 1 Cor vi. 9, 10 Gal. v. 19–21. Eph. v. 3–6. Col. iii. 5–9. 1 Tim i. 9, 10. 2 Tim. iii. 2–5. Tit. iii. 3. Rev. xxi. 8. xxii. 15.

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ration, or in the conduct of their lives; nor were they thankful for his goodness to them. On the contrary, they sanctioned, by a hypocritical conformity, the stupid idolatries of their countrymen; and, proud of their superior discernment, they amused themselves with vain fancies and reasonings concerning matters too high and abstruse for them. Thus they were bewildered in speculations, and most of them took refuge in skepticism, or atheism. Their minds, being destitute of *practical* wisdom and understanding, became more and more darkened with error and delusion; and whilst they professed themselves to be sages, wise men, and philosophers, they were *infatuated*, or turned into mere fools or idiots, in the great concerns of God and religion. So that most of them relapsed into gross idolatry; and men in general concurred in exchanging the glorious Object of all worship for inanimate idols. They at first commonly changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the image of a mortal man, which they foolishly supposed to be a proper resemblance of him: at length they made images of their deities, like birds, beasts, fishes, serpents, and insects, and thus actually fell down to worship the meanest and most noxious of the creatures. It is well known that many of the ancients, especially the *learned* Egyptians, worshipped dogs, snakes, reptiles, nay, even vegetables. Thus mankind, having retained from original tradition, or having acquired by the exercise of reason, some general notions of a Deity, invented numerous species of idolatry, and universally forsook the worship of the true God, in all places where revelation was not actually vouchsafed. Indeed, the fact is undeniably the same even to this day; and if any nations seem to be sunk into such total stupidity, as to have no notions of a God remaining among them, this still more clearly proves, not man's want of rational powers, but his carnal enmity to God and religion, through which he becomes more and more the besotted and blinded slave of Satan. (*Notes, Is.* xliv. 9—20. *Marg. Ref*) *Imaginations.* (21.) Or *reasonings,* (*Matt.* xv. 19. *Luke* ix. 46, 47. *Gr.*) Cicero's books, 'On the nature of the gods,' contain a most striking illustration of the apostle's meaning.

V. 24—27. The race of men, having thus dishonoured God by wilful apostacy and idolatry, he left them, under the influence of Satan, to debase themselves by the most unnatural and abominable uncleanness. This did not so much result from the prevalence of animal inclinations, (for the very brutes are kept from such excessive and unnatural practices,) as from the lusts of their own hearts, which madly sought satisfaction in sensuality, when they had lost the favour of God, and happiness in him. Thus they disgraced their bodies, (which had been most curiously formed by the Creator, to be the instruments of the soul in his worship and service,) by using them to perpetrate with each other the most detestable pollutions. This was permitted *judicially*; because they had exchanged the truth of God which had been made known to them, respecting his nature, perfections, and worship, for the basest falsehoods and delusions of the devil, and the sophistical conclusions of their own vain reasonings; and in consequence, they had rendered divine honours to creatures, in preference to the infinite Creator, who is in himself "blessed for evermore;" whom all rational creatures ought to adore and bless: and whose praises are celebrated by all the inhabitants of heaven, whilst saints on earth repeat a cordial Amen to them. The idolaters first joined creatures with him in their worship, or adored them as mediators; they used images to represent the invisible Object of their adoration, and at length the vilest of creatures engrossed the whole of it. The Lord therefore being provoked to jealousy by this base apostacy and ingratitude, gave them up to the vilest affections and inclinations, so that they were left to practise such unnatural lusts, as are not fit to be mentioned, except as a stigma on human nature, and to enhance the grace of our redemption. And this was a judgment meet for such a crime; as they had so dishonoured God, through their pride and carnal enmity, it was proper for them to be left to expose their own shame, that the consequences of their apostacy, and the blindness of their boasted reason, as well as the filthiness of their hearts, might be known to the whole intelligent creation. Those unnatural crimes and vile affections, which are most scandalous at present, and carefully concealed and most severely punished, were openly avowed among the Greeks and Romans, even in their politest ages; and their most elegant and celebrated poets have defiled their compositions by the mention of such vile amours, without any expressions of abhorrence, or even of disapprobation! *More than,* &c. (25.) *Præterito Creatore,* ("passing, by, or disregarding the Creator.") 'Thus Hilary renders the clause with purity and elegance.' (*Beza.*)

debate, deceit, malignity; [e] whisperers,

30 [f] Backbiters, [g] haters of God, despiteful, proud, [h] boasters, [i] inventors of evil things, [k] disobedient to parents,

31 [l] Without understanding, [m] covenant-breakers, * without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

32 Who [n] knowing the judgment of God, (that they which commit such things are [o] worthy of death,) not only do the same, but † have pleasure in them that do them.

e Ps. xli. 7. Prov. xvi. 28. xxvi. 20. 2 Cor. xii. 20.
f Prov. xxv. 23.
g viii. 7, 8. Num. x. 35. Deut. vii. 10. 2 Chr. xix. 2. Ps. lxxxi. 15. Prov. viii. 36. John vii. 7. xv. 23, 24. Tit. iii. 3.——h ii. 17. 23. iii. 27. 1 Kings xx. 11. 2 Chr. xxv. 19. Ps. x. 3. xlix. 6. lii. 1. xciv. 4. xcvii. 7. Acts v. 36. 2 Cor. x. 15. 2 Thes. ii. 4. Jam. iii. 5. iv. 16. 2 Pet. ii. 18. Jude 16.——i Ps. xcix. 8. cvi. 39. Ec. vii. 29.——k Deut. xxi. 18—21. xxvii. 16. Prov. xxx. 17. Ez. xxii. 7. Matt. x. 21. xv. 4. Luke xxi. 16. 2 Tim. iii. 2.——l 20, 21. iii. 11. Prov. xviii. 2. Is. xxvii. 11. Jer. iv. 22. Matt. xv. 16.——m 2 Kings xviii. 14, &c. Is. xxiii. 8. 2 Tim. iii. 3.

* Or, *unsociable*.
n i. 21. ii. 1—3. 21—23.
o vi. 21. Deut. xvii. 6. xxi. 22. 2 Sam. xii. 5—7. 1 Kings ii. 26. Heb. x. 29. Rev. xvi. 6.
† Or, *consent with them*. Ps. l. 18. Hos. vii. 3. Mark xiv. 10, 11.

V. 28—32. Men, in all ages and nations, had shown a disposition to discard from their minds the knowledge of the true God. Having no delight in him, they did not endeavour "to retain him in their knowledge." The original word signifies *prove*, (as metals are assayed,) or *approved*. The latter seems the meaning in this passage. Not *approving* the knowledge of JEHOVAH, men every where were prompt to run into idolatry. This was an evident fact all over the Gentile world. The glorious perfections, spiritual worship, and holy service, of God, by no means suited the proud, sensual, carnal, heart of fallen man: so that, as with one consent, they preferred the basest idols to him, because more congenial to their dispositions, and consistent with their favourite pursuits; in righteous judgment he gave them up to a *reprobate* mind, that they should foolishly and perversely prefer the most shameful and pernicious practices, to those which are decent, honourable, and becoming rational creatures. Thus they were left to commit such crimes, as were utterly inconsistent with reason, nature, and their own and each others welfare. Nay, they proceeded to such lengths in wickedness, that their whole hearts and lives were filled with every kind of fraud, oppression, extortion, and iniquity; they practised all fornication, incest, and adultery without remorse; they delighted in mischief for its own sake: they rapaciously amassed wealth by every means in their power, however vile; they revenged every injury with desperate malice; they envied all, who were more honoured or prospered than themselves; they were prompt to commit murder or engage in any kind of bitter contests, and in every species of deceit and malignity, or *habitual mischievousness*, as delighting in the misery of others. Secret calumnies and slanders were employed to ruin men's characters; they were haters of God, and of his authority, law, justice, service, and providence, and despiteful to his worshippers and to each other. They were proud of their abilities, possessions, and exploits; they idolized themselves, in boasting of their virtues or performances, and in wholly seeking their own glory in the most ostentatious manner; they invented new species of cruelty, treachery, luxury, impiety, idolatry, sensual gratification, and magnificence. They cast off all regard to parental authority, and despised, injured, or even murdered their aged parents, (as the emperor Nero did his mother Agrippina.) They, acted, in many things, as if they had been destitute of common sense, by the indulgence of their headstrong passions; they violated without scruple the most solemn treaties, covenants, and oaths; they sinned away natural affection, and even exposed their new-born infants without remorse or censure, that they might not have the trouble or expense of bringing them up, and in many places they put to death their parents, when they became helpless and burdensome. They were implacable in their resentments, and unmerciful in their dispositions; so that, besides the cruel carnage of their ambitious wars, the indiscriminate slaughter which often attended the taking of cities, and the frequent murder of their vanquished enemies, their public diversions consisted in beholding gladiators fighting together, till hundreds were sometimes massacred before their eyes, or in seeing slaves and criminals fighting with wild beasts, and often devoured by them. Nor did the principal persons, whether men or women, absent themselves from these horrid spectacles! Nay, even those among them, who were most fully convinced that these things were criminal, and deserving of condemnation and death, according to the judgment of God, not only continued to practise them, but they also delighted in, honoured, caressed, flattered, preferred, or even deified, such persons, as were most notoriously addicted to them. The history of the Greeks and Romans, especially of the latter, about the time when the apostle wrote, abundantly confirms this horrid description of their general character, from which even their philosophers and moralists were by no means excepted.—It might easily be shown, that the morals of idolatrous nations, if judged according to the immutable standard of the divine law, are at this day very little, if at all, better than the description here given of the Gentile world.—*Have pleasure*, &c. (32.) 'This, say the Greek commentators, is much worse than the bare doing of them; 'for a man may do them by the power of temptation, 'and, by consideration, become sensible of his folly, and 'repent of it; but when he is arrived at that height of 'wickedness, that he not only approves, but *delights* in 'seeing the like things done by others, he demonstrates 'such a strong affection to them as is incurable.' (*Whitby.*) —The apostle, however, is showing what need the Gentiles, and all men, had of the grace of the Gospel; and not that they were *incurable* by it; and in fact multitudes, who once had answered this description, afterwards embraced Christianity, and became "a peculiar people "zealous of good works."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

A servant of Jesus Christ is the highest style of man; and that of a minister, or an apostle, only specifies the particular service in which he is employed; but the Christian slave is a servant of Christ as truly as the apostle. All those, who are thus distinguished, have been called out of a state of darkness and alienation from God, and separated from their sinful connexions by divine grace; and thus taught to believe, love, adorn, and promote the

CHAP. II.

They, who judge others, and yet transgress themselves, are inexcusable, and cannot escape the judgment of God, 1—6. *The measure of his dealings with Jews and Gentiles,* 7—16. *The apostle solemnly*

Gospel of God. This Gospel, though often treated as a new doctrine, hath comprised the whole hope of sinful man from the beginning; and was promised by the prophets long before it was published by the apostles of Jesus Christ. He is the great Subject of the Gospel, being the Son of David, and the Son of God, according to the testimony of the Spirit of holiness by the prophets, and the demonstration of his resurrection from the dead by the power of God, attested by the same Spirit. From his fulness have all his servants received; he gives grace to the sinner, and qualifies the believer or the minister for the work allotted to him; but in vain do any claim authority in the Church, as successors to the apostles, when their lives evince that they have not received regenerating grace, and when, instead of bringing others to the obedience of faith, they themselves are evidently disobedient and unbelieving. The end of the Gospel-ministry is, to bring sinners of all nations to obey the command of God, by believing in his Son, and submitting to his authority, that his name may be glorified in their salvation, and that they may become a peculiar people, to show forth his praise. Happy they, who are thus the called of Jesus Christ to be his saints, beloved of God and devoted to him! They should often recollect their character and privileges, that they may be excited to act consistently; and they should cordially desire an increase of grace and peace to all their brethren in every place. Without grace there can be no substantial peace; in proportion as grace is communicated, peace may be expected; and when grace shall ripen into perfect holiness, peace will become complete fruition. These then are the great blessings, which we should seek for ourselves, our children, our friends, and all around us, in preference to all earthly possessions or prosperity; and they must be sought from the mercy of God our Father, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and by reliance on his merits and mediation.

V. 8—15.

Zealous Christians are always ready to thank God, in behalf of all others who partake of the same invaluable blessings in which they rejoice: and we should cultivate this pious and benevolent disposition, that we may present our grateful tribute to the Lord, not only for our friends, or such as have been converted by our means, but for strangers also, and for all concerning whom we hear a good report. Indeed, if we "serve God with our spirit in "the Gospel of his Son," we shall be sure to approve our hearts before him, as deeply concerned for the peace and prosperity of his Church: and we should also without ceasing, in our daily prayers, make mention of our fellow Christians and the interests of the Gospel, all over the world. Yet, alas, most of us must own with shame, that we are not so earnest, or particular, in this respect, even in our narrow circles, as Paul was, in respect of his most extensive connexions, and with all his vast and multiplied engagements! But we should endeavour to follow him even as he followed Christ: and we ought to long for opportunities of usefulness, as worldly men do for a prosperous trade, or occasions of distinguishing themselves, and acquiring celebrity; and count that the most successful journey or undertaking, in which most good hath been done, though it have exposed us to hardship, loss, or peril. We should earnestly request the Lord, that by his will such opportunities may frequently return; though we know not in what manner these prayers may be answered: we should readily impart to others, what God hath intrusted to us, whether to supply their temporal wants, or to promote their spiritual comfort and establishment; we ought to *rejoice* in making others *joyful*; and should peculiarly take pleasure in communing with those who believe, hope for, and experience, the same things with us. But purposes, resulting even from this happy and excellent state of mind, may often be retarded and disappointed; nor ought we to be discouraged or desist on this account. We should still desire and expect the opportunity of bringing forth fruit, though we have been hindered hitherto: and while we ought to be thankful for the least usefulness, we should not say of any measure, let this suffice us as long as we have health and strength for labour, and so much yet remains to be done, before all nations are brought to the obedience of faith. Being redeemed by the blood, and converted by the grace of the Lord Jesus, we are altogether his: and for his sake, we are debtors to all men, to do them all the good we can, to whatever nation they belong, or of whatever complexion, rank, capacity, or education, they are. Nor ought we to deem such services any great thing; but merely our bounden duty, our debt of gratitude to Christ, and of love to our neighbours and brethren.

V. 16—22.

We ought not for a moment to allow of that absurd and hateful shame, which the enmity and contempt of the wicked against the Gospel often excite in our minds. On the other hand, we should glory in the doctrine of the cross, and be ready to profess or preach it in any place, or before any description of men, according to our ability, and our call in Providence; as knowing that it is "the "power of God unto salvation to every one that be-"lieveth," and that no sinner can be saved in any other way. It is indeed evident to this day, that learned speculations, and supposed rational schemes, or the elegances of admired orators, are not attended in general with that power, which converts sinners from impiety and immorality to the love and service of God: but this effect is produced, in some good measure, wherever the despised Gospel is preached, even though it be in a homely manner, and by persons of inferior abilities and erudition. For by the Gospel is the righteousness of God revealed; his way of justification and sanctification is opened; and sinners are taught to trust in him, and to come before him, by faith in his mercy through the righteousness, atonement, *expostulates with the Jews, who trusted in the law, and yet brake it; and shows that external forms will not profit, without internal piety, which God would accept even in the uncircumcised,* 17—29.

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and intercession of his beloved Son. And he will honour this doctrine, because it honours his perfections, law, and government, and because it is his own appointment: but they, who devise other schemes, may put forth *their own power* to make them successful, if they can; for God will not own or countenance them. The Gospel is worthy of universal acceptation, "for the wrath of God is revealed "from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness "of men;" and all have been, in some degree, ungodly and unrighteous. No man can plead, that he has fulfilled all his obligations to God and to his neighbour; nor can any one truly say, that he hath not "held the "truth in unrighteousness," or that he hath acted up to the light afforded him. Whatever may be pretended, atheism, infidelity, impiety, and idolatry spring from human depravity, not from unavoidable ignorance or mistake. The heathen nations might have known enough of God from his works, and the benefits conferred on them, to have excited their admiring love and gratitude, and to have influenced them to adore and obey their Creator and Benefactor; had they not shut out the light, or sinned in opposition to it: so that even they were without excuse in their apostacy and idolatry, however succeeding rebels against God may have vindicated and justified them. But instead of glorifying him in humble gratitude, according to their measure of information; their pride and carnal enmity led them to indulge vain conjectures and reasonings; till their professed and boasted wisdom ended in the most palpable and degrading folly and stupidity. Thus idolatry, the stigma of man's understanding, was introduced and propagated, through the wickedness of his heart; and rational creatures exchanged the worship of the glorious Creator for that of brutes, reptiles, or inanimate images: and they continued to wander from God, till all traces of true religion must have been lost, had not the revelation of the Gospel prevented it.

V. 23—32.

Whatever speculators may assume of the sufficiency of man's reason to discover divine truth and moral obligation, or to regulate men's practice; stubborn facts confute the flattering hypothesis: and as far as God hath *in awful displeasure* left men to themselves, they have dishonoured him by the most absurd idolatries and superstitions, and degraded themselves by "vile affections," and abominable lusts: nor is it generally expedient to mention the enormities, to which *they,* who, liking not to retain God in their knowledge, preferred their own inventions to his holy worship, have been given up: when being left to a reprobate mind, their deluded judgments, their perverse wills, and their depraved affections, have reciprocally helped to corrupt, and have been corrupted by, each other. A most horrid view of the moral character of the Greeks and Romans, even amidst all their prosperity, politeness, and erudition, is here set before us by the apostle: and the student, *who judges of characters and actions by the law of God,* will perceive, that their own historians, orators, and poets, amidst all their flattering and false colouring, adduce such facts, and make such representations, as fully prove the apostle's picture to be a real and striking likeness, and no caricature. Nay, the most illustrious and celebrated persons among them, may be produced, as most exactly answering to this horrid description! It must indeed be thankfully acknowledged, that Christianity has had considerable effect on mankind in general, in giving them more just notions of excellence, and in humanizing their manners, especially in respect of war: so that battles are sometimes *now* scarcely more fierce and bloody than the diversions of the savage Romans were. Our laws and customs also restrain, and drive into dark recesses, those abominations, which stalked abroad with horrid effrontery among the Pagans. There are also great numbers of real Christians among us. Yet after all, what multitudes, even in this land, seem to be the original of the picture before us! They are full of all unrighteousness, and commit all uncleanness with greediness; or they gratify their enormous avarice by oppressions, extortion, and cruelty; or they are full of envy, deceit, contention, ambition, ostentation, malice, or malignity. Some rush upon murder from a diabolical pride and revenge, which they call *honour;* others vent their malice by whispering calumnies and slanders, to ruin their neighbour's reputation. Multitudes are so ingenious in contriving new species of fraud, perjury, impiety, or dishonesty; that legislators can scarcely keep pace with them, in devising new statutes to counteract their villany. While disobedience to parents is, alas! shamefully common: children are often as shamefully turned over to hirelings, and neglected by their parents, as if they were "without natural affection;" and it is too obvious, that numbers are implacable and unmerciful to those, whom they can exult over or oppress with impunity. Thus men show themselves to be haters of God and his holy service: not only by doing such things as he hath forbidden, and adjudged deserving of his wrath; but by applauding, and taking pleasure in the company of those who blaspheme his name and trample on his authority, as though they were the most worthy, generous, and excellent of the human race: while the pious servants of God are proportionably despised and shunned. These are they who would discard revelation, and who count the preaching of the cross foolishness! But their conduct demonstrates their need of it, and that it is a remedy which they must avail themselves of, or perish. Finally, we may here observe, that religion moderates and regulates natural affections; but excess of depravity extinguishes them: that it is a proof of more determined impiety, for men to take pleasure in the company of the enemies of God; than to commit many crimes, whilst the heart and conscience rise up against them: and that it is a peculiar cause for gratitude, if we have been restrained from these enormities, to which by nature we are as propense as any others of our apostate race.

THEREFORE [a] thou art inexcusable, [b] O man, [c] whosoever thou art, that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; [d] for thou that judgest doest the same things.

2 But we are sure that [e] the judgment of God is according to truth, against them which commit such things.

3 And [f] thinkest thou this, [g] O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, [h] that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

a i 18—20.
b 3. ix. 20. 1 Cor. vii. 16. Jam. ii. 20
c 26, 27. 2 Sam. xii. 5—7 Ps l. 16—20. Matt. vii 1—5. xxiii. 29—31. Luke vi. 37. xix. 22. John viii 7—9. Jam. iv. 11.
d 3. 21—23.
e 5 iii. 4, 5 ix. 14. Gen. xviii 25. Job xxxiv. 17—19. 23. Ps. ix. 4. 7, 8. xi. 5—7. xxxvi. 5, 6. xcvi. 13. xcviii. 9. cxlv. 17. Is. xlv 19. 21. Jer xii. 1. Ez. xviii 25. 29. Dan. iv. 37. Zeph. iii. 5 Acts xvii. 31 2 Thes. i. 5—10 Rev. xv. 3, 4. xvi. 5 xix. 2.——f 2 Sam. x. 3 Job xxxv. 2 Ps. l 21. Matt. xxvi. 53 ——g 1 Dan. x. 19. Luke xii. 14. xxii. 58. 60. h 32. Ps. lvi 7. Prov xi. 21. xvi. 5. Ezra xvii. 15. 18 Matt. xxiii. 33. 1 Thes. v. 3. Heb. ii 3 xii. 25.

4 Or [i] despisest thou [k] the riches of his goodness, [l] and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that [m] the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

5 But [n] after thy hardness and impenitent heart, [o] treasurest up unto thyself wrath, against [p] the day of wrath, and [q] revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

6 Who [r] will render to every man according to his deeds;

i vi. 1. 15. Ps. x. 11. Ec. viii. 11. Jer vii. 10. Ez. xii. 22, 23. Matt xxiv. 48, 49. 2 Pet iii. 3.
k ix. 23 x. 12. xi. 33. Ps lxxxvi. 5. civ 24. Eph. i. 7 18. ii. 4. 7. iii. 8, 16. Phil. iv. 19 Col. i. 27. ii. 2 1 Tim. vi. 17. Tit. iii 6.
l iii. 25. ix. 22. Ex. xxxiv 6. Num. xiv. 18. Ps lxxviii. 38. lxxxvi. 15. Is. lxiii. 7—10. 1 Tim i. 16. 1 Pet. iii 20.
m Job xxxiii. 27—30. Ps. cxxx 3, 4. Is. xxx 18. Jer. iii 12, 13. 22, 23. Ez. xvi 63. Hos. iii. 5. Luke xv. 17—19. xix. 5—8. 2 Pet. iii. 9. 15. Rev. iii. 20 ——n xi 25. *Marg.* Ex. viii. 15 xiv. 17. Deut. ii. 30 Josh. xi. 20. 1 Sam. vi. 6 2 Chr. xxx 8. xxxvi. 13. Ps xcv. 8. Prov. xxix. 1. Is xlviii. 4. Ez. iii. 7. Dan. v 20 Zech vii. 11, 12. Heb iii 13. 15. iv. 7.——o ix. 22. Deut xxxii 34. 35 Am iii 10 Jam. v. 3 ——p Job xxi. 30 Prov xi. 4 2 Pet. ii. 9. iii. 7. Rev vi 17.——q 2, 3. i 18.——r xiv. 12. Job xxxiv 11. Ps. lxii 12. Prov. xxiv 12. Is. iii. 10, 11 Jer. xvii. 10. xxxii. 19. Ez. xviii. 30. Matt xvi. 27. xxv. 34, &c. 1 Cor. iv. 5. 2 Cor. v. 10. Gal. vi. 7, 8. Rev. ii 23. xx. 12. xxii. 12.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1—3. The apostle is commonly supposed to have here passed from the state of the Gentiles, to animadvert on that of the Jews; though some think that the heathen philosophers and moralists were also included. He, however, seems to have expressed himself in this general manner, that he might include all those, of every nation, sentiment, or description, "who hold the "truth in unrighteousness," or object to "the righteous-"ness of God by faith," (*Note*, 1. 17, 18;) and who are ready to judge and condemn others, though guilty themselves. Of these, the Jews were the most notorious; for they disdained and abhorred the Gentiles as profane, abominable, and utterly undeserving of God's favour; whilst they thought themselves a holy people, and entitled to all their privileges by an unalienable right. Yet, while they would join with the apostle in showing the inexcusable wickedness of the Gentiles, they were equally or more inexcusable; for they proudly arrogated, and severely exercised, the office of a judge, and yet the sentence, which they denounced on others actually condemned themselves; as they might be proved guilty of the very same crimes, or such as were of similar malignity. They copied the vices of the very heathen whom they condemned; like them they acted in opposition to the light afforded them, and they were unthankful, rebellious, and unrighteous, even as the Gentiles were. But they, and all other persons in the world, whosoever they were, who acted in this manner, must be reminded, that assuredly the judgment of God, according to the truth of his word, and the real character and conduct of men, would be then executed on them: and, instead of meeting with favour on account of their external advantages, or their condemnation of sin in others, their punishment would be enhanced by these very circumstances. For could any man suppose, that when he had committed the same crimes, which he judged deserving of punishment in others, he should himself escape the judgment of God? This intimated to the unbelieving Jews, that personal and national judgments awaited them, unless they fled for refuge to the grace of the Gospel. 'These Gentiles were by the Jews reputed as 'unclean, great sinners, and so incapable of salvation. 'To these Jews the apostle in this chapter directs his 'discourse, proving here, that they who lived under the 'law wanted this justification as much as others, being 'also great sinners; and in the following chapters, that 'neither they nor the Gentiles could obtain this justification 'by the law.' (*Whitby.*)—The outward wickedness of the Jews was enormous at this time, as Josephus has shown: in this sense they copied the worst crimes, (idolatry excepted,) of the despised Gentiles; and their superior advantages rendered their conduct still more atrocious. (*Note*, *Matt.* vii. 1—5.)

V. 4—6. The Gentiles were without excuse, because they were unthankful to their Creator and Benefactor. Did then the Jews despise the exuberant riches of his kindness to them, whom he had so peculiarly favoured? (*Marg. Ref.*) He had distinguished them, both by temporal and spiritual benefits, in every age: though they had always proved rebellious, yet he had still exercised immense goodness, forbearance, and long-suffering, towards them; and he had at length sent his Son among them. Even after they had crucified him, he had in infinite mercy ordered the first proposals of his Gospel to be made to them; and he still besought them by his apostles and ministers to accept of this salvation! And did they despise all this as a small favour? Did it embolden them to continue in sin? Or did the Lord's special mercy and patience towards them lead them to conclude that he would always favour them, however ungratefully they rebelled against him? If they thus despised his rich goodness, they strangely mistook its tendency, as it ought to lead and induce them to repentance. The more kindness God exercises, the greater aggravation is there in the sinner's disobedience, and the more should he be humbled for his base ingratitude. The patience of God gives the sinner time and opportunity for repentance, and the discoveries of his mercy furnish him with motives and encouragements; and were it not for man's total depravity, the proposals of the Gospel must prevail with every one to repent of his departure from God, and to return to his worship and service. (*Notes*, *Luke* xv. 11—24.) If the Jews presumed upon the special kindness of God to them, and continued to reject the Gospel, and to disobey his commandments, according to the obduracy of their impenitent hearts, their condemnation would be proportionably severe; and the

7 To them who, [s] by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for [t] glory, and honour, [u] and immortality; [x] eternal life;

8 But unto them that are [y] contentious, [z] and do not obey the truth, but [a] obey unrighteousness, [b] indignation and wrath;

9 Tribulation [c] and anguish upon every soul [d] of man that doeth [e] evil, of the Jew first, and also of the * Gentile:

10 But [f] glory, honour, [g] and peace, [h] to every man that worketh good; to the Jew first, and also to the † Gentile:

[s] viii. 24, 25. Job xvii 9 Ps xxvii. 14. xxxvii. 3 34. Lam. iii. 25, 26. Matt xxiv. 12, 13 Luke viii. 15 John vi. 66—69 1 Cor. xv. 58 Gal. vi. 9. 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. Heb. vi 12. 15 x. 35, 36. Jam. v. 7, 8. Rev. ii. 10 11.

[t] viii. 18 ix. 23. John v 44. 2 Cor. iv. 16—18. Col. i. 27 1 Pet i. 7, 8. iv. 13, 14

[u] 1 Cor. xv. 53, 54. 2 Tim. i. 10.

[x] vi 23. 1 John ii. 25.

[y] Prov. xiii. 10. 1 Cor. xi. 16. Tit. iii 9.

[z] i. 18. vi. 17. x 16. xv. 18. Job xxiv. 13 Is. l. 10. 2 Thes. i. 8 Heb. v 9. xi. 8. 1 Pet. iii 1. iv. 17 ——[a] John iii 18—21 2 Thes. ii 10—12. Heb. iii 12, 13 ——[b] ix. 22. Ps. xc. 11. Nah. i. 6. Heb. x 27. Rev xiv. 10. xvi. 19.——[c] Prov. i 27, 28. 2 Thes i. 6 [d] Ez xviii. 4 Matt. xvi. 26 ——[e] 10 i 16 Am. iii. 2. Matt xi 20—24. Luke xii 47, 48. 1 Pet iv. 17.——* Or, *Greek*.——[f] 7. ix. 21. 23 1 Sam ii. 30. Ps. cxii. 6—9 Prov. iii. 16, 17 iv. 7—9. viii. 18 Luke ix. 48. xii 37 John xii. 26. 1 Pet i. 7. v. 4.——[g] v. 1. viii. 6 xiv. 17. xv. 13 Num vi. 26. Job xxii. 21. Ps. xxix. 11 xxxvi. 37. Is. xxvi 12. xxxii 17. xlviii. 18. 22. lv. 12 lvii 19. Jer. xxxiii. 6. Matt. x. 13. Luke i. 79. ii 14. xix. 42. John xiv. 27 xvi. 33 Gal. v. 22. Phil. iv. 7 ——[h] Ps xv 2. Prov. xi. 18. Is. xxxii. 17. Acts x 35. Gal v. 6. Jam. ii. 22. iii. 13. ——† Or, *Greek*.

11 For [i] there is no respect of persons with God.

12 For as many [k] as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law; and as many [l] as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law;

13 (For [m] not the hearers of the law *are* just before God, [n] but the doers of the law shall be [o] justified.

14 For when the Gentiles, [p] which have not the law, [q] do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, [r] are a law unto themselves:

15 Which shew the work of the law [s] written in their hearts, ‡ their [t] con-

[i] Deut x. 17. xvi. 19. 2 Chr xix. 7. Job xxxiv. 19. Prov. xxiv. 23, 24 Matt xxii 16. Luke xx. 21 Acts x. 34. Gal. ii. 6. Eph vi 9 Col iii. 25. 1 Pet i. 17.

[k] 14, 15 i 18—21. 32 Ez xvi. 49, 50 Matt. xi. 22. 24. Luke x. 12—15. xii 47, 48. John xix. 11. Acts xvii. 30, 31.

[l] 16. iii. 19, 20 iv. 15. vii 7—9. viii. 3. Deut. xxvii. 26. 2 Cor. iii. 7—9. Gal. ii. 16—19. iii. 10. 22. Jam. ii 10, 11. Rev. xx 12—15.

[m] 25 Deut iv. 1. v. 1. vi. 3 xxx. 12—14 Ez. xx. 11. xxxiii 30—33. Matt. vii 21—27. Luke viii. 21. Jam. i. 22—25. 1 John ii 29. iii. 7. [n] iii. 20. 23 x 5. Luke x. 25—29 Gal. iii 11, 12.——[o] iii 30. iv. 2—5. Ps cxlii. 2 Luke xviii. 14 Acts xiii. 39 Gal. ii. 16. v 4. Jam ii. 21—25 ——[p] 12 iii. 1, 2 Deut iv 7. Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20. Acts xiv. 16. xvii 30. Eph. ii 12 ——[q] 27. i 19, 20. 1 Cor xi. 14. Phil. iv. 8.——[r] 12. i. 32 ——[s] i 18, 19 ——‡ Or, *the conscience witnessing with them.*——[t] ix. 1. John viii. 9. Acts xxiii. 1. xxiv. 16 2 Cor. i. 12. v. 11. 1 Tim. iv. 12 Tit. i 15.

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longer God had patience with them, the heavier vengeance would be executed on them. And all others, who thus employed the day of mercy in committing sin, hardening their hearts in impenitence because of the goodness of God, would find that they had accumulated wrath as *their* treasure, *for themselves*, which would be secured for them, till the day of wrath and final recompense. Then the Lord will manifest the perfect justice of his decisions before the whole world, to the full satisfaction of all his friends, and the confusion of his enemies: seeing he will then render to every individual according to his works; whether he was an obstinate unbeliever, or a humble penitent believer in the divine Redeemer. (*Notes, Matt.* xvi. 27. xxv. 31—46.)

V. 7—11. The apostle here gradually proceeds to a more explicit mention of the Jews, whom he especially intended to "conclude under sin." According to the whole tenour of Scripture, as well as the dictates of common sense, no sinner can *do well*, till he repents, submits to God, and seeks mercy from him. The Jew, who did this, must have respect to the types and promises of a Saviour, with which the law of Moses was replete, as well as to the preceptive part of it; and he alone, who did this, would perform any *spiritual* obedience. If then there was a man, any where, who embraced by faith the revelation of glory, honour, and immortality, through the promised Messiah, made in the word of God, and was earnestly bent upon obtaining this blessing; if he sought the inheritance, by repenting, "ceasing to do evil, learning to do well," attending on the ordinances of God, obeying his commandments, and thus waiting patiently for the completion of his promises; and if he proved his sincerity, by patience under trials, and perseverance in well doing amidst temptations and difficulties; this man would surely be made partaker of eternal life, according to the constitution of the most gracious covenant of God in Jesus Christ, whatever measure of explicit knowledge he might be favoured with, or under whatever dispensation he might live. But as all trangressors of the law are under condemnation, so those Jews, or others, who disputed against the Lord's method of saving sinners, and his sovereignty in dispensing unmerited favours, whose "eye was evil, "because the Lord was good, who were angry at the kindness shown to returning prodigals, and who refused to obey the truth, by embracing the Gospel, and submitting to the promised Saviour, choosing rather to obey unrighteousness, and continue the slaves of sin and Satan, all such persons would surely sink under the indignation and wrath of their offended Judge. For tribulation and anguish of spirit will be the inevitable portion of every soul of man, who "worketh evil;" and the Jew will have the first and most severe lot in this condemnation, though the unbelieving and disobedient Gentile will not be exempted. On the other hand, that glory, honour, and peace, which God confers on the objects of his special love, will certainly be given to "every man that *worketh good*," as a sinner who *obeyeth the truth*. The Jew indeed had the first proposal of this mercy, but no Gentile was excluded from the full participation of it, "for God is no respecter of "persons." (*Notes, Acts* x. 1—8. 34, 35.) It is evident, that the apostle did not mean that either Jew or Gentile could be saved by his own works, without faith in Christ, but that, "by obeying the truth," and by that patient continuance in well-doing which springs from faith, the Gentile would obtain eternal life; and without this, the Jew must fall under wrath and condemnation. To suppose he meant that any man could be saved without believing the Gospel, would absurdly make him advance principles subversive of his own grand argument throughout the whole epistle, and of his doctrine in all his epistles. He had many reasons for first proposing his doctrine in this covert and practical manner. He thus avoided giving immediate disgust to the Jewish reader, previous to the more explicit declaration of the Gospel, for which he was here only making way; he intimated, that they, who really best understood and obeyed the law, would most readily embrace the Gospel, and that the Jews did not refuse to "obey the truth," from love to the holiness of the law, but from "obedience to unrighteous"ness." (*Marg. Ref.*)

science also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts * the mean while [u] accusing or else excusing one another;)

16 In the day when [x] God shall judge the secrets of men [y] by Jesus Christ [z] according to my Gospel.

17 ¶ Behold, [a] thou art called a Jew, and [b] restest in the law, and [c] makest thy boast of God,

18 And [d] knowest *his* will, and † approvest the things that are more excellent, [e] being instructed out of the law;

19 And [f] art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, [g] a light of them which are in darkness;

20 An instructor of the foolish, [h] a teacher of babes, which hast [i] the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law.

21 Thou [k] therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, [l] dost thou steal?

22 Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, [m] dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, [n] dost thou commit sacrilege?

23 Thou [o] that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?

* Or, *between themselves.*

[u] Gen. iii 8—11. xx 5 xlii 21, 22. 1 Kings ii 44 Job xxvii. 6 Ec vii. 22. 1 John iii. 19—21.

[x] 5 iii 6. xiv. 10—12. Gen. xviii. 25. Ps. ix. 7. 8 l. 6. xcvi. 13. xcviii. 9. Ec. iii 9. xi. 9. xii. 14. Matt. xvi. 27 xxv. 31, &c. 1 Cor. iv 5 2 Cor. v. 10. Heb ix. 27. 1 Pet. iv. 5. 2 Pet. ii 9 Rev. xx. 11—15.

[y] John v 23—29 Acts x. 42. xvii 31. 2 Tim. iv. 1 8.

[z] xvi, 25. 1 Tim. i. 11. 2 Tim ii. 8.——[a] 28, 29. ix. 4—7. Ps. cxxxv. 4. Is. xlviii. 1, 2. Matt. iii 9. viii. 11, 12. John viii. 33. 2 Cor. xi. 22. Gal. ii 15 Eph. ii 11. Phil. iii. 3—7. Rev. ii. 9. iii. 1. 9 ——[b] 23. ix. 4. 32 Jer. vii. 4—10 Zeph. iii. 11. Luke x 28. John v. 45 vii. 19 ix 28, 29.——[c] Is. xlv. 25. xlviii. 2. Mic. iii 11. John viii. 41.——[d] Deut. iv. 8. Neh. ix. 13, 14 Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20 Luke xii. 47. John xiii 17 1 Cor. viii. 1. 2. Jam. iv. 17.——† Or, *triest the things that differ.* Phil. i. 10 *Marg.* 1 Thes v. 21. Heb. v. 14.

[e] xv. 4. Ps xix. 8. cxix. 98—100. 104, 105 130. Prov vi. 23 2 Tim iii. 15—17.

[f] Prov. xxvi. 12. Is. v. 21. lvi. 10. Matt. vi. 23 xv. 14. xxiii. 16—26. Mark x. 15. John vii. 46—49 ix, 34. 40, 41. 1 Cor. iii. 18. iv. 10 viii. 1, 2. Rev. iii. 17, 18.

[g] Is. xlix. 6. 9, 10. Matt. iv. 16. v. 14. Luke i. 79. Acts xxvi. 18. Phil ii. 15.

[h] Matt. xi. 25. 1 Cor. iii. 1. Heb. v. 13. 1 Pet ii 2

[i] vi. 17. 2 Tim. i. 13. iii. 5. Tit. i. 16.

[k] Ps. l. 16—21. Matt. xxiii. 3, &c. Luke iv. 23. xi. 46. xii. 47. xix. 22. 1 Cor. ix. 27. Gal. vi. 13. Tit. ii. 1—7.

[l] Is lvi. 11. Ez. xxii. 12, 13. 27. Am. viii 4—6. Mic. iii. 11. Matt. xxi. 13. xxiii. 14.

[m] Jer. v. 7. vii. 9, 10. ix. 2. Ez xxii. 11. Matt. xii. 39. xvi. 4 Jam. iv. 4.

[n] Mal. i. 8. 14. iii 8. Mark xi. 17.——[o] 17. iii 2. ix. 4. Jer. viii. 8, 9. Matt. xix. 17—20. Luke x. 26—29. xviii. 11. John v. 45. ix. 28, 29. Jam. i. 22, &c. iv. 16, 17.

V. 12--16. No Gentiles could be found, who had perfectly acted according to the light of their own dispensation; so that none could be justified by their own obedience; yet, as they had sinned without law, or without the advantages of a written authenticated rule for their conduct, they would "perish without law;" and be consigned to a milder punishment than the wicked Jews would be: who having sinned *in* or *under*, the law, would be judged by it, and fall under the awful curses denounced in it against the disobedient. The Jews indeed were apt to imagine that the reading and hearing of the law, together with some attention to the legal ceremonies, would justify them before God, and atone for all their violations of the moral precepts; just as many professed Christians expect to be justified by some general attendance on outward ordinances, and a decency of moral conduct, though they are habitually guilty of many known sins. But the apostle declared, that the mere hearers of the law could not be justified by it: if they would seek acceptance in this way, they must be *doers* of the law; and if any thus *perfectly* performed its righteous demands, he might then indeed claim the reward of righteousness, but not otherwise. (*Note, Luke* x. 25—29.) For even the Gentiles, who had not the written law, when from natural principles they performed any of those duties which the law required, were in this respect a law to themselves; and by obeying thus far their own rule came nearer to righteousness, than the Jews who broke their rule. The fragments of the law, which had originally been written in the heart, exerting their influence by a natural sense of right and wrong, appeared in their works. Their consciences also testified to the propriety of this part of their conduct, and produced an inward satisfaction: whilst, at the same time, their secret thoughts, or their reasonings one with another, served to accuse or excuse themselves, or each other, according to the conformity of their conduct to their own sentiments of right and wrong, or the contrary. If then the very Gentiles could not but condemn themselves, when they acted against their own consciences; how absurd and presumptuous must it be for a Jew to expect justification before God, by a law which he was continually transgressing! This seems to be the apostle's argument; but it by no means implied that the Gentiles performed any *spiritual* obedience; or that any of them could be justified on account of their partial and scanty compliance with the dictates of their own understanding. As rational creatures in a fallen state, yet not desperate, they sometimes acted more morally than at other times; and accordingly their consciences approved, or disapproved, of their conduct: and the same is the case at this day with infidels and mere nominal Christians. This is an earnest and evidence of a future judgment, when God will judge the secret actions, thoughts, motives and affections of all men, by his Son Jesus Christ; which was one principal doctrine of the Gospel that Paul preached both to Jews and Gentiles. As the apostle plainly says, that "as many as have sinned "without law shall perish without law," it is rather surprising that any expositors should have thought the case of Job and his friends, and Cornelius, to be referred to. Probably, Job lived and died before the law; and he had traditional revelation, as the patriarchs had; and Cornelius, though not observant of the ceremonial law, had the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and by the grace of God had studied them to good purpose. The apostle's object evidently was, to convince his readers that neither revelation, nor the light of reason and conscience, could save those who failed of obeying them; that all had in many things failed, however in particular instances some had been obedient; and that all must perish, though with different degrees of aggravation, unless saved by the Gospel. 'Hell 'hath no power over sinners of Israel, because Abraham 'and Isaac descended thither to fetch them thence. No 'circumcised person goes to hell, God having promised to 'deliver them from it, for the merit of circumcision.— 'All Israelites have their portion in the world to come; 'and that notwithstanding their sins; yea, though they 'were condemned here for their wickedness.' (*Extracts from Jewish writers in Whitby.*) It would not be easy to produce any passage from modern writers, in which proud self-righteousness and rank antinomianism are so completely combined; but a considerable portion of the same leaven may often be discerned both among papists and protestants.

24 For [p] the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, [q] as it is written.

25 For [r] circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: [s] but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.

26 Therefore, [t] if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?

27 And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, [u] if it fulfil the law, [x] judge thee, who [y] by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?

28 For [z] he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; [a] neither *is that* circumcision which is outward in the flesh:

29 But he *is* a Jew [b] which is one inwardly: [c] and circumcision *is that* of the heart, [d] in the Spirit, *and* not in the letter; [e] whose praise *is* not of men, but of God.

p Is. lii. 5. Lam. ii. 15, 16. Ez. xxxvi 20—23. Matt xviii. 7. 1 Tim v. 14. vi. 1. Tit. ii. 5. 8.
q 2 Sam. xii. 14.
r 28, 29. iii 1, 2. iv. 11, 12 Deut. xxx. 6. Jer. iv. 4. Gal. v. 3—6. vi 15. Eph. ii. 12.
s 23. Jer. ix. 25, 26 Acts vii. 51.
t Is lvi. 6, 7. Matt. viii. 11, 12. xv. 28. Acts x. 2—4 34. xi. 3, &c. 1 Cor. vii. 18, 19. Phil. iii. 3. Col. ii. 11.
u viii. 4. xiii. 10. Matt. iii. 15. v. 17—20. Acts xiii. 22. Gal v. 14.
x Ez. xvi 48—52. Matt xii. 41, 42 Heb. xi. 7.
y 20 29. vii. 6—8. 2 Cor. iii. 6
z ix. 6—8. Ps lxxiii. 1. Is i. 9—15. xlviii 1, 2 Hos i. 6—9 Matt iii. 9. John i. 47 viii 37—39. Gal. vi. 15. Rev ii. 9.
a Jer. ix. 26 Rom iv 10—12. 1 Pet. iii. 21
b 1 Sam. xvi. 7. 1 Chr. xxix. 17. Ps. xlv. 13. Jer. iv. 14. Matt. xxiii. 25—28. Luke xi. 39, 40. xvii 21. John iv. 23, 24. 1 Pet. iii. 4.——c Deut. x. 16. xxx. 6. Jer. iv 4. Col ii. 11, 12——d 27. vii. 6. xiv. 17. John iii. 5—8. Phil. iii. 3.——e John v. 44. xii. 43. 1 Cor. iv. 5. 2 Cor. x. 18. 1 Thes. ii. 4. 1 Pet. iii. 4.

V. 17—24. In order to understand this chapter, it should be remembered, that the apostle is combating the prejudices and presumption of the Jews; to whom he expected the epistle would be shown, and whose influence he knew would be employed to unsettle the minds of the believers at Rome. The Gentiles are therefore only introduced by way of illustrating the argument, and not in order to show in what way they should be justified. The apostle here immediately addressed himself to any Jew, that was willing to take up the argument. He supposed him to rest his hope of acceptance on the law, and to boast of God, as standing in a covenant-relation to him. He thought himself well acquainted with the will of God; and, as an expert casuist, he could "distinguish things "which differed," and give the preference to such as were more excellent, having from his youth been instructed, or *catechised*, from the law. In this confidence he thought himself qualified to guide and enlighten the blind and benighted pagans, and to instruct such as became proselytes, whom he deemed foolish, and mere babes, compared with himself, as he had got a complete knowledge of the whole law, having an epitome, or abstract, of it in his memory; yet this was but a mere *form*, *semblance*, and *outside appearance of* the spiritual knowledge and true meaning of the law, which, rightly understood, would lead him to trust in the promised and typified Redeemer, and not in the law itself. In this *form* he rested, without even obeying the precepts of the law according to his own exposition; as if his work had been to instruct others, and not himself! Or as if he meant to insult the great Lawgiver, by studying his commandments in order to break them! Did such a man explain and enforce the law against theft, and then practice dishonesty? Did he commit adultery, after quoting and explaining the seventh commandment? Did he sacrilegiously embezzle the sacred treasures, or defraud the Lord of his dues, through an idolatrous love of money, after having expressed his abhorrence of idolatry? It was notorious, that many of the chief priests, scribes, and elders, who appeared most zealous for the law, were guilty of these and similar crimes: and the rest, who rejected the Gospel and made their boast in the law, would be found to dishonour God, by evidently breaking it. For in fact the name of God was blasphemed among the Gentiles, and they were set against true religion by the wickedness of the Jews, as it was written in their Scriptures, and was a charge brought frequently by the prophets against their fathers. (*Marg. Ref.*) The terms here used concerning the Gentiles aptly expose the arrogant self-wisdom of the Jews. 'This 'passage may be illustrated from the Jewish writings; for 'they say that he, who teacheth others what he doeth 'not himself, is like a blind man who hath a candle in 'his hand to give light to others, whilst he himself doth 'walk in darkness.' *Blasphemed*, &c. (24.) 'Of this 'Josephus doth frequently accuse them, saying, 'What 'wickedness do you conceal or hide, which is not known 'to your enemies? You triumph in your wickedness, 'strive daily who shall be most vile, making a show of 'your wickedness, as if it were virtue.' 'And thinkest 'thou this, O man, that thou shalt escape the judgment 'of God, who punisheth the Gentiles, when thou art as 'guilty as they of acting against thy own conscience, 'and doing that for which thy own mouth condemns thee; 'and which doth also cause them to "blaspheme that "holy name by which thou art called?" (*Whitby.*)

V. 25—29. Though chargeable with the grossest violations of the moral law, the Jews confided in circumcision, as if it had secured their covenant-relation to God. But the apostle showed them, that, though circumcision, and the means of grace connected with it, would be very advantageous to the conscientious Jew, who copied the example of Abraham; especially in bringing him acquainted with the oracles of God, and preparing him to receive the Gospel; yet they could not profit the presumptuous transgressor, who rested in them, and neglected that "righteousness by faith," of which it was the seal. If a man cleaved to the law, he must perfectly obey it, in order to justification; circumcision made "him a debtor to ful"fil the whole law;" and his transgressions cast him out of the covenant of God, as if he had never been circumcised. On the other hand, if an uncircumcised Gentile should regulate his conduct according to the righteousness prescribed by the law, ought he not to be deemed one of God's true worshippers, notwithstanding his uncircumcision? Such Gentiles, as were taught by divine grace thus to love and serve God, would, like Cornelius, embrace the Gospel when proposed to them: and thus in uncircumcision, the *external* natural state of man, they, being made partakers of an *inward* spiritual change, would judge and condemn the Jew, who, having the letter of the law and the outward circumcision, had no inward disposition to obedience. For, in fact, he was not to be counted a Jew, or one of God's chosen people, who was only so in his outward profession or descent; nor was

CHAP. III.

The advantages of the Jews, 1, 2. *The unbelief of some does not render the faith of God of no effect,* 3, 4; *who is just in punishing sin, though he takes occasion from it to display his own glory,* 5—8. *Passages from the Old Testament adduced to prove that the Jews are all under sin,* 9—19; *so that no flesh is justified by the deeds of the law,* 20. *The righteousness of God without the law, is upon all that believe, without any difference,* 21, 22. *As all have sinned, whether Jews or Gentiles, all must be justified by the free grace of God, through faith in Christ, and the redemption of his blood, that God may be glorified, and boasting excluded,* 23—30. *This establishes the law,* 31.

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that the true circumcision, the true seal of the covenant, which was outward in the flesh. But he was the real Jew, or child of Abraham, who had the inward disposition of his believing and obedient progenitor; and that was the true circumcision, which was wrought in the heart by regeneration, according to the spiritual meaning, and not the mere letter, of the law; producing an inward conformity of the judgment and affections to its holy precepts. This indeed men could not see, or would not approve and commend, but rather despise and hate; but God would approve, commend, and value it. So that, though the outward seal was, for the time, necessary; yet the inward grace, or the thing signified, was always far more excellent; and the former was now superseded by the Christian dispensation, and could be of no use to those who tenaciously adhered to it.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

The censures which men pass on others, who perhaps justly deserve them, may yet render themselves more inexcusable, while they do the same things. The branches of man's disobedience are numerous, yet they all spring from the same root; nor can any one judge another to be deserving of divine wrath, without, at the same time, condemning himself; for though he may not have committed the same crimes, yet he hath been guilty of the same apostacy from God, and rebellion against him, and is equally chargeable with sinning against his better judgment in various ways. Frequently, superior advantages render a man's apparently lighter offences more aggravated in the sight of God, than the more scandalous sins of his worse educated neighbour, against which he vehemently declaims. We are indeed very incompetent judges of the comparative heinousness of men's conduct; but it is certain that the judgment of God is, and will be, "according to truth," against all who break his law and reject his grace. To him we ought to leave others, and to be chiefly concerned to judge ourselves, and to seek mercy according to his blessed Gospel. If our fellow-sinners cannot stand before us in judgment, how shall we, who are guilty of the same things, escape the righteous condemnation of a heart-searching God? In deciding against them, we pass sentence upon ourselves; and "if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." The excuses which numbers make for their misconduct may very commonly be turned against them; nor would men in general be so daringly wicked, were it not for their experience of God's long-suffering, and their general notions of his mercy. But they, who thus "despise the riches of his goodness and forbearance," and grow more bold in rebellion by that kindness, which should "lead them to repentance," will find at last that they have "been sinning against their own souls;" and that their hard and impenitent hearts have led them "to treasure up wrath, against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." Indeed, this is the daily employment of every unbeliever; and he adds to his store with a rapidity of increase, proportioned to his crimes and abused advantages. He himself will certainly reap the harvest that he now sows, and the longer he is spared in the long-suffering of God, the more terrible will be the day of righteous retribution, in case he proceed in this destructive course.

V. 7—16.

The questions concerning justification, election, or efficacious grace, should be kept distinct from those that relate to the character and conduct of the righteous and the wicked. If a man cannot be satisfied with an earthly portion, but aspires after glory, honour, and immortality, and if he seeks this inheritance by faith in the promises of God, and patient continuance in well doing, he doubtless is in the way to eternal life. But if men quarrel with the precepts and sanction of God's holy law, with his decrees and dispensations, and with his truths and ordinances, or with any thing rather than their sins, if they "do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness," and live in allowed violations of the divine law, no doubt they are in the broad road to destruction, and if they proceed in that path, indignation and wrath will overtake them, to whatever Church or sect they may belong. Indeed, tribulation and anguish must come upon all impenitent evil-doers; but glory, honour, and peace, will be awarded to all, "who are taught by the grace of God to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in the present world," "for there is no respect of persons with God." Whatever may now be objected to this, from some doctrines ill understood, or from appearances in providence which are misconstrued, it will be made manifest to all the world, in the day when "God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ," as he hath assured us he will, in his holy Gospel. Then they who, not having the written word, have sinned against the dictates of their own consciences, will be proved guilty, and condemned by that rule. They that have sinned against the law of God which was made known to them, a ii. 25—29. Gen. xxv. 32. Ec vi. 8 11. Is. i. 11—15. Mal. iii. 14. 1 Cor. xv. 32. Heb. xiii. 9.

WHAT [a] advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit *is there* of circumcision?

2 [b] Much every way: chiefly, [c] because that unto them were [d] committed [e] the oracles of God.

b 3 xi. 1, 2. 15—23. 28, 29.
c ii. 18. ix. 4. Deut iv 7, 8. Neh. ix. 13, 14. Ps lxxviii. 4—7. cxlvii. 19, 20. Is viii. 20. Ez. xx. 11, 12. Luke xvi. 29—31. John v. 39. 2 Tim. iii 15—17. 2 Pet. i. 19—21. Rev. xix. 10 ——d 1 Cor. ix. 17. 2 Cor. v. 19. Gal. ii. 7. 1 Tim. vi. 20.
e Acts vii. 38. Heb. v. 12. 1 Pet. iv. 11.

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will be judged and punished according to that law: and the professors of the Gospel will be shown to have been either true believers or hypocrites, according to the effects produced by the truth on their tempers and conduct. For if the very Gentiles were a law unto themselves and each other, when they acted contrary to "the work of the "law, written in their hearts," how absurd must it be for any man to expect acceptance with God by a written law which he hears and disobeys; or by the Gospel, when he does not *practically* believe it! No man can indeed be justified by his own obedience, because all men deviate from their rule: yet the nearer they act in conformity to their principles and convictions, the lighter will be their condemnation; and the greater the distance there is between their *known rule* and their *allowed practice*, the more aggravated must be their guilt, when the secrets of men shall be brought to light, and all these infinitely important concerns shall be determined by the omniscient and righteous Judge.

V. 17—29.

The Jew, who rested in the law, and made his boast of God, and was proud of his superior knowledge and attainments, will, at the last day, be more deeply condemned, than the blind Gentile whom he so greatly disdained; and numbers, who call themselves Christians, and have learned many right notions of the Gospel as a system, and so deem themselves the children of God, though they obey not the truth, will perish more dreadfully than their more ignorant neighbours, who have sinned against less light and inferior advantages. Indeed, the sermons which many preach, and the books which they publish, will testify against them; and it behooves ministers, especially, to be very jealous over themselves in this respect; for it is far more congenial to the self-flattery of our hearts to instruct others, than to bear the yoke ourselves. Many teach their hearers the truth and will of God, who never teach themselves: they lay down good rules, but never practise them; and the discoveries of the great day will show, that some, who appeared to be the guides of the blind, and the light of such as sat in darkness, were indeed dishonest men, adulterers, or sacrilegious mercenaries. Numbers despise their ignorant neighbours for resting in a dead form of godliness, and yet they themselves trust in a form of knowledge which is equally lifeless and inefficacious; and many glory in the Gospel, whose unholy lives dishonour God, and cause his name and truth to be blasphemed among his enemies. In short, no forms, ordinances, or notions, can profit us, without regenerating grace, which will always eventually lead us to seek an interest in "the righteousness of God by faith." The distinction between truth and error, and between divine ordinances and human inventions, is indeed immutable and most important; yet a man may be alive to God, who maintains some errors, cleaves to some superstitions, and forms improper conclusions in respect to some divine institutions: while another, who is very clear in his notions, and exact in externals, may be dead in sin, uncircumcised in heart; and, through the letter and the outward form, he may deceive himself, and be a scandal to the Gospel. For he is no more a Christian now, than he was a Jew of old, who is one outwardly; "neither is that bap-"tism, which is outward in the flesh:" but he is the real Christian, who is inwardly a true believer, with an obedient faith; and the true baptism is that of the heart, by "the washing of regeneration and the renewal of the Holy "Ghost," producing a spiritual mind, and a cordial subjection to the truth, in its holy import and tendency. A Christian of this character will seldom be much approved by zealots of any party, any more than by the world at large; but he will be accepted of God, and at length welcomed with "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter "thou into the joy of thy Lord."

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1, 2. If disobedient Jews could not be accepted, and if pious Gentiles might be saved, it might be inquired what advantage the Jew had above the Gentile, or what good circumcision did him? The whole Old Testament implied, that God had peculiarly favoured the posterity of Abraham; and the law, together with the seal of circumcision, had been supposed to convey some special privileges: and did the apostle mean to level all these distinctions, and to prove that the Jews had no advantage from their relation to Abraham and their national covenant? To this he replied, that they had doubtless much benefit from them in every way. The law and circumcision could not indeed save them in their sins, or by their own efficacy; yet they gave them great advantages for obtaining salvation. The stated ministry of the priests, the occasional messages of the prophets, the ordinances, of the temple, the worship at their synagogues, their education in an acquaintance with the true God, and at a distance from idolatry, the many good examples that were set before them, and the dispensations of providence respecting them, were *means of grace*, which probably were made effectual to the conversion of more persons in that one nation, than were converted in all the rest of the world. But especially the oracles of God, the sacred writings of Moses and the prophets, were committed to them; and the written word of God had been continued among them through their several generations, to direct them how to seek acceptance with God, and to walk before him. In them the Messiah was promised, and the various particulars of his character, miracles, redemption, and kingdom, were typified and predicted: among the Jews he made his appearance in the appointed time; in him the Scriptures were fulfilled before their eyes, and numbers of them had believed in and found salvation by him. *Oracles*, &c. (*Marg. Ref.*) Some think the Scriptures are thus called, with reference to the oracular answers, which the

3 For what [f] if some did not believe? [g] shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?

4 [h] God forbid: yea, [i] let God be true, [k] but every man a liar; as it is written, [l] That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

5 But [m] if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, [n] what shall we say? [o] *Is* God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? ([p] I speak as a man,)

6 [q] God forbid: [r] for then how shall God judge the world?

7 For [s] if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; [t] why yet am I also judged as a sinner?

8 And not *rather*, (as [u] we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) [x] Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just.

f ix. 6 x 16. xi. 1—7 Heb. iv. 2. g x. 29 Num xxiii. 19. 1 Sam. xv. 29. Is. liv. 9, 10. lv. 11. lxv. 15, 16 Jer. xxxiii 24—26. Matt. xxiv. 35. 2 Tim ii 13. Heb vi. 13—18. h 6. 31 vi. 2. 15. vii. 7. 13. ix 14. xi 1 11. Luke xx 16. 1 Cor. vi. 15 Gal. ii 17. iii. 21 vi. 14 i Deut. xxxii. 4. Job xl. 8. Ps c 5. cxix 160. cxxxviii 2 Mic vii. 20. John iii. 33 2 Cor. i 18. Tit. i. 2. Heb. vi 18. 1 John v. 10 20 Rev. iii 7 ——k Ps lxii. 9 cxvi. 11.——l Job xxxvi 3 Ps li. 4 Matt. xi. 19. ——m 7 25. 26 v 8 20 21.——n iv. 1. vi. 1. vii 7 ix. 13. 14.———o ii 5. iii. 19. ix. 18—20 xii. 19. Deut xxxii. 39—43. Ps. lviii 10, 11 xciv. 1, 2. Nah i 2. 6—8. 2 Thes i. 6—9. Rev xv. 3, 4. xvi. 5—7. xviii. 20.

p vi. 19. 1 Cor. ix. 8. Gal iii. 15. q *See on*, 4. r Gen. xviii. 25. Job viii. 3. xxxiv. 17—19. Ps ix. 8 xi. 5—7. l. 6. xcvi 13. xcviii. 9. Acts xvii. 31. s Gen. xxxvii 8, 9. 20. xliv. 14. l. 18—20 Ex. iii. 19. xiv 5. 30. 1 Kings xiii. 17, 18 26—32. 2 Kings viii. 10—15 Matt. xxvi. 34 69—75 t ix 19. 20. Is x. 6, 7 Acts ii 23—25. xiii. 27—29 u Matt. v. 11. 1 Pet iii. 16, 17 ———x v 20. vi. 1. 15. vii. 7. Jude 4.

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high-priest delivered, when he consulted the Lord by the breast plate of judgment, (*Note, Ex.* xxviii. 30;) implying that they were as immediately and entirely the word of God, as the oracles thus delivered had been. 'This is 'so remarkable and important a testimony to the divine 'inspiration of the Old Testament in general, that it can 'leave no doubt concerning the full persuasion of St. Paul 'on this head.' (*Doddridge.*) *Committed*, &c. Or, "they were intrusted with the oracles of God." (*Gal.* ii. 7. 1 *Thes.* ii. 4. *Gr.*) 'The oracles of God were 'deposited with the Jews, not to keep to themselves, but 'to publish them to all the world besides. But because 'they did not this work sufficiently, it is Christ's ap'pointment to the apostles, that they should disperse 'themselves unto all nations, and so bring them to the 'knowledge of his will.' (*Hammond.*) It behooves Christians in every age to remember, that the Scriptures are thus intrusted to them also, in order that they may communicate the blessing to all around them, and to all who shall come after them, by every proper means, to the utmost of their ability. (*Note,* ix. 4, 5.)

V. 3, 4. What if some, if the greater part of the nation, from carnal and ambitious motives, had obstinately, and wickedly rejected this divine Saviour? Did their unbelief render *the faithfulness* of God ineffectual? He had fulfilled his promises to their fathers; and if they would not receive and submit to the Seed of Abraham and of David, could they pretend that God had failed of his word, because he would not continue his special favour to them, notwithstanding their disobedience and atrocious wickedness? *God forbid* that such a thought should be allowed in any one's mind! "Let it not be," (for that is the literal translation of the words;) let every man rather humbly acknowledge the veracity and faithfulness of God, though it should require him to suppose that all men were liars, hypocrites, or deceivers, as every one in some degree must be allowed to be. (*Ps.* lxii. 9.) Let the blame of the rejection of the Messiah rest on *them* and *their* hypocrisy, and not be supposed to reflect upon the faithfulness of God: even as David, when he had committed grievous offences, acknowledged that God was by his crimes justified in his declarations concerning the desperate wickedness of the human heart; and that this humiliating event was permitted, to display more clearly his truth, justice, and mercy; and that God might be fully vindicated from all those presumptuous charges, by which men venture to arraign the testimonies of his word, the threatenings of his law, or the dispensations of his providence. (*Note, Ps.* li. 4.)

V. 5—8. To the foregoing conclusion of the apostle the cavilling Jews might reply, that if their unrighteousness gave occasion to the more illustrious manifestation of the divine justice, or rather of showing more evidently the necessity and excellency of "the righteousness of God" for man's justification, would he not be unrighteous, if he took vengeance on them, for those actions which eventually displayed his glory? This objection the apostle adduced *as a man*, an unbeliever, a carnal unregenerate man, who purposed to justify himself, and find fault with the sentence of God against him. In fact, the wickedness and obstinate unbelief of the Jews fully proved the need which all men have of "the righteousness of God by "faith," and also his justice, in punishing them for their sins, and in the sentence of the law against all transgressors; and thus in every sense it "commended his "righteousness." Yet the thought, that it would be unjust in him to take vengeance on them, ought to be rejected with abhorrence: for if he could not *justly* punish those crimes, which made way for the display of his glory, how could he judge the world? In that case he never could inflict vengeance on any criminal; for he will take occasion from the rebellion of all fallen creatures to display his own glorious perfections to the greater advantage: though the intention of transgressors, and the natural tendency of their conduct, are diametrically contrary to both. So that this proves still more fully the malignity of sin as committed against a Being of such infinite wisdom, power and perfection, that he educes good to his creation, and glory to himself, from those very actions, that naturally tend to the destruction of his creatures, and the dishonour of his name. This objection might for substance be stated in another way: suppose the truth of God, in his predictions, promises, or denunciations, should be more abundantly manifested to his glory by any man's telling a wilful lie; why should the liar be punished for giving occasion to the display of God's glory? Yet every one must see, that the lie thus told was directly *contrary* to the truth of God, and merely the *occasion* of displaying it; and the event could not deduct from the malignity of the lie. If it were in any case admitted, that a violation of the law of God ceased to be criminal, because his glory was eventually promoted by it, then the slanderous report

9 ¶ [y] What then? [z] are we better *than they?* No, in no wise: for we have before * proved both Jews and Gentiles, [a] that they are all under sin;

10 [b] As it is written, [c] There is [d] none righteous, no, not one:

11 There is [e] none that understandeth, [f] there is none that seeketh after God.

12 They [g] are all gone out of the way, they are together [h] become unprofitable; [i] there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

13 Their [k] throat *is* an open sepulchre; [l] with their tongues they have used deceit; [m] the poison of asps *is* under their lips:

14 Whose [n] mouth is full of cursing and bitterness;

15 Their [o] feet *are* swift to shed blood:

16 Destruction and misery *are* in their ways:

17 And [p] the way of peace have they not known:

18 There is [q] no fear of God before their eyes.

[y] 5 vi. 15 xi 7 1 Cor x 19. xiv. 15. Phil. i. 18.
[z] 22. 23. Is lxv. 5 Luke vii. 39. xviii 9—14. 1 Cor iv 7.
* Gr. *charged.* i. 28, &c. ii. 1, &c.
[a] Gal iii. 10 22
[b] 4. xi. 8 xv. 3, 4 Is viii. 20 1 Pet. i. 16.
[c] Ps. xiv. 1—3. liii 1—3
[d] 23 Job xiv. 4 xv. 14. xxv. 4 Mark x. 18. Eph ii. 1—3. 1 John i. 8—10.
[e] i 22. 28. Ps xiv. 2. 4. liii. 2 4 xciv. 8. Prov. i 7 22 29, 30. Is xxvii 11. Jer. iv 22. Hos. iv. 6. Matt. xiii. 13, 14 19 Tit iii. 3. 1 John v 20
[f] viii 7. Jon xxi. 15, 16 Is ix. 13 xxxi. 1. lv. 6 lxv. 1. Hos. vii 10.
[g] Ex xxxii. 8. Ps xiv 3 Ec. vii. 29. Is liii. 6. lix. 8. Jer ii 13. Eph ii. 3 1 Pet. ii. 25
[h] Gen i 31 vi. 6, 7 Matt xxv 30. Philem. 11
[i] Ps liii 1 Ec vii. 20 Is. lxiv. 6. Eph. ii. 8—10. Phil. ii. 12, 13. Tit ii. 13, 14. Jam. i. 16, 17.
[k] Ps. v. 9. Jer. v. 16 Matt. xxiii. 27, 28.
[l] 4 Ps. v. 9. xii. 3. 4 xxxvi. 3. lii. 2 lvii. 4 Is. lix. 3 Jer. ix. 3. 5 Ez. xiii. 7. Matt xii 34. 35. Jam iii 5—8.
[m] Deut xxx 33. Job xx 14—16. Ps cxl. 3.
[n] Ps x. 7. lix. 12. cix 17, 18. Jam. iii 10
[o] Prov. i. 16 vi. 18. Is. lix 7, 8.
[p] v. 1. Is. lvii. 21. lix 8. Matt vii. 14 Luke i. 79
[q] Gen. xx 11. Ps. xxxvi. 1. Prov. viii 13. xvi. 6. xxiii. 17 Luke xxiii. 40. Rev. xix. 5.

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spread concerning the Christians by those, who, mistaking the doctrine of free grace, affirmed that they said, "Let "us do evil, that good might come," would indeed be established as a general principle, and as the rule of man's conduct, instead of the law of God. But in fact, the condemnation of such, as thus abused the Gospel, or who committed sin that good might come from it, was most righteous. The blame of their sins belonged only to themselves, the honour of the good educed from them to God alone. Different opinions indeed are advanced concerning the persons, of whom the apostle said, "whose "damnation is just." Some interpret it of the Jews, and others who reject the Gospel: but this proposition, though true, seems not to arise out of the context, or belong to the argument. Others apply the awful sentence to the calumniators, who charged the Christians with saying, "Let us do evil, that good may come:" but the clause, "as we be slanderously reported," &c. is I think properly included in a parenthesis, that it may not interrupt the main argument. The apostle evidently intended to show that God may justly, and will certainly, punish those sins, which yet eventually prove the occasion of more conspicuously manifesting his glory. Now, if this were not the case, it might be said, "Let us do evil, that good "may come:" but, on the contrary, whatever blasphemers may assert, this proposition is so contrary to the real nature and genius of the Gospel, that every intelligent minister or Christian will be forward to allow the condemnation of those, who thus encourage themselves in sin, under a vain imagination that good will follow, to be undeniably righteous. (*Note*, vi. 1, 2.) The floodgates of licentiousness are opened by such a view of the Gospel. Even apparently religious persons often tolerate, nay, zealously promote, practices, which cannot be denied to be deviations from truth and integrity, and vindicate them, because good is thus done. In this way the standard of *integrity* is, (dreadful to say,) fixed lower in some particulars among numbers, who are zealous for the Gospel, than among respectable worldly people, who are, by observing these things, exceedingly prejudiced against evangelical truth. Nay, the same false principle is brought forward, in another and more fashionable form, when *utility*, and not the *law of God*, is made the standard of morality, and a main principle of reasonings on moral obligation. It is on these accounts, most obvious to suppose, that the apostle meant, though in a cursory manner, to bear a most decisive testimony against a maxim, which, carried to its consequences, is destructive of all practical religion; and against those, who, professing Christianity, countenanced and acted according to it.

V. 9—18. The apostle here resumes his subject from the second verse. The advantages of the Jews were many; but were they *better* than the Gentiles, or more able to justify themselves before God by their own works, or without "the righteousness of faith?" This could by no means be admitted: for it had been *proved*, or rather *charged upon* both Jews and Gentiles, "that they were all "under sin." They had all, in manifold instances, violated the known rule of their conduct, and were under condemnation as transgressors, unless delivered by the mercy and grace of God. To this indictment, on which the Gentiles had been convicted, the Jews pleaded *not guilty:* and therefore, to the evidence already brought against them from notorious facts, and the nature of the case, the apostle next produced several passages of the scriptures against them. In these it was not intimated that circumcision, the written law, their ceremonial observances, or their national covenant, would excuse their crimes, or entitle them to the favour of God, as the unbelieving Jews vainly imagined. And if these charges were true of the greater part of the nation in former times, could it be supposed that the Jews, when the apostle wrote, were better *by nature*, or merely *as circumcised*, or as *having the law*, than their fore-fathers had been? It was expressly written of them, that in themselves, and by their works, there was not one of them righteous: that there were none of them who understood the character, truth, and will of God, or their own interest and duty; or who sought to know him, and find happiness in his favour: they had all forsaken the way of holy obedience, they were all become unprofitable, in respect of the great end of their creation and their peculiar advantages; so that none of them employed themselves in glorifying God, and doing good to man. Their throats, by their insatiable luxury, or rather by their filthy communications, resembled the sepulchre when opened to receive the dead, or when emitting its nauseous and infectious vapours. Deceit and dissimulation seemed the

19 Now we know that [r] what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; [s] that every mouth may be stopped, [t] and all the world may become * guilty before God.

r 2. ii. 12—18. John x. 35. xv. 25. 1 Cor. ix. 20, 21. Gal. iii. 23. iv 5 21. v. 18.

s 4 i 20. ii 1. 1 Sam ii 9. Job v. 16 ix 2,3 Ps. cvii 42 Ez xvi. 63. Matt. xxii. 12, 13. John viii. 9. 1 Cor. i. 29.

t 9. 23 ii. 1. Gal. iii. 10. 22.

* Or, *subject to the judgment of God.*

20 Therefore [u] by the deeds of the law, there shall [x] no flesh be justified [y] in his sight: [z] for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

u 28 ii. 13. iv. 13 § ix. 32. Acts xiii. 39. Gal. ii. 16. 19. iii. 10—13. v. 4. Tit. iii. 5—7. Jam. ii. 9, 10. Jam. ii. 20—26.

x Job xxv. 4. Ps. cxxx. 3. cxliii 2.

y Job xv. 15. xxv. 5.

z vii. 7—9. Gal ii. 19.

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main use of their tongues; their slanders, seductions, and flatteries, were under their lips as the fatal poison of asps; instead of pious and kind words, their mouths were filled with imprecations, perjuries, and bitter revilings; they were eager to shed blood, in revenge, ambition or avarice; they knew not the ways in which godly men walk, at peace with God and their neighbours; and therefore they went on in those paths, which lead to misery and ruin, both to themselves and each other. In short, they had cast the fear of God behind their backs, and habitually disregarded his authority, threatenings, precepts, and judgments. (*Notes*, &c. *Ps.* v. 9. x. 7. xiv. 1—3. xxxvi. 1. liii. 1—3. cxl. 3. *Is.* lix. 7, 8.) A few exceptions, by *the mercy and grace of God*, there doubtless were to these general rules; and the apostle intended very soon to show how these persons were made to differ: but these quotations, were full to the point to show the Jews, that they were as unable to justify themselves before God, as the Gentiles. For if, in the days of David and Isaiah, this had been the general character of the people, the acceptance and holiness of any among them must arise from some other cause than their national covenant and external privileges.

V. 19, 20. It was well known, that the things which were written in the law, or in the Old Testament, were immediately addressed to those who were under the law, and had the benefit of divine revelation; or to the nation of Israel, and not to the Gentiles. This was intended to silence the cavils and objections of the Jews, who brake the law in which they rested; and indeed in this manner “every mouth must be stopped,” and all the world must *become*, or *be proved*, guilty before God; as it was not supposed that the Gentiles were more free from guilt than the peculiar people of God. So that in fact every sinner's plea must eventually be silenced, either now as an humble penitent before the mercy-seat, or as a condemned criminal before the judgment-seat of God. From these premises it evidently followed, that no one of the whole fallen race of men could be justified before God by his own obedience to the law; for by the law sin is discovered, exposed, and condemned. The straightness of that perfect rule makes known the crookedness of men's dispositions and actions; and it must therefore convict the transgressor as guilty, instead of pronouncing him not guilty, or a righteous person. Every attentive reader must observe, that the apostle used the word *law* in a variety of meanings; which is rather to be considered as the defect of human language, than the result of any ambiguity in his style. But the context will generally show how the word is to be understood: and common sense, united with a teachable spirit, will usually determine this better than critical learning; which is too often employed rather to perplex what is plain, than to clear up what is obscure. The nature of the argument requires us to suppose that the apostle means the sacred Scriptures in general, when he saith “what soever the law saith:” for the quotations were not from the law of Moses, and it is evident the whole Old Testament was thus spoken of. (*Marg. Ref.*) When he spoke of the Jews as “under the law,” he evidently meant the whole legal dispensation, by which they were distinguished from the Gentiles. But when he says, “by the law is the knowledge of sin,” he must be understood of the moral law especially, the extent, spirituality, and excellency of which shows what things are sinful, and how evil sin is: whereas the ceremonial law rather gave the knowledge of salvation, by prefiguring the shedding of that atoning blood, and the communication of that sanctifying grace, by which sin is taken away. Indeed this subject seems capable of an easy solution; if there be any law, which a man hath perfectly kept, he may doubtless be justified by it; and surely no man can be justified by a law which condemns him for breaking it! But there is no law of God which any man hath kept; therefore none, by the deeds of which a man can be justified. The Gentile broke the law of his reason and conscience; the Jew broke the moral law; and even the attempt to justify himself by observing the ceremonial law, contradicted the very nature and intent of it. And as to that *new law*, which requires sincere obedience as the condition of justification, they who dream of it should show us when it was promulgated, where it may be found, what it requires, whom it can condemn, or whom it can justify. When this is done, it may be worth while to show, that it makes void both the law and the Gospel; that it introduces a new, vague, and unintelligible rule of duty, which every man may interpret according to his own inclinations, that it introduces boasting, and unites together pharisaical pride and antinomian licentiousness. Yet this vague, unscriptural notion, which is replete with such complicated absurdities, so well suits men's natural indolence of thought in matters of religion; serves so conveniently to reconcile a quiet conscience with a worldly life; and so coincides with their enmity against both the holiness of the law, and the humiliating doctrine of the Gospel; that perhaps it deceives more souls, than all other false systems of religion put together, in this superficial dissipated age. ‘By law, ‘which is the publishing of the rule with a penalty, ‘we are not delivered from the power of sin, nor can ‘it help men to righteousness; but by law we come ‘experimentally to know sin, in the power and force ‘of it, since we find it prevail upon us, notwithstanding ‘the punishment of death is annexed to it.’ (*Locke.*) (*Notes*, vii.) ‘The knowledge of sin being chiefly by ‘the moral law, (vii. 7,) shows that the apostle excludes ‘that, as well as the ceremonial law, from justifica‘tion; and evident it is, that the *antithesis* runs all ‘along, not between *moral* and *ceremonial* works, but ‘between *works in general and faith*.’ (*Whitby.*) *No flesh*, means none born of fallen Adam's race. (1—5. 9. *John* iii. 6.)

21 ¶ But now [a] the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, [b] being witnessed by the law [c] and the prophets;

22 Even the righteousness of God [d] *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ [e] unto all, [f] and upon all, them that believe; [g] for there is no difference:

23 For [h] all have sinned, and [i] come short [k] of the glory of God:

24 Being [l] justified freely by his grace, [m] through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus;

25 Whom God hath * set forth [n] *to be* a propitiation [o] through faith in his blood, [p] to declare his righteousness for † the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

26 To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness; [q] that he might be just, [r] and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

a i 17. v 19. 21. x. 3, 4. Gen. xv. 6. Is. xlv. 24 Jer xxiii. 5, 6 xxxiii 16 Dan. ix. 24. 1 Cor. i. 30. 2 Cor. v. 21. 2 Pet. i. b Deut xviii. 15—19 Luke xxiv. 44. John i. 45. iii. 14, 15 v. 46, 47 Acts xxvi. 22. Heb. x. 1—14. c i 2. Acts iii 21—25. x. 43. xxviii. 23. 1 Pet. i. 10, 11. d iv. 3—13 20—22. v. 1. viii. 1 Phil. iii 9.——e iv. 6 11. 22 Gal. ii. 16 iii. 6. Jam. ii 23 ——f Is. lxi. 10. Matt. xxii. 11, 12 Luke xv. 22 Gal iii 7—9 ——g ii 1. x 12. Acts xv 9. 1 Cor. iv. 7. Gal iii. 28. Col. iii. 11.——h 9—19 i 28—32. ii. 1, &c. Gal. iii 22 1 John i 8—10.——i Heb iv. 1.——k v. 2. 1 Thes. ii. 12. 2 Thes. ii. 14. 1 Pet. iv. 13. v. 1. 10 l v. 16—19. 1 Cor vi. 11. Eph. ii. 7—10. Tit. iii. 5—7.

m v. 9 Is liii. 11 Matt. xx. 28 Eph. i. 6 7. Col i. 14. 1 Tim. ii 6 Tit. ii 14. Heb ix. 12—14 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. Rev. v. 9 vii 14. * Or, *fore-ordained* Acts ii. 23. iii. 18. iv. 28. xv. 18 1 Pet i. 18—20 Rev. xiii 8 n Ex xxv. 17—22 Lev. xvi. 15. Heb. ix 5. *Gr.* 1 John ii 2. iv. 10. o v 1. 9 11. Is. liii 11. John vi. 47 53—58. Col. i. 20—23. Heb x. 19, 20.——p 26. Ps. xxii 31. xl. 10. l. 6. xcvii. 6. cxix. 142 1 John i 10 ——† Or, *passing over* 23. 24. iv 1—8. Heb ix 15—22 25, 26. x 4 xi 7. 13 17. 39, 40. Rev. v. 9. xiii. 8. xx. 15.——q Deut. xxxii. 4. Ps lxxxv 10, 11 Is xlii 21. xlv 21. Zeph. iii 5. 15. Zech. ix. 9. Rev. xv. 3.——r 30. iv. 5. viii. 33 Gal. iii 8—14.

V. 21—26. The apostle having "concluded all men under sin," proceeds more explicitly to exhibit "the righteousness of God by faith," (*Note*, i. 17,) which had been manifestly declared by the preaching of the Gospel. This was the righteousness, which God had *appointed, provided* and *introduced*, in the Person of his Son. It was "without the law;" having no dependence on a man's personal obedience to the law, being entirely a distinct thing: no past obedience being supposed as having any influence in the sinner's justification; and his subsequent obedience being intended for other purposes. It had nothing to do with the ceremonial law, (except as it was the substance of some of those shadows,) for the Jew, who accepted of this righteousness, would place no dependence on these externals; and the Gentile was not required to be circumcised, or to keep that law. Yet it had been witnessed by the law and the prophets; the ceremonies typified it; the very strictness of the moral law and its awful curses, being compared with the promises of mercy to sinners, implied it; the promises and predictions of the Messiah bore witness to it; the faith and hope of ancient believers testified it; and the whole Old Testament, rightly understood, taught men to expect and depend on it. This "righteousness of God by faith in Jesus" is accounted or imputed to all believers without exception; yea, it is put on them as a robe; for the words "*unto*, and *upon*, all," seem to admit of no other construction. Nor is there *in this respect* any difference between one man and another, however otherwise distinguished; as all have sinned and come short of rendering to God the glory due unto him, all have lost his glorious image, and all have forfeited that glorious felicity, which was annexed to perfect obedience as its reward, (*Marg. Ref.*) and therefore, whatever the nature or degree of their crimes may have been, or whatever their nation, rank, or capacities be; there is no difference in the way in which they must be justified before God. Every believer is not only pardoned, but honourably acquitted, as one against whom no charge can be supported, and *accounted righteous*, or entitled to the reward of righteousness. This is by the free gift of God, which he bestows on him, merely from his own infinite grace and mercy; not only without his deserving it, but directly contrary to his deserts, which the apparent tautology, "freely by his grace," seems to denote. This grace is honourably exercised, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, or through the ransom and meritorious obedience unto death of the incarnate Son of God, as our Surety; for God the Father had before set him forth, or fore-ordained him, (*Marg.*) to be a propitiatory sacrifice for sin; he had appointed him to be Mediator, as "God manifest in the flesh," for that purpose: he had openly laid on him the iniquities of us all, and exacted the punishment from him; and he had exhibited this transaction to the world by the Gospel, that, through him, sinners of every nation might approach God on a propitiatory or mercy seat, and find acceptance by faith in the Saviour's atoning blood. This method was taken, in order to declare and manifest the perfect righteousness of God; even in the very act of pardoning the innumerable sins of believers, remitting the punishment due to them, and accounting them righteous, who in themselves were not so. And, whatever the Jews might suppose, this was as necessary in respect of their believing progenitors, as any other sinners. For in *remitting* the punishment justly merited by the sins committed in times past, through his *forbearance*, God had neither respect to the repentance nor subsequent good works of his servants, which could not satisfy his justice; nor did he ultimately respect the legal sacrifices, which could not take away sin; but he had respect to the engagements of the divine Surety of the new covenant, and the atonement which he was at length to make. In the fulness of time therefore this sacrifice was offered, this righteousness introduced, and this method of justification published to mankind, that God might be clearly known to be a just and righteous Governor, and yet the Justifier of every sinner who believed in Jesus; which he could not otherwise have been, (*Prov.* xvii. 15:) for justice in a governor requires, that every man be dealt with according to his real character and actions, except some expedient can be adopted for maintaining the authority of the law and the credit of the administration, and to indemnify individuals, while mercy is exercised to those who deserve punishment. So that ancient believers had been admitted to the reward of righteousness, as well as exempted from the punishment deserved by their sins, for the sake of that promised Redeemer, who had engaged to pay their ransom, and bring in an infinitely valuable and everlasting righteousness for their justification: nor would it otherwise have consisted with the infinite justice of God to deal with them in a manner so very different from their real deservings. This is evidently the apostle's argument; and the concluding verses might be thus translated.

27 [s] Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? [t] of works? Nay; [u] but by the law of faith.

28 Therefore [x] we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law.

29 *Is he* [y] the God of the Jews only? *Is he* not also of the Gentiles? yes, of the Gentiles also:

30 Seeing *it is* [z] one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

31 Do we then [a] make void the law through faith? [b] God forbid: yea, [c] we establish the law.

s 19. ii. 17. 23. iv. 2. [Ez. xvi. 62, 63. xxxvi 31. 32 Zeph. iii 11. Luke xviii. 9—14. 1 Cor. i. 29.—31. iv 7. Eph. ii 8—10. t ix. 11 32 x. 5 xi 6. Gal ii. 16. u vii 21. 23. 25. viii. 2 Mark xvi 16. John iii. 36. Gal iii. 22. 1 John v 11, 12.——x 20—22 26. iv. 5. v 1. John iii. 14—18. v 24. vi. 40. Acts xiii 38, 39 1 Cor. vi. 11. Gal ii. 16. iii. 8 11—14. 24. Phil. iii. 9. Tit iii 7——y i. 15. ix. 24—26. Gen. xvii. 7. 8. Is. xix 23—25. liv. 5 Jer. xvi. 29. xxxi. 33. Hos. i. 10. Zech. ii. 11. viii. 20—23. Mal. i. 11. Matt xxii. 32. Gal iii. 14 25—29. Eph. iii. 6. Col. iii. 11.

z 28. iv. 11, 12. x 12. 13. Gal. iii 14—16. v. 6 vi. 15. Phil. iii. 3. Col. ii. 10, 11. a iv. 14. Ps. cxix. 126 Jer. viii. 8, 9. Matt. v. 17. xv. 6. Gal. ii. 21. iii. 17—19. b *See on.* 4. c vii. 7—14. 22. 25. viii. 4 x. 4. 7, 8. xiii. 8—10. Ps xl. 8. Is. xlii. 21 Jer. xxxi. 33. 34. Matt iii 15. v. 20. 1 Cor. ix. 21. Gal. ii. 19. v. 18—23. Heb. x. 16. Jam ii. 8—12.

" Whom God hath before appointed to be a propitiation, " through faith in his blood, for a demonstration of his " justice, on account of the passing by of sins that had " been committed in former times, through the forbear- " ance of God;" *I say*, " for a demonstration of his " justice in this present time, in order that he might be " just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."— ' Dr. Hammond saith the word δικαιος is here to be ren- ' dered *clement and merciful*, and that it is commonly ' taken in that notion, and seldom in that of *vindictive* ' *justice;* but in opposition to this I assert, that the word ' δικαιος is used about eighty times in the New Testament, ' and not once in that sense of clemency and mercy. He ' himself produces but one place, (*Matt.* i. 19.) ' Where, ' says Dr. Lightfoot, men torment the word δικαιος to ' make it signify clement and merciful, when it bears ' clearly the ordinary sense. Joseph, being a just man, ' would not cohabit with an adulteress; and yet, not being ' willing to make her a public example, and no necessity ' —lying upon him so to do, he was minded to put her ' away privily.' (*Note, Matt.* i. 18, 19.) ' That he ' might appear to be just, in requiring this satisfaction ' for our sins.' (*Whitby.*) Too strong a protest cannot be entered against this practice of giving a new meaning to words in Scripture, in order to get rid of a conclusion, against which the writer happens to be prejudiced: it is absolutely adding to, or taking from, or changing, the word of God; and it perplexes the minds of ordinary readers to such a degree, that the plainest passages seem to them obscure, and of doubtful meaning.

V. 27, 28. The Jews were disposed to boast, as if they had been superior, in nature and excellency, to the Gentiles, instead of considering themselves more highly and undeservedly favoured of God. But the apostle here inquires what reason they had for glorying, seeing even their pious ancestors had been justified by grace, through faith, for the sake of the promised Redeemer and his propitiation. And he determines, that all boasting of any of the human race is excluded, and can have no admission in consistency with truth and justice. It was indeed the express promise of God, that boasting should be shut out, as the rival of his glory; but by what law, or rule of judgment, could this be effected? Was it to be done by " the law of works," or the method of justifying men on the condition of their obedience? This would never answer the end, if it were practicable for any to be thus justified; nay, this would introduce and sanction the boasting of one over another in the things of God. Boasting must therefore be excluded " by the law of faith," not by *a remedial law*, as some call it, which in fact is a law of works, and introduces boasting; but by justifying believers merely by the grace of God, through the merits of Christ, without any respect to their works, by faith alone of his own gift and operation, and not considered *in this matter* as an act of obedience or good work, but as forming the relation between Christ and the sinner, which renders it proper that the believer should be pardoned and justified for the sake of the righteousness and ransom of the Saviour; and that the unbeliever who is not thus united or related to him, should remain under condemnation. This is " the " law of faith," or the rule of the divine conduct towards believers and unbelievers; and as God hath determined that " no flesh shall glory in his presence," so, on this ground also, the apostle concluded that a man is justified by faith, and not by the deeds of the law. *By what law?* ' Or, " by what doctrine," as the Hebrew word *Torah* is ' sometimes used for the doctrine which any one pre- ' scribes.' (*Beza.*) It is indeed used with great latitude, even much greater than the word νομος (*law*,) is in the New Testament. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 29—31. Could any suppose that the great Creator of all men was the God of the Jews only? Was he not also the God of the Gentiles? Being the Proprietor, Governor, and Benefactor of the whole earth, when all men had alike apostatized from him, it was meet, that in revealing a way for their recovery and reconciliation, he should suit it to the general case of all the nations, though special reasons might require a temporary restriction of it; for his object would be to receive worship from, and become the Portion of, his creatures, in different parts of the world. And in fact he was the God of the Gentiles, as well as of the Jews, nor were even external privileges to be restricted to the Jews any longer, seeing the same One, living, and true God, who had formerly, and did at that time, justify those of the circumcision who believed, by their faith, and not by their legal services, and left unbelievers under condemnation, was ready, with equal regard, to justify uncircumcised Gentiles, through faith in Christ, when they were brought thus to receive him. And if any should object that this doctrine of faith made void the law, as if it had been given in vain, the apostle absolutely denied the charge, and would by no means have such a thought be allowed of; on the contrary, this fully established the law in all its honour and authority; neither abrogating it, nor disgracing it, nor altering it to a nearer level with man's present state and abilities. The doctrine of faith indeed honoured and fulfilled the ceremonial law; and showed the proper intent of it, and of the legal dispensation; but, then, this was only in order to their final abrogation. But the moral law was fully established in

CHAP. IV.

Justification by faith proved by the example of Abraham, and the words of David, 1—8. *Abraham was justified before circumcision, (which was the seal of the righteousness of faith,) that he might be the father of all believers, whether circumcised or not,* 9—12. *The promise was not given to him through the law, else it had been void; but, being of faith by grace, it is sure to all his spiritual seed in every age and nation,* 13—17. *The nature and strength of that faith, by which he was justified,* 18—22. *This was recorded, not for his sake, but to show that all who believe in Christ, as crucified and risen, are justified in like manner,* 23—25.

honour and authority, both in respect of its precepts and sanction, by the perfect obedience and satisfactory sufferings of the incarnate Son of God; so that its immutable obligation, excellency, and equity, could not have been so fully shown, either by the perfect obedience of the whole human species, or by the destruction of every transgressor. Nor is any man justified by faith in Christ, who does not condemn himself, as justly deserving the wrath of God for breaking his holy law. Moreover, it is given into the hands of every believer, as his rule of grateful obedience, by which he is to regulate his temper and conduct, and examine all his actions, that in every thing in which he deviates from this perfect standard, he may repent and seek forgiveness through the blood of Christ. Yea, it is written in his heart by the regeneration of the Holy Spirit, and his love to it, and delight in obeying it, are the evidences of his justification. So that the doctrine of faith in every way magnifies and establishes the just, holy, good, and spiritual law of God, in all its honour and authority, whilst all other schemes of justification disgrace it, or weaken its authority and obligation, as if its precepts were unreasonably strict, and its penalty unrighteously severe. We therefore *know* what the apostle's doctrine was, because we *know* what doctrine is objected to, as making void the law; is abused by hypocrites, as loosening man's obligation to holy practice; and yet, when duly understood, establishes the law in the completest manner, and gives the most efficacious motives to all holy obedience.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

We ought always to distinguish between our *advantages* and our *deservings*, and between the means of becoming accepted and holy, and that grace which teaches to profit by those means. It is a favour of inestimable value, to have the oracles of God transmitted to us; yet numbers, who are thus distinguished, continue in unbelief, to their deeper condemnation. As the promises of God are only made to believers, so the unbelief of some, or many, professed Christians cannot make the faithfulness of God of none effect; for he will fulfil his promises to his people, and execute his threatened vengeance upon hypocrites and apostates. But while pride and enmity charge God foolishly, humble faith says, "God forbid, let God be true, "and every man a liar;" and the believer will give him credit for his truth and justice, even where his dispensations are enveloped in clouds and darkness. Indeed, he readily decides against every man's pretensions or opinions, when they reflect on the veracity, or militate against the word of God, as knowing that every man is fallible, deceitful, and unholy, but that the Lord can neither mistake, deceive, nor be deceived, and that he will be justified from every charge, and overcome in every contest or controversy, which his rebellious creatures may presume to enter into with him. The nature and desert of sin, and the motives and purposes of the sinner, remain precisely the same, when the only wise God has taken occasion from them to manifest more conspicuously his own glory; and his justice also will be glorified in punishing the transgressors. It hath often been slanderously reported of Christians, that they say, "Let us do evil, that good may "come," and "sin on, that grace may be glorified;" but, if true believers, we know that duty belongs to us, and events to God; and that we must not commit any sin, or speak one falsehood, on the hope, or even the assurance, that God would glorify himself by means of it. But if any habitually speak and act in another manner, without all doubt their damnation will be just; and they who love the truth of the Gospel should be extremely careful to avoid all appearances, which may give plausibility to such slanders against our holy religion.

V. 9—20.

Let us remember, that, great as our advantages are, we are no *better* than benighted heathens, if not worse, except grace have made us to differ: and then to grace the whole praise is due, for it is proved beyond contradiction, that we are all, in ourselves, under sin. The texts here adduced, too exactly describe the bulk of nominal Christians; their want of conformity to the law of God, and of understanding in the great concerns of religion, and their indisposition to seek after his favour and image, their unprofitableness, and working of mischief, instead of doing good. Their filthy, profane, dissembling, slanderous, boasting, and flattering words; their oaths, perjuries, curses, and bitter revilings; their revenge, murders, duels, fightings, and delight in war; their mischievous and destructive courses, and their ignorance of the way of peace and holiness, too evidently prove that there is no fear of God before their eyes. So that he, who examines the state of society, even in this *Christian* country, nay, he who inquires seriously into the disposition of his own heart, and the tenour of his past and present life, comparing them with the holy law of God, will easily perceive that his mouth, and every mouth, must be stopped, and all the world must be brought in guilty before God. How plain then is it to common sense, that "by "the works of the law shall no flesh be justified before God!"

WHAT [a] shall we then say that [b] Abraham, our father [c] as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?

2 For if Abraham [d] were justified by works, [e] he hath *whereof* to glory, [f] but not before God.

3 For [g] what saith the scripture? [h] Abraham believed God, and it was [i] counted unto him for righteousness.

a vi. 1. vii. 7. viii. 31.
b Is li. 2. Matt. iii 9 Luke iii. 8. xvi. 24, 25. 29 — 31. John viii. 33 37—41. 53 56 Acts xiii. 25. 2 Cor. xi. 22 —— c 16. Heb. xii. 9. —— d *See on*, iii. 20—28. Phil. i.i. 9.
e iii 27. xv. 17. Ex. viii 9. Jer. ix. 23 24. 1 Cor. ix. 16 2 Cor v. 12. xi 12. 30 xii. 1—9. Gal. vi. 13, 14 Eph ii. 9.
f Gen. xii. 12, 13 18. 20 xx 9—13. Josh. xxiv 2 1 Cor. i. 29. iv. 7. Gal. iii. 22. —— g ix. 17. x 11. xi. 2. Is. viii. 20 Mark xii 10 Jam iv. 5 2 Pet. i. 20, 21. —— h Gen. xv 6. Gal. iii 6—8. Jam. ii 23 —— i 5. 9. 11 22—25 Ps. cvi. 31.

V. 21—31.

* * *

Blessed be the Lord that he hath not left our fallen race shut up under sin, without hope or help. For "now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested;" and those alone are truly wise, who plead guilty at his mercy-seat, and seek "that righteousness of God by faith in Jesus Christ, which is unto, and upon, all that believe, without any difference." Proud men will be offended at this, and strive to establish some distinction between themselves and more scandalous or vulgar sinners; but they labour in vain, for "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," and the meanest and vilest of the human species, who comes in God's appointed and manifested way, shall be "justified freely by his grace, through the redemption of his Son;" while all, who persist in the attempt of justifying themselves, will assuredly perish under the wrath of God. This is a plan equally suited to glorify the justice, holiness, and mercy of our God; and to give encouragement to the broken-hearted, self-condemned criminal. Thus all they, who of old obtained a good report, found righteousness and salvation; thus the believer's felicity is secured, boasting is excluded, despair obviated, and the Lord shown to be the God of all nations, with equal regard, making no other distinction in his final decision, than that which subsists between believers and unbelievers. And whatever Pharisees, Sadducees, or infidels may object, whatever Antinomians, or Enthusiasts may pretend, the doctrine of faith alone establishes the law in its real honour, and lays the true foundation for all holy obedience.

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1—3. The apostle had before intimated, that the favours shown to pious persons of old, had a reference to the righteousness and redemption of Christ, (*Note*, iii. 21—26.) and he here proceeds to show this more especially in respect of Abraham, the most renowed progenitor of Israel. 'From this single example of Abraham, as deservedly selected from among all the fathers, the apostle intended to draw a conclusion, which would necessarily take in all believers. And that he might do this fairly, he intimates, at the very entrance of the question, that he did not propose Abraham merely as one of the number of believers, but as the father of the Church, that he might properly reason from the father to his children, the foundation of which he lays in the thirteenth verse. In whatever way Abraham, the father of believers was justified, in the same must all his children, (that is, all believers,) be justified; but Abraham was not justified and made the father of the faithful by any of his own works, either preceding or following his faith in Christ, as promised to him; but merely by faith in Christ, or the merit of Christ by faith imputed to him for righteousness. Therefore all his children become his children, and are justified, not by their works, either preceding or following their faith, but by faith alone in the same Christ, who was at length to come;—and thus they are at present justified, and shall be to the end of the world.' (*Beza.*) The original seems to connect the words, "according to the flesh," with the verb *found*. "What shall we say? that Abraham our father hath found according to the flesh?" and some would explain it exclusively of his circumcision, 'By virtue of his obedience to God's command, in circumcising his foreskin.' (1 *Cor.* x. 18. 2 *Cor.* v. 16. xi. 18. *Phil.* iii. 3, 4.) 'In this the Jews had the greatest confidence of being acceptable to God, declaring that no circumcised Jews go to hell.' (*Whitby.*) The apostle had doubtless respect to these arrogant prejudices of his countrymen in this argument; but if circumcision exclusively had been intended, he would hardly have allowed that Abraham might have had whereof to glory, if he had been justified by his obedience in that single instance, and not by his faith. It may therefore be supposed, that all those formal and proud works, however distinguished, by which men in every age seek justification before God, were intended by the words "according to the flesh." Did Abraham find righteousness or justification in this way? Surely no; why then should any man, who allows this, seek to be justified by such works? As all really good works are "the fruits of the Spirit," and none else are called *good works* in Scripture, and as it is especially the office of the Holy Spirit to convince men of sin, and to glorify Christ, it may be inferred that "the fruits of the Spirit" are never expressly and allowedly depended on for justification. Even the proposition, 'Good works are the fruits of faith, and follow after faith' in Christ, though a general truth, may admit of some exception, in such cases as that of Cornelius. (*Notes*, *Acts* x. 1—4.) 'This interrogation, being not formally answered, must be taken as an answer to itself; "What do we say? that Abraham found according to the flesh?" 'No, certainly he did not.' (*Hammond.*) No Jew would deny that Abraham was at least one of the most eminent servants of God mentioned in Scripture; if therefore any of them had been justified by works, it might be supposed that he belonged to that company. And if this had indeed been the case, he would have had some ground of glorying above others, which was contrary to the doctrine before taught, (iii. 27.) but in fact, however distinguished he had been in various respects, he had really nothing to boast of in the presence of God; being a sinner saved by grace, through faith, even as other men. For, not to argue from the years which had preceded his calling, the original source of his being made to differ from his former neighbours, or the failures in his subsequent obedience, and even in his faith, it was evident, from express Scripture, that "he believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness," (*Note*, *Gen.* xv.

4 Now [k] to him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

5 But [l] to him that worketh not, but [m] believeth on him that justifieth [n] the ungodly, [o] his faith is counted for righteousness.

6 Even as David also describeth [p] the blessedness of the man unto whom [q] God imputeth righteousness [r] without works,

7 *Saying*, [s] Blessed *are* they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

8 Blessed *is* the man [t] to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

9 *Cometh* [u] this blessedness then upon the circumcision *only*, or upon the uncircumcision also? [x] for we say that faith

k ix. 32. xi. 6, 35. Matt xx. 1–16.
l 24, 25. iii. 22. v. 1, 2. x. 3 9, 10. Acts xiii. 38, 39. Gal. ii. 16, 17. iii. 9–14. Phil. iii 9.
m 24. iii. 26–30. viii. 30 – 34 John v. 24. Gal iii. 8.
n i. 17, 18. v. 6–8. Josh xxiv. 2. Zech iii 3, 4. 1 Cor vi. 9–11. 1 Tim. i. 13–15. Tit. iii. 3–7.
o *See on*, 3 ——p 9. Deut xxxii. 29. Ps. i. 1–3. cxii. 1. cxlvi. 5, 6. Matt v. 3–12. Gal iii 8, 9. 14 iv 15. Eph. i. 3.——q 11. 24 i. 17 iii. 22. v 18, 19. Is. xlv. 24, 25. liv 17. Jer. xxiii. 6. xxxiii. 16. Dan. ix. 24. 1 Cor. i 30. 2 Cor. v. 21. Phil. iii. 9. 2 Pet. i. 1.
r iii. 20, 21 27. Eph. ii. 8–10. 2 Tim. i. 9
s Ps xxxii 1, 2. li. 8, 9. lxxxv. 2. cxxx. 3, 4. Is. xl. 1. 2. Jer. xxxiii 8, 9. Mic. vii 18–20 Matt. ix. 2 Luke vii. 47–50.
t Is liii. 10–12. 2 Cor. v. 19–21 Philem 18, 19. 1 Pet. ii. 24. iii. 18
u iii 29, 30. ix. 23, 24. x. 12, 13. xv. 8–19. Is. xlix. 6. Luke ii. 32. Gal. iii. 14. 26–28. Eph. ii. 11–13. iii 6. Col. iii. 11.——x *See on*, 3.

6.) The promise of God, his perfections as engaged to perform it, and the promised Seed through whom the blessings were bestowed, were the objects of his faith; this formed his relation to the Messiah, and interested him in the righteousness which he had engaged to perform, and therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness, as if he had personally satisfied divine justice, and perfectly answered all the demands of God's holy law. But if Abraham, though greatly distinguished among men, had no ground of glorying before God, much less had his posterity any ground of glorying in him as their father, while they refused to walk in his steps. Thus the apostle, by this single example, struck at the very root of their national vain confidence in Abraham, as their Father in circumcision, and in the law of Moses.

V. 4, 5. From the example of Abraham, the apostle observed, that to a man, (if there had been any such,) who had worked the full measure required by the law, the reward must be adjudged, as a debt due to him by the terms of that covenant, whereas it was obvious that it was adjudged to Abraham as a favour, seeing "faith was "imputed to him for righteousness;" and this was the general case of believers. For to the man who *worketh not*, but, conscious that he can advance no claim of this kind to the desired reward, comes as a sinner, to "believe "in him who justifieth the *ungodly*," his faith is counted to him for righteousness, not on account of its own excellency or worthiness as a good work, but as it refers the sovereign Judge for payment to the accepted righteousness and atonement of his Son: even as the receipt of a scrap of paper, intrinsically not worth a farthing, in the form of a draft upon a creditable banker, is entered in the merchant's book for a considerable sum of money, as if it had been paid in cash. This man, "who worketh not," will indeed diligently use appointed means of grace, repent, forsake sin with earnestness, conscientiously perform his several duties, and even become "zealous of good works;" yet he *worketh not at all* with an aim, or expectation, of obtaining righteousness in this way, which he knows to be absolutely impossible. But he comes to God, as "the "Justifier of the ungodly," that he may obtain the gift of righteousness by faith, of mere grace, through the merits of the divine Surety. He is not indeed absolutely *ungodly* at the time of his justification, for his humiliation, submission, and faith, are effects of regeneration, which is the source of all godliness in a fallen creature. Yet he is justified as *ungodly* in himself, in strict justice, and according to the law; he comes for the blessing as *ungodly;* God makes no account of any thing in justifying him, except his faith, as forming his relation to Christ, and the man has no respect to any thing else himself, in expecting that blessing. Nay, the justified believer, whatever his holiness or diligence may be, never works *for this purpose;* and he still comes before God as *ungodly in this respect*, still desiring and depending on "the righteousness of God "by faith in Christ," as his only hope, though his good works are evidences of the sincerity of his faith. Abraham, several years before, "by faith, obeyed" the call and command of God, and therefore could not be, strictly speaking, altogether *ungodly*, when it was said, "He be- "lieved God, and it was counted to him for righteousness;" so that the example of Abraham is alone a full and clear refutation of the construction by some put on this text, that men are altogether and in every sense ungodly and unregenerate, at the time when God justifies them; a sentiment of most dangerous tendency. "He that worketh," 'that is, who hath deserved any thing by his work, to 'him is opposed "he that worketh not;" 'that is, who 'brings no work, for which he claims a reward, but de- 'pends on the gratuitous promise of God. But this indeed 'is spoken, by concession, in a similitude taken from the 'commerce and contracts of men; for otherwise, "Who "hath first given? and it shall be rendered to him again." (*Beza.*)

V. 6–8. This quotation from the thirty-second Psalm, and the apostle's interpretation of it, come in as a parenthesis. David did not pronounce those men happy, who had never sinned, or who had done works to cover their sins, and to justify themselves; but he "described the "blessedness of the man, to whom God imputed right- "eousness without works," when he declared that man happy, whose sins were forgiven, &c. Not that forgiveness of sins is equivalent to justification; which implies also treating a man as righteous, and entitled to the reward of eternal life; for it is evident, in all human transactions, that the pardon of a criminal is a very distinct thing from giving him the title to a large estate. But God always imputes righteousness where he does not impute sin; for none are pardoned, except in virtue of their relation to Christ by faith; and if his atoning blood cover their sins, his righteousness also justifies their persons. As their Surety he suffered for their sins, which were imputed to him, and they are rewarded and made heirs of eternal life, because his righteousness is imputed to them. (*Note, Ps.* xxxii. 1, 2.) 'From hence the expression of 'blotting out iniquity, so frequently used in Scripture, may 'be understood: that is, the striking it out of the account.' (*Locke.*)

was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.

10 How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? [y] Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

11 And he received [z] the sign of circumcision, [a] a seal of the [b] righteousness of the faith which *he had yet* being uncircumcised; that he might be the [c] father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; [d] that righteousness might be imputed unto them also;

12 And the father of circumcision [e] to them, who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk [f] in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which *he had* being *yet* uncircumcised.

13 For [g] the promise that he should be the heir of the world, *was* not to Abraham, or to his seed, [h] through the

y Gen xv 6. xvii. 10. 1 Cor vii. 18, 19 Gal v. 6 vi 15.
z Gen xvii. 11. Ex. xii. 13. xxxi 13 17. Ez. xx 12. 20
a ii. 25 29 Deut xxx 6 2 Cor. i 22. Eph. i. 13 iv. 30 Rev ix. 4.
b 13 iii 22 ix 30 x 6. Gal v 5 Phil. iii 9. Heb xi. 7. 2 Pet i 1
c 2. 16—18. ix. 6 Matt viii 11 Luke xix 6 Gal. iii. 7 29 vi 16
d *See on*, 6.
e ix 6, 7 Matt iii. 9 Luke xvi 23 — 31 John viii. 39, 40. Gal iv. 22—31.
f Job xxiii. 11 Prov. ii. 20 Cant. i 8 2 Cor. xii 18. 1 Pet. ii. 21
g Gen. xii. 3. xv i 4, 5. 16. xxii. 17, 18. xxviii. 14. xlix 10. Ps ii 8. lxxii. 11.
h Gal. iii. 16—18. 29.

law, [i] but through the righteousness of faith.

14 For [k] if they which are of the law *be* heirs, faith is [l] made void, and the promise made of none effect.

15 Because [m] the law worketh wrath: for [n] where no law is, *there is* no transgression.

16 Therefore *it is* [o] of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end [p] the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, [q] but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is [r] the father of us all.

17 (As it is written, [s] I have made thee a father of many nations,) * before him, whom he believed, *even* God, [t] who quickeneth the dead, [u] and calleth those things which be not as though they were:

i *See on*, 11.
k 16 Gal ii. 21. iii 18—24. v. 4. Phil iii. 9. Heb. vii 19. 28.
l iii. 31. Num. xxx 12. 15. Ps. cxix. 126. Is. lv. 11 Jer. xix. 7.
m iii 19, 20. v. 20. 21. vii. 7—11. John xv 22. 1 Cor xv. 56. 2 Cor iii. 7—9. Gal. iii 10. 19. 1 John iii. 4.
n ii 12, 13 v 13.
o iii 24—26. v. 1. Gal iii. 7—12. 22. Eph. ii 5 8. Tit. iii 7.
p Heb. vi. 13—19. 2 Pet i 10
q *See on*. 11.
r x 8. Is li. 2.
s Gen. xvii. 5 16. 20 xxv. xxviii. 3. Heb xi 12.
* Or *like unto him*. iii 29
t 2 viii. 11 Matt. iii. 9 John v. 21. 25. vi. 63. 1 Cor. xv 45. Eph ii. 1 5. 1 Tim vi. 13
u viii 29, 30. Is. xlii 6. xliv. 7. xlix. 12 lv 12. Acts xv. 18. 1 Cor. i 28 Heb. xi. 7 1 Pet. ii. 10. 2 Pet. iii. 8.

V. 9—12. The Jews not only supposed that righteousness was by works, but that the privileges of God's people were inseparably connected with circumcision; the apostle therefore next inquired at what time Abraham's "faith "was reckoned to him for righteousness?" And the answer was undeniable, for it appeared from the scripture before cited, that he was justified *at least* fourteen years before his circumcision; the former having been some time before Ishmael's birth, the other when Ishmael was thirteen years of age. It was therefore manifest, that circumcision was not necessary in order to justification; and indeed Abraham had received from God this instituted ordinance, to be an outward sign of the grace given him, and a seal of the righteousness of faith imputed to him, when in uncircumcision. (*Note, Gen.* xvii.) This demonstrates that circumcision *sealed spiritual blessings to Abraham personally*, as the outward seal of the covenant of grace, and the emblem of sanctification, however it might otherwise be applied or understood. 'This seems an in'contestable proof, that circumcision was the seal of the 'covenant of grace, and not merely of temporal promises, 'and consequently obviates the most considerable objection 'that hath ever been urged against infant-baptism.' (*Doddridge.*) This seal was also a pledge to Abraham of the performance of the promise respecting his seed, especially his spiritual seed of true believers. He was therefore justified before he was circumcised, that he might be the father of all those true believers, who should have the circumcision of the heart, but not the circumcision of the flesh, that they might inherit all his blessing; and he was afterwards circumcised, that he might be the father of the circumcision also, not merely the natural progenitor of the nation of Israel, but the spiritual father of all true believers among them, who walked after the example of his obedient faith, which he had before circumcision, but many of them subsequent to it, that it might be *to them* the seal of the righteousness of faith, though not *to those* who had only the outward sign, and not the inward grace signified by it.

V. 13. *The world* cannot here mean the land of Canaan, which is never so called; but in Abraham and his Seed all the nations of the earth are blessed. Abraham was the root and specimen of all that multitude, all over the earth, to whom the most valuable blessings were to be confined, and who may be said to be heirs of the world. He was, as it were, the repository, in whom all these blessings were first laid up for their advantage; and also the progenitor of Christ "the King of kings and Lord of "lords," and "Heir of all things." This distinction was not given to Abraham through the law, (for that was not promulgated till long after,) nor to his posterity as under the law, for many of them would be excluded for their sins; but it was given to him through the righteousness of faith, and they were the true seed who partook of that same distinction.

V. 14—17. The apostle further argues, that if all they, and they only, who were under the legal dispensation, were heirs, *faith*, which the scripture assigned as the immediate cause of Abraham's justification, would be made ineffectual. 'It is made void to them who are not 'of the law, because then they cannot by it be made 'heirs; and it is also made void to them that are of the 'law, because they were heirs before, and may still be 'so without it.' (*Whitby.*) Indeed, whether the law of reason or tradition, (under which Abraham was,) or the law of Moses, be considered, instead of giving any man an interest in the promises of God, it must necessarily expose him to condemnation. For "the law worketh "wrath," by showing that every transgressor is exposed to the righteous indignation of God; and the clearer, the more copious, and express, the law is, the more numerous, evident, and aggravated, must his transgressions appear.

18 Who [x] against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, [y] So shall thy seed be.

19 And, [z] being not weak in faith, [a] he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb:

20 He [b] staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; [c] but was strong in faith, giving glory to God:

*21 And being [d] fully persuaded, that what he had promised [e] he was able also to perform.

22 And therefore [f] it was imputed to him for righteousness.

23 Now [g] it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;

24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, [h] if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

25 Who [i] was delivered for our offences, [k] and was raised again for our justification.

x 19 v. 5. viii. 24. Ruth i 11—13 Prov. xviii. 12. Ez. xxxvii. 11 Mark v 35, 36 Luke i 18 Acts xxvii 20 25.
y Gen. xv 5, 6
z 20. 21. xiv 21. Matt vi 30 viii. 26. xiv 31. Mark ix 23 24. John xx 27, 28
a Gen xvii. 17 xviii. 11 — 14 Heb xi. 11—19
b Num. xi 18—23 2 Kings vii. 2. 19. 2 Chr xx. 15 20. Is. vii. 9. Jer. xxxii 16—27 Luke i. 18. 45
c Is xxxv. 4 Dan x 19. xi 32. Hag ii. 4. Zech. viii. 9 13 1 Cor xvi 13 2 Cor xii. 10 Eph. vi. 10. 2 Tim ii. 1.——d viii. 38. 2 Tim. i. 12. Heb xi 13.
e xiv. 4. Gen. xviii. 14. Ps. cxv 3 Jer. xxxii 17. 27. Matt. xix. 26. Luke i. 37. 2 Cor. ix 8.
f *See on*, 3 6.
g xv 4 1 Cor ix. 10. x. 6. 11 2 Tim. iii. 16 17.
h x. 9, 10. Eph i. 18 — 20 Heb. xiii. 20, 21. 1 Pet. i. 21.
i iii. 25. v 6—8. viii 3. 32 Is. liii. 5, 6. 10—12. Dan. ix. 24. 26. Zech. xiii 7. Matt. xx 26 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4 2 Cor. v. 21 Gal. i 4 iii 13. Eph. v 2 Tit. ii 14. Heb. ix. 28. 1 Pet. i 18, 19. ii. 24 iii. 18. 1 John ii. 2. iv. 9, 10. Rev. i. 5. v. 9. vii. 14.——k viii. 33, 34. 1 Cor. xv 17 Heb iv 14—16. x. 12—14. 1 Pet i. 21.

If a man could be without any law, he would not be arraigned and condemned as a criminal; for, as sin is the transgression of the law, so no transgression could be charged upon him who is under no law. But as this cannot be the case of any, so all men are liable to condemnation; for every man's rule worketh wrath against him for acting contrary to it, till he flees for refuge to Christ, who delivers believers from the condemnation of the law, though not from their obligation to obey it. As therefore God intended to give sinners a title to the promised blessings, so he appointed it to be by faith, that it might be wholly of grace, in order to ensure it to all the seed of Abraham, even to all who should ever be made partakers of like precious faith with him, not only to those who lived under the legal dispensation, but to all others throughout the earth, and in every age of the world. This accorded to the promise, that Abraham should be "the father of many nations; for though several nations naturally descended from him, yet this promise had a far nobler and more sublime accomplishment in the immense multitude from so many nations, who have been, are, and hereafter shall be, interested in the blessings first conferred on him, in behalf of himself, and all that should resemble him by a living faith. This was the state of the case, (before that God in whom Abraham believed,) as to the relation of the whole church to him; for God not only quickeneth the dead in sin, and so raises up children to Abraham from the nations that were dead in their idolatry and iniquity, but "He calleth those things "which be not, as though they were," and so had all the unnumbered millions of future believers, as it were, present before him, in respect of his fore-knowledge and pre-determination, when he made the promise to Abraham, and considered him as the father, and them as the family, to whom the inheritance of the blessing was ensured through faith.

V. 18—22. The nature and power of Abraham's faith are next stated. He believed the testimony of God, and expected the performance of his promise, when the case seemed *hopeless*, and when there was nothing to oppose to the most formidable objections and apparent impossibilities but the bare word of God. He hoped to become the father of many nations, naturally, in his posterity, and spiritually, through Christ who was to descend from him, because God had said, that his seed should be innumerable as the stars of heaven. Yet many years had elapsed since the same promise, for substance, was given, and he still continued without any child by Sarah, to whose offspring the promise was restricted. She had been barren all her younger years, and was then become incapable of bearing children, according to the common course of nature, and he was now grown old, and unlikely to have any; yet, though he had been tried by such long delays, and was discouraged by such immense difficulties, he did not weakly stagger at the promise through unbelief; he hesitated not most confidently to expect that God would be as good as his word; being marvellously strengthened in his faith, he gave glory to God, and honoured all his perfections, by a full assurance that he was able to perform what he had promised; and therefore "his faith was imputed to him for right-"eousness." That is, his faith was thus approved to be genuine, meet to form a relation between him and the predicted Redeemer, and therefore it marked him out as a proper person to be justified by the everlasting righteousness which the Messiah would introduce. It is evident, from the whole context, that Abraham's faith did not justify him by its own merit or value, but as interesting him in Christ; for, though the sincerity of his faith was manifested on this occasion, he had actually been justified long before, and his example could not aptly illustrate the Christian's justification by the merits of Christ, and not by those of his own faith, if we do not thus understand it. A very common perversion of this passage must not pass unnoticed. Many speak of "hoping against hope," not that God will fulfil his promises to believers, notwithstanding all difficulties and improbabilities, but that themselves are believers and shall be saved, contrary to the evidence of their tempers and lives, and this is often the grossest presumption and fanaticism imaginable, though sometimes used by those who are not aware of its tendency.

V. 23—25. The history of Abraham and of his justification was not written for his sake, as he had been dead long before Moses recorded it; but it was intended for the instruction for all future generations, and of those especially to whom the Gospel was preached. For in case they believed in that God, who had raised Christ from the dead, and who was able to fulfil his largest promises, their faith would be imputed to them for righteousness, even as that of Abraham had been; for this faith, if genuine, would form a relation between them and the Lord Jesus, and

CHAP. V.

Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, rejoice in hope, and rejoice in tribulations, 1—5. The rich love of God to us when sinners, in reconciling us to himself by the death of his Son, assures us of final salvation, and leads us to rejoice in him, 6—11. As sin and death come upon all men by Adam; so the grace of God, which justifieth unto life, with all concurrent blessings, comes more abundantly on all believers by Jesus Christ, 12—19. The law proved an occasion to the abounding of sin unto death; but this made way for the still greater abounding of grace, as reigning through righteousness unto eternal life by Christ, 20, 21.

THEREFORE, [a] being justified by faith, [b] we have peace with God, [c] through our Lord Jesus Christ:

2 By [d] whom also we have access by faith into this grace [e] wherein we stand, [f] and rejoice in hope of [g] the glory of God.

a 9. 18. i 17. iii. 22. 26—28. 30. iv. 5. 24, 25. ix. 30 x. 10. Hab. ii 4. John iii. 16—18 v. 24. Acts xiii. 38, 39. Gal. ii. 16. iii. 11—14 25. v. 4—6. Phil. iii 9. Jam. ii 23—26. b x. 10. 15. Job xxii. 21. Ps. lxxxv. 8—10. Is. xxvii. 5. xxxii. 17 liv. 13. lv. 12. lvii. 19—21. Luke ii. 14. John xiv 27. xvi. 33. Acts x. 36. 2 Cor. v. 18—20. Eph ii. 14—17. Col i. 20, 21. iii. 15. Heb. xiii. 20. Jam ii. 23 ——c vi. 23. John xx. 31. Eph. ii. 7. d John x. 7. 9. xiv. 6 Acts xiv 27 Eph. ii. 18 iii. 12. Heb x 19, 20 1 Pet iii. 18. e 9, 10 viii. 1. 30—39 xiv. 4 John v. 24. 1 Cor. xv. 1, 2. Eph. v. 13. 1 Pet. i. 4, 5.——f 5. viii 24. 25. xii 12. xv. 13 Job xix. 25—27 Ps. xvi. 9—11. xvii 15. Prov xiv. 32. 2 Thes. ii. 16. 17 Heb. iii. 6 vi 18, 19 1 Pet. i. 3—9 1 John v. 1—3.——g ii. 7. iii 23. viii 17, 18. Ex. xxxiii. 18—20. Ps lxxiii. 24. Matt. xxv. 21. John v. 24. 2 Cor. iii. 18. iv. 17. Rev. iii. 21. xxi. 3. 11. 23. xxii. 4, 5.

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give them an interest in his mediatorial work. For, as Jesus had been delivered up to death, by man, as a criminal, but by the Father as a sacrifice for the offences of his people, so he had been raised again for their justification: he was thus perfectly justified from the charges brought against him, and the acceptance of his righteousness and redemption was demonstrated; and in this all his people were interested, for the justification of the Surety was eventually effectual for the justification of all those who were represented by him, to which privilege every one is actually admitted, when he truly believes the Gospel.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

No mere man, since the fall, could ever *find* any thing but death by his own works, and the history contained in the Scriptures, and the confessions of the best of men, prove that all, who have been saved, escaped condemnation and obtained heaven by "faith being imputed to them for "righteousness." In all controversies we should inquire, "What say the oracles of God?" These uniformly teach, that the reward is not assigned to a man for working, as a debt, but through believing, as of grace. None can sincerely pray for this blessing, till he ceases from working in order to justify himself, and indeed no man performs good works from pure principles, till he learns to believe "in "him who justifieth the ungodly." Yet at the same time no true believer will neglect *working*, in order to glorify God, to do good, and to make his own calling and election sure. Man's felicity consists in the favour of God, which can belong to none of our fallen race, except the pardoned sinner; and the forgiveness of sin, and the imputation of righteousness without works, are entirely through the obedience unto death of our gracious Redeemer. They who obtain this blessedness, are happy, though poor, despised, and afflicted; all who come short of it are most miserable, however wealthy, honoured, and prospered. This distinction extends to all nations, sects, or forms of worship; some are justified, and some are not, in all companies where the great truths of the Gospel are known; and this method of justifying the ungodly is equally suited to preclude the most eminent saints from glorying, and the most atrocious sinners from despairing.

V. 13—25.

The seal of the Holy Spirit in sanctification is the inward evidence "of the righteousness of faith;" when the old nature is crucified, and the heart is circumcised to love God, it is evident that we are the children of Abraham, and walk in his steps; and sacraments will be really seals and pledges of the same blessing. Blessed be God, that we are not left under the covenant of works. For the more holy and perfect the law, the greater wrath would in that case come upon us; but as all is of grace, it is through faith, and the promised blessing is ensured to all the chosen seed, wherever dispersed, or however distinguished. May we then copy the example of Abraham, and in the midst of perils and difficulties "in hope believe "against hope," assured that God is both able and willing to perform his promises to all who trust in him, and wait the accomplishment of them in patient obedience. Thus our faith will be imputed to us for righteousness, through him who died for our offences, and rose again for our justification.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1, 2. The apostle, having stated and confirmed his doctrine concerning justification, here proceeds to show the happiness of those who are thus justified. When the sinner believes in Jesus, his "faith is imputed "to him for righteousness;" thus he is justified before God, accounted a righteous person, and entitled to the reward of righteousness. In consequence of this, "he "hath peace with God," the controversy, or hostility, which sin hath excited, is terminated by a blessed pacification through the great Mediator, and a covenant of amity is ratified between that holy God, who had so just cause to treat his rebellious creature as an enemy, and that rebel, who before was so unreasonably alienated from his beneficent Creator. The sinner submits, pleads guilty, seeks mercy, and learns to love and serve God; and his offended Sovereign receives him to full favour and thenceforth behaves to him as his Friend and Father. The sinner, being thus reconciled, considers the cause and people of God as his own, and separates from his enemies, that he may be united to his friends: he makes the glory of his God the ultimate end of his habitual conduct, and God protects, countenances, provides for, and communes with

3 And not only *so*, [h] but we glory in tribulations also: [i] knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

4 And [k] patience, experience; [l] and experience, hope:

5 And [m] hope maketh not ashamed; [n] because the love of God is [o] shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.

6 For [p] when we were yet [q] without strength, * in due time [r] Christ died for the [s] ungodly.

7 For [t] scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for [u] a good man [x] some would even dare to die.

h viii. 35—37. Matt. v. 10—12. Luke vi. 22, 23 Acts ii. 41. 2 Cor. xi. 23—30. xii. 9, 10. Eph. iii. 13. Phil. i 29. ii. 17, 18. Jam i. 2 12. 1 Pet. iii. 14 iv. 16, 17.

i 2 Cor. v. 17. Heb xii. 10, 11. Jam i. 3.

k xv. 4. 2 Cor. i. 4—6. iv. 8—12. vi 9 10. Jam. i. 12. 1 Pet. i. 6, 7. v. 10.——l Josh x 24, 25. 1 Sam xvii. 34—37. Ps. xxvii 2, 3 xlii. 4, 5. lxxi. 14 18—24 2 Cor iv 8—10 2 Tim. iv 16—18.

m Job xxvii 8. Ps. xxii 4, 5 Is xxviii. 15—18 xlv. 16, 17. xlix. 23. Jer xvii. 5—8. Phil. i 20. 2 Thes ii 16. 2 Tim. i. 12 Heb vi 18, 19.——n viii. 14—17. 28 Matt. xxii. 36, 37. 1 Cor. viii 3. Heb vii 10—12. 1 John iv. 19.——o Is xliv 3—5 Ez xxxvi. 25—27. 2 Cor. i. 22. iii 18. iv. 6. Gal. iv. 6. v. 22 Eph. i. 13, 14. iii. 16—19. iv. 30. Tit. iii. 5, 6.

p Ez. xvi. 4—8. Eph. ii 1—5. Col. ii. 13. Tit. iii. 3—5

q Lam. i. 6. Dan. xi. 15.

* Or, *according to the time* Gal iv. 4. Heb. ix. 6. 1 Pet. i. 20

r *See on*, iv 25. 1 Thes. v. 9, 10.

s *See on*, iv 5. xi. 26. Ps. i 1. Tit. ii. 12.

t John xv. 13. 1 John iii. 16.

u 2 Sam. xviii. 27. Ps. cxii. 5. Acts xi. 24.——x xvi. 4 2 Sam. xviii. 3. xxiii. 15—18.

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the believer as his friend, and requites the injuries or favours done to him as if done to himself. All this centres in the Person, mediation, and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath made and preserves this blessed peace. Thus every true believer has actually found admission into a state of full favour with God, even as if he had never sinned; in this he *stands* accepted before him, and is secured by his promise and grace from being cast down from it; and he learns to rejoice in the prevailing, abiding, and realizing hope of being glorified with God, and glorifying him; of completely bearing his glorious image, and of enjoying his unspeakable love to all eternity. The expressions may also allude to the free access of sinners, from different nations, into the full enjoyment of the privileges of God's people, without any respect to the legal ceremonies and restrictions in approaching his mercy-seat. The word rendered *rejoice* more properly signifies *glory*, or *boast.* (*Note, Jer.* ix. 23, 24.) *Boasting* or *glorying* in ourselves is excluded, that, by the free grace of God, we may glory and exult in the hope of heavenly felicity, in our very trials, in Christ Jesus, and in God as our God and Portion.

V. 3—5. The primitive Christians not only rejoiced or exulted in hope of the glory of God, *notwithstanding* present afflictions, but they gloried in the tribulations themselves, as the sure pledges of the divine favour and means of spiritual improvement. For they were assured, from the word of God and from the evidence of facts, that their trials and persecutions produced submission to the divine will, and acquiescence in it, meekness amidst injuries and provocations, and "patient continuance in "well-doing," and quietly waiting for the Lord amidst all difficulties, perils, and sufferings. Their trials indeed might at first excite impatience; but, by watching and praying, they would overcome it, and thus be brought into a patience of spirit through trials, as the rough block is wrought into a beautiful statue by the chisel and labour of the workman. At the same time this patience produced an enlarged experience, an experimental acquaintance with their own weakness and sinfulness, in order to their humiliation; of the reality and power of grace in their hearts after repeated trials in the furnace; of the faithfulness of God to his promises; and of his readiness to answer their prayers. So that these painful dispensations tended still further to establish the hope of glory, and to assure them that this hope would never make them ashamed, by vanishing in disappointment, like the baseless confidence of a worldly man, of a Pharisee, an unbelieving Jew, or a hypocrite. For the hope of the tried and experienced believer is not only warranted by the word of God, but sealed upon his heart by the gift of the Holy Spirit, by whose sacred influences the excellency and loving-kindness of God, especially in the work of redemption, are so discovered to him, and diffused or poured out through all the faculties of his soul, as to produce a similarity of disposition, a reciprocal love of the divine perfections, a longing desire of the favour of God, a delight in communing with and serving him, a lively gratitude for his benefits, and zeal for his glory; these being full proofs of regeneration, the inward "seal of the righteousness of faith," and earnests of heavenly felicity, ensure the Christian's hope from the shame of disappointment. Most expositors interpret this clause, ("the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, "&c.") exclusively of the perception and sense of the love of God to us, which is vouchsafed by the Holy Spirit. Yet *our love to God*, as "the fruit of the Spirit," writing his law in our hearts, is in fact the only indisputable proof that our hope will never make us ashamed. The seal and consolations of the Spirit are distinguished from all enthusiastical delusions and false affections, by their permanently sanctifying effects; no supposed sense of God's love to us, except as attended with the consciousness of loving him, can warrant a scriptural assurance; and the Spirit of adoption is doubtless a Spirit of love to God, as well as confidence in him. (*Note,* viii. 14—17.) It must therefore be evident, that the work of the Holy Spirit, in changing our natural enmity against God into supreme love of him, must be intended, either as the primary meaning of the clause, or as the inseparable effect of a genuine sense and perception of the love of God to us. (*Marg. Ref.*) It cannot be supposed that the apostle mentioned this triumphant confidence as the habitual attainment of all justified persons, but rather as an invaluable privilege consequent on justification, which must be sought with diligence and earnestness, and which is actually enjoyed nearly in proportion as it is thus sought. The sufferings of believers, especially from persecution, form one grand objection to what is spoken in Scripture concerning their happiness, in the opinion of men in general. To select, therefore, these very trials, as one ground of the Christian's glorying and rejoicing, was peculiarly suited to meet that objection, and to produce a great effect on the reader's mind and heart.

V. 6, 7. It might perhaps be objected, that, after all, it was not impossible, nor even highly improbable, that the believer's hope should terminate in disappointment and shame, through the prevalence of in-dwelling sin and the power of temptation, and that Satan might, at length, induce him to apostatize. Some constitutional or habitual

8 But God [y] commendeth his love toward us, [z] in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then, [a] being now justified by his blood, [b] we shall be saved from wrath through him.

y 20, 21. iii. 6. Eph i. 6—8. ii. 7. 1 Tim i. 16.
z Is. liii. 6 1 Pet iii. 18. 1 John iv. 9, 10.
a *See on*, 1. iii. 24—26. 1 John i. 7.
b 10. i. 18. viii. 1. 30. John v. 24. 1 Thes. i. 10.

10 For if [c] when we were enemies, we were [d] reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, [e] we shall be saved by his life.

c viii. 7. 2 Cor. v. 18—21 Col. i. 20, 21.
d 11. *Marg.* viii. 32. Lev vi 30 2 Chr. xxix. 24. Ez. xlv. 20. Dan. ix 24. Eph ii. 16. Heb. ii. 17
e John vi. 40. 57. x. 28, 29. xi. 25, 26. xiv. 19. 2 Cor. iv. 10, 11. Col. iii. 3, 4. Heb. vii. 25. Rev. i. 18.

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iniquity, which in more favourable circumstances had been kept under with great difficulty, might at length obtain the ascendency through his unwatchfulness, and so destroy him, or he might fall away in the hour of death, or at some other critical season. The apostle therefore digresses, in order to obviate this objection, and at the same time he shows what abundant reason believers have to love their God and Saviour. When they, who are now at peace with God, lay in the ruins of the fall, under deserved wrath, and the power of sin and Satan, without any *strength* to resist, or to deliver themselves, when they had neither natural power for so vast a work, if they had been inclinable to it, nor moral ability or inclination to attempt it, when thus impotent and helpless, and dead in sin, they could have no refuge but in the mere compassion of God, and yet were *ungodly*, and without any proper disposition of heart towards him, nay, every way contrary to his nature, will, and worship; when they were too proud even to ask for mercy, or to allow their need of it, and too averse to religion, to be at all willing to become spiritual worshippers; even then Christ died for them, in their stead, a sacrifice for their sins, and to make way for their salvation! For though some of those, for whom Christ died, were previously gone to heaven, others were godly persons then living on earth, and others had not come into existence: yet they were all considered as *ungodly*, and *without strength*, in respect of Christ's dying for them. They all stood, as it were, present before God, according to his omniscience, fore-knowledge, and pre-determination, in their natural state of impenitent ungodliness, and Christ, as their divine and righteous Surety, took their sins upon himself, and engaged to atone for them, before they knew their own lost condition, and without any solicitation from them. In this sense he is "the Lamb slain "from the foundation of the world." The believers who lived before his coming not only were pardoned and saved through his engagement in their behalf, but their repentance, faith, and grace, as the effects of regeneration, sprang from the same source. At length, "in due "time," the season appointed by the only wise God, he appeared on earth, and "died for the ungodly; and by his Spirit sinners are quickened from the death of sin, repent, believe, love, and obey: but all comes to them through his atonement and intercession.

V. 8—10. To illustrate the immensity of this love of God, the apostle shows, that if "a righteous man," one of strict integrity, who had committed no crime against the welfare of the community, were about to be unjustly put to death, there would scarcely be found a person who would consent to die in his stead; though perhaps for *a good man*, one of extensive philanthropy, whose life had been and was likely to be a public blessing, some might even venture to lay down their lives. This has sometimes been done in the field of battle, and perhaps it would be possible to find a man, who would, in such cause, suffer for his friend or benefactor upon a scaffold. Yet this most rare instance, the very summit of human affection, is immensely beneath the love of God to us. He, who should give up his life in these circumstances, would do it for one of superior excellency, or who had greatly befriended him, and his death would ensure honour and applause to his memory. But the infinitely glorious God had commended, or set off to the utmost advantage, his love to us, in that his incarnate and co-equal Son gave himself to endure the most agonizing and ignominious death for those who were infinitely beneath him, his creatures that had rebelled against him, and persisted in that ungrateful rebellion: yea, impenitent sinners, who had perpetrated the most atrocious and multiplied crimes to provoke his vengeance, and whose state of heart rendered them the meet objects of his abhorrence. Yet he had freely loved them, and purposed their salvation, and when his justice and holiness, and the honour of his law, obstructed that gracious design, he so loved them, that he gave his own Son to die a sacrifice for their sins! (*Notes*, &c. *Gen.* xxii. *John* xv. 13—5.) Now, if this was so, and they by divine grace had been brought to repent, and to believe in Christ, and had thus been justified through the shedding of his blood, by faith in that great atonement; much more then would they be kept from falling again under the wrath of God, and perishing in sin, through him who died for them and rose again. For could it be imagined that He, who so loved them when enemies, as to die for them, would not save and uphold them by his almighty power, now they were made friends? If, when they were not only destitute of godliness, and impenitent transgressors, but enemies to the holy character, law, sovereignty, grace, providence, and cause of God, they had been brought into a state of reconciliation and cordial peace with him, by the death of his Son upon the cross, *much more* would they, being thus reconciled, be preserved from falling under the power of Sin and Satan, or finally apostatizing, "by his life," his intercession, authority, and omnipotent grace. (*Note*, *John* x. 27—30.) He, that had done the greater work for his enemies, would surely do the less difficult for his friends and children, and the *living* Lord would complete the purpose of his *dying* love, by saving all believers to the uttermost, till his finished ransom on the cross should terminate in their finished salvation, as "presented faultless before his pre-"sence with exceeding joy." There could be no danger of a reconciled believer falling under the wrath of God, but on supposition that he should commit sin, and die without repentance; but had Christ suffered, and denied, and humbled himself, even to death upon the cross, that he might bring him into this state of reconciliation? and would he, after all, so leave him to himself, and in the hands of the wicked one, as thus finally to perish, when

11 And not only *so*, [f] but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, [g] by whom we have now received the [*] atonement.

12 ¶ Wherefore, [h] as by one man sin entered into the world, [i] and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, [†] for that [k] all have sinned:

13 For [l] until the law sin was in the world: [m] but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

14 Nevertheless [n] death reigned from Adam to Moses, [o] even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, [p] who is the figure of him that was to come.

f ii. 17. 1 Sam. ii. 1. Ps. xxxii 11. xxxiii 1. xliii 4. civ 34. cxlix 2. Is. lxi. 10. Hab. iii 17, 18 Luke i. 46. 47. Gal. v. 22 Phil. iii 1. 3. iv. 4 1 Pet. i. 8.
g John i. 12 vi. 50—58 1 Cor. x. 16. Col ii. 6
* Or, *reconciliation*. 10.
h 19. Gen iii. 6.
i vi. 23. Gen ii 17 iii 19. 22—24. Ez. xviii 4. 1 Cor. xv. 21. Jam. i. 15. Rev. xx. 14, 15.——† Or, *in whom*.——k iii. 23. Jam. iii 2. 1 John i. 8—10.
l Gen. iv. 7—11. vi. 5, 6. 11, 12. viii. 21. xiii 13. xviii. 20, 21. xix 4. 32–36. xxxviii. 7. 10
m iv 15 1 Cor. xv 56. 1 John iii 4.
n 17. 21. Gen. iv. 8 v 5–31. vii. 22 xix. 25. Ex. i. 6
o viii. 20 22. Ex. i 22 xii 29, 30 Jon. iv. 11.
p 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22. 45

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his living power could prevent it, without any suffering or self-denial whatever? Some expositors insert, 'If we be 'not wanting to ourselves.' But first, Is not this adding to the Scripture? And, secondly, Does not this lead us to trust in our own hearts, instead of trusting in God, to "hold "us up, that we may be safe?"

V. 11. Having such a pledge of future and complete salvation in the love of God through Christ, and in past mercies experienced, the apostle declared that he, and other established believers, not only rejoiced and exulted in the hope of heaven, and in their tribulations for Christ's sake, but they gloried in God also, as their unchangeable Friend and all-sufficient Portion; but this was not by the works of the law, as the Jew made his boast in God, but "through "our Lord Jesus Christ." For, according to the law, they were all sinners and enemies, but by Christ they had now "received the reconciliation." (*Marg.*) This is the proper translation of the sentence, which refers to the whole of the pacification between God and the believing sinner, through the mediation of Christ, and not merely to the *atonement* which is the ground of it. As they were confident that the great Peace-maker, who had effected this reconciliation by the blood of his cross and the power of his grace, would certainly preserve it, they gloried in God through him, as their God and everlasting Portion. To explain all this of the Gentiles exclusively, as if the Jews did not want a reconciliation, makes the apostle speak of himself as a Gentile; and indeed it is so unscriptural and irrational, that one cannot but be surprised to find men of great learning and talents contend for it.

V. 12—14. In order more fully to illustrate his important subject, the apostle calls the reader's attention to the state of man from the fall of Adam. He was the federal head, surety, and representative of all his posterity; nor was sin entered, save to the personal condemnation of Eve, till he also had eaten the forbidden fruit. (*Notes, Gen.* iii.) By that one man sin entered into the world, to pollute and ruin the whole human species: and so death, spiritual and temporal, followed and passed upon all men, "for that," (or, as some translate it, "*in whom*,) all had sinned." In Adam, as being in his loins when he thus apostatized, we all sinned and fell under condemnation: his blood was attainted for rebellion; and thence that evil nature originated, from which all our personal transgressions proceed. In proof of this our union with Adam, and our concern in his first transgression, which the proud heart of man is prone to deny or object to with blasphemous enmity, it should be observed, that for two thousand five hundred years before the giving of the law, sin prevailed in the world, and was punished with death: but sin cannot be imputed where no law is, of which it is a transgression. None of the immense multitudes, who died between the fall of Adam and the promulgation of the law, could personally violate the prohibition, to which the penalty of death had been annexed; yet were they included in the sentence denounced against Adam, and after much toil and suffering returned to the dust whence they were taken. And though adults might be thought to die for their personal violation of the law of tradition, or of their own reason: yet, during this long interval, an innumerable multitude had been subjected to death, who had never broken any law, after the similitude of Adam's transgression, that is, wilfully and deliberately. For the number of infants, that had been cut off, with great pain and agony, previously to their commission of actual sin, had been immensely great. They had been involved in the destruction of the old world, and of Sodom and Gomorrah; and in the ordinary course of things death reigned over them, before they were capable of wilful deliberate transgression: and this fact could not be otherwise accounted for, consistently with the divine perfections, than by allowing them, as one with Adam, to have fallen in him under condemnation, through his violation of that covenant, in which he acted as surety for all his offspring. There may indeed be a comfortable hope, that as infants die in Adam without their own personal transgression, so they will be saved in Christ without their own personal exercise of faith in him; as never living to be capable of it: yet that change must be wrought in them by the regenerating Spirit, which would have produced faith in him had they lived longer. Indeed the sufferings and death of infants in every age form an irrefragable proof of original sin: but it was more peculiarly so, from Adam to Moses; as that law was not then in being, which in some instances entailed the guilt of the parents on their children, to the third and fourth generation. Yet these laws were deduced from the same principle of the *oneness* between the root and the branches; though only applied in some special cases, whilst that of Adam reached in general to all his posterity. For he was a figure or type, of him, who was to come, as the Surety of a new covenant, in behalf of all related to him. In many respects Adam might be considered as the contrast of Christ; but he resembled him, and was his type in the divine prescience, by acting as the surety of all related and united to him: for thus Christ acted as the Surety of all his people, who are deemed his spiritual progeny, and they are interested in his obedience, sufferings, victories, and exaltation.—'Adam is compared with Christ, both in what is similar, 'and what is contrary. They are alike in this; that each 'of them shares what he has with *his*: they are clearly 'unlike in this, that Adam by nature communicates sin

15 But [q] not as the offence, so also *is* the free gift. For if through the offence of one [r] many be dead; much more the grace of God, [s] and the gift by grace, *which is* by one man, Jesus Christ, [t] hath abounded unto many.

16 And not as *it was* by one that sinned, *so is* the gift: [u] for the judgment *was* by one to condemnation; [x] but the free gift *is* of many offences unto justification.

17 For if [y] by * one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive [z] abundance of grace, and of the [a] gift of righteousness, [b] shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ:

18 Therefore, as by † the offence of one, *judgment came* [c] upon all men to condemnation; even so by ‡ the righteousness of one, *the free gift came* upon [d] all men unto justification of life.

19 For [e] as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; [f] so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

[q] 16, 17 20. Is iv. 8, 9. John iii 16. iv 10

[r] 12. 18. Dan. xii 2 Matt. xx. 28 xxvi. 28

[s] vi. 23. 2 Cor. ix. 15. Heb. ii. 9 1 John iv. 9, 10. v. 11, 12

[t] 20 Is. liii 11. lv 7 Rev. vii 9,10 14—17

[u] Gen iii. 6—19. Gal. iii. 10. Jam. ii. 10

[x] Is. i. 18. xliii 25. xliv. 22. Luke vii. 47—50. Acts xiii. 38 39. 1 Cor. vi. 9—11. 1 Tim i 13—16.

[y] 12. Gen iii. 6. 19 1 Cor. xv. 21. 22. 49.

* Or, *by one offence.*

[z] 20 John x. 10. 1 Tim. i. 14.

[a] Is. lxi. 10. Phil. iii. 9.

[b] viii. 30. Matt. xxv. 34. 1 Cor. iv. 8. 2 Tim. ii. 12. Jam. ii. 5. 1 Pet. ii. 9. Rev. i 6. iii 21. v. 9, 10. xx. 4 6. xxii. 5.

† Or, *one offence.*

[c] 12. 15. 19. iii. 19, 20

‡ Or, *one righteousness.* iii. 21, 22. 2 Pet. i. 1.

[d] John i. 7. iii. 26. xii. 32. Acts xiii 39. 1 Cor. xv. 22. 1 Tim. ii. 4—6. 1 John ii. 20.

[e] 12—14

[f] Is. liii. 10—12. Dan. ix. 24. 2 Cor. v. 21. Eph. i. 6. Rev. vii. 9—17.

'unto death to his posterity, but Christ by grace communicates his righteousness to his people unto life.' (*Beza.*) Many learned men explain what is said of *death* as meaning only *mortality;* but do we not all derive a depraved, as well as a mortal nature, from Adam? And does not Christ save his people from guilt and depravity, as well as from mortality? And will immortality, without justification and sanctification, be any blessing? If we are depraved, or dead in sin, and mortal, as Adam's descendants, we must not only die, but be miserable and unholy for ever, without the salvation of Christ.

V. 15—19. The chief difficulty, which renders the expositions generally given of these verses perplexed and unsatisfactory, arises from an evident misconception of the apostle's reasoning, in supposing that Adam and Christ represented exactly the same company: whereas Adam was the surety of the whole human species; Christ only of that chosen remnant, which hath been, or shall be, one with him by faith. Indeed, all men, in consequence of the undertaking of Christ, are under a dispensation of mercy, and are "endured with much long-suffering;" they are not left desperate, have many temporal mercies, and shall all arise to judgment. There is also such an infinite sufficiency in the atonement of Christ, and it is so proposed to sinners, as a common salvation for all who will accept of it, that a foundation is laid for the most unreserved invitations, exhortations, and expostulations, and no sinner will be rejected, who sincerely seeks this salvation. Yet these general truths perfectly harmonize with the secret purposes and foreknowledge of God, in respect of the persons, who actually will embrace and obtain the proffered blessings. If then we omit the consideration of the *number* that perish in the first Adam, or are saved in the second Adam, if we wholly leave this to the wise, righteous, and merciful Creator and Judge of all men, as one of those secret things which belong not to us; and only consider the benefit *believers* derive from Christ, as compared with the loss sustained in Adam by *the human race,* we shall then see the passage open most perspicuously and gloriously to our view. For the thought of the *supposed* vast majority of those, who shall eventually perish, is apt to encumber our minds in such contemplations; I say *supposed;* for probably we shall find our conjectures erroneous, when the doom of men through all ages and nations shall be finally determined. Let us then advert to the apostle's words. The offence of Adam and its consequences do not in all things coincide with the free gift, or the grace, of redemption. Through that one man's single offence, the many or the multitude, of mankind are *dead,* under condemnation, and exposed to death temporal and eternal. But the infinite grace and mercy of God, and the free gift of righteousness and salvation, through that one man Jesus Christ, the second Adam, who is also "the "Lord from heaven," much more abound to *many,* even to all the multitude of believers, by bringing them into a far safer, happier, and more exalted state, than that from which they fell in Adam. For this gift not merely answers to the loss sustained by Adam's sin, but far exceeds it in this respect, that the judgment of God came through Adam's *single offence* upon mankind, to their condemnation; but the free gift not only delivers believers from that condemnation, but from the punishment due to their own numerous, or rather innumerable, transgressions; nor does it place them anew in a state of probation, like that of Adam before he sinned, but it fixes them in a state of complete justification, even as Adam would have been if he had stood his time of trial. For if, by one offence of one man, death acquired a complete dominion over all the whole human race, so that none were admitted to a personal trial *in that respect,* whether they would be obedient or not; much more would they, who by faith received the abundance of God's grace and mercy, and were interested in the gift of righteousness, be assuredly preserved in that state of acceptance, and so reign in life, by the perfect obedience of their one Surety Jesus Christ, without the infinite peril, or fatal consequences, of being put upon *a personal trial of their obedience,* like that in which Adam had failed, and Christ had persevered. Man is indeed in some sense in a probationary state on earth; but no man is put upon the trial, whether he can obtain exemption from the general condemnation of Adam and his seed by his own personal obedience. A trial is made of him, tending to discover the wickedness of his heart by manifold experiments; the trial is made by the Gospel, whether the sinner will repent and believe; professed Christians are tried whether they are sincere or not, and believers are proved in respect of the strength of their faith and grace; yet they are not put upon any probation, with reference to their justification and eternal life, but are accounted righteous, and appointed heirs, by faith alone, through the righteousness of their One divine Surety, which consisted not, like Adam's offence, in one

20 Moreover, [g] the law entered, that the offence might abound; [h] but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound;

g iii. 19, 20. iv. 15. vi. 14. vii. 5—8. John xv. 22. 2 Cor. iii. 7—9. Gal. iii. 19. 25.
h vi. 1. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 9—13. Ps xxv. 11. Is. i. 18. xliii 24, 25. Jer. iii. 8—14. Ez. xvi 52. 60—63. xxxvi 25—32. Mic. vii. 18, 19. Matt. ix. 13. Luke vii. 47. xxiii. 39—43. 1 Cor vi. 9—11. Eph. i. 6—8. ii. 1—5. 1 Tim. i. 13—16. Tit. iii. 3—7.

21 That [i] as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might [k] grace reign [l] through righteousness, [m] unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.

i 14. vi. 12. 14. 16.
k John i. 16, 17. Tit ii 11 Heb. iv. 16. 1 Pet. v. 10.
l 17. iv. 13 viii. 10. 2 Pet. i. 1.
m vi. 23. John x 28. 1 John ii. 25. v. 11—13.

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action, but in a continued and perfect conformity to the whole divine law through life, and unto his death upon the cross. Yet, notwithstanding these differences, the similarity is striking and instructive; for, as by the offence of one man sin entered and prevailed to the condemnation of all men; so by the righteousness of One, even Christ, grace entered and prevailed to the complete justification of all men, throughout the earth, and during all ages, who are related to Christ by faith, as all were to Adam by nature. For, as by the disobedience of one single person, being a public character or representative of his posterity, many were made or constituted sinners, and dealt with accordingly, previously to the consideration of their personal transgressions; so by the obedience of One who also was a public character, and the representative of his people, *many,* even the whole multitude of believers, are constituted righteous before God, and dealt with as such, even previously to the consideration of their personal holiness and obedience, which spring from their spiritual union with Christ, as depravity does from man's natural union with Adam. Thus in many things the type and Antitype coincide, though disobedience and condemnation are opposite to obedience and justification. But the believer, being justified in Christ, has his title to life in him, who preserves it for him, so that he is not left to peradventures, or to the hazards arising from the mutability of creatures, as Adam was; but he is safe by his union with Him, who is "God manifested in the flesh;" and his future felicity will be proportionably more exalted, in consequence of his endeared relation to the Godhead, in Christ his Brother and Friend. As it is evident that *all men,* in the strict sense of the word, do not "receive "abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness," or obtain "justification of life;" and that *all men,* in this universal sense, shall not "reign in life," for some shall "go "away into everlasting punishment," so the term must be explained, in the first clause, of *all men in Adam,* and in the second, of *all men in Christ.* (18.)

V. 20, 21. The whole plan, respecting the justification of believers, was fixed and engaged for long before the law was given by Moses. This dispensation *entered a little,* or among a few persons, compared with the whole posterity of Adam, and for a short time, compared with the duration of the world, but so far from being intended for the justification of sinners, "it entered that the offence "might abound." The moral law, by its perfections, showed that many thoughts, affections, tempers, words, and actions, were sinful, which otherwise would not have been known to be so; it evinced the malignity and desert of every sin, and it irritated man's natural corruption, both to hanker after forbidden objects, and to rise in opposition and enmity against its spiritual precepts and its righteous sanction. Thus it occasioned transgressions to be multiplied, for it had no efficacy to cure human depravity; and at the same time it aggravated the enormity of sin, seeing it was committed against so express a declaration of the divine will. Even the ceremonial law, as considered apart from Christ, multiplied duties, and consequently transgressions. So that the law in every sense entered, in order to show and condemn man's abounding wickedness, as an experiment tried with a specimen of the human race, that the free grace of redemption might be more gloriously displayed, by its super-abounding most where sin had most abounded; and (like the waters of the deluge,) flowing far above the summits of the highest mountains of man's guilt and depravity. So that, as sin, like some terrific victor and tyrant, had reigned with uncontrolled sway, unto the death and ruin of all men, under Adam's covenant; even so grace, or the infinitely free and rich mercy of God, might ascend a more exalted throne, and there reign with benign authority, through the righteousness of the Surety of the new covenant, unto the eternal life of all who believe, in virtue of the power and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace, as reigning in the believer's heart, may be included; but this is more explicitly treated on in the ensuing chapter; and grace, as reigning upon the throne of God, to justify every believing sinner, and to complete the salvation of every justified believer, is here principally intended.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

A most blessed change takes place in the sinner's state, however vile he has been, when he becomes a true believer; "being justified by faith he hath peace with God," "through our Lord Jesus Christ," which will in due time be communicated to his conscience, and dwell in his heart; he has free access to the mercy-seat, he is established in the grace and favour of God, and he may now rejoice in the hope of everlasting glory, though he just before trembled from apprehensions of deserved vengeance. How vast then are our obligations to him, who hath made "all things ready" by his agonizing death, and hath made our hearts willing by his converting grace! May we act as the covenanted friends of our reconciled God; may we "adorn the doctrine of his salvation;" may we study to recommend it to our fellow-sinners, and to make grateful returns for his love, by our kindness to our poor fellow Christians, who are the brethren and receivers of this our rich and bountiful Benefactor! Then we need not be dismayed by temptations or afflictions, or despond and murmur under them; nay, we may glory and rejoice in them: for though nature feels that tribulation worketh impatience, yet grace finds that at length it produces patience, experience, and a hope, which can never make us ashamed; "because the love of God is shed abroad in "our hearts by the Holy Ghost." This seal of God cannot be broken, and Satan evidently and peculiarly fails in his attempts to counterfeit it; for all false affections, and enthusiastic confidences, are liable to be consumed in the furnace of long-continued afflictions; and they never

CHAP. VI.

Believers are dead to sin, according to the meaning of baptism; which represents their conformity to Christ in his death, burial, resurrection, and living unto God, 1—10. They should reckon themselves to be dead to sin and alive to God, 11; and, as not being under the law, but under grace, they must not suffer sin to reign in their bodies, but yield them to God, as instruments of righteousness, 12—15. Being made free from sin, and become servants to righteousness, they should serve it wholly, 16—20. The service of sin is unfruitful, shameful, and destructive; but the servants of God have their fruit unto holiness, and the end eternal life, 21, 22. This is the gift of God by Christ; but death is the wages of sin, 23.

[a] WHAT shall we say then? [b] Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

2 [c] God forbid: [d] How shall we that are [e] dead to sin, [f] live any longer therein?

a *See on,* iii 5.
b 15. ii 4, 5. iii. 5—8 31. v 20, 21 Gal. v. 13. 1 Pet. ii. 16. 2 Pet ii. 18. 19. Jude 4.
c *See on,* iii. 4.
d Gen. xxxix. 9. Ps. cxix. 104. 1 John iii 9.
e 5—11 vii. 4. Gal. ii 19. vi. 14. Col iii. 3. 1 Pet ii 24.
f 2 Cor v. 14—17. 1 Pet i. 14. iv. 1—3.

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can communicate that reciprocal, steady, pre-eminent, and abiding love of God in Christ, which no fire can burn, no waters can quench, and which, in ten thousands of instances has proved stronger than the fear of death, in its most tremendous forms, and has enabled a feeble believer to disregard the cruelties of a savage executioner, in comparison of the anguish of wilfully denying or disobeying his beloved Lord. Surely he is worthy of all this from every one of us! If we consider how helpless, ungodly, rebellious, and full of enmity against God, we were, when his compassionate eye was first fixed upon us, if we reflect on the salvation purposed for us, the price paid for it, the dignity of our Redeemer, the change wrought in us before we would accept of the free gift, and the privileges most graciously bestowed upon us, we cannot but allow, that the love of God our Saviour passeth knowledge, and is infinitely beyond example or illustration. It is inconceivable, that even God himself could more have commended his love to us, or have given us more powerful motives and encouragements to humble submission and grateful obedience. In proportion as we feel the force of these motives, we may be assured that we are justified by the blood of Jesus, and reconciled to God by his death; and that we shall be saved from wrath by him, "who was "dead, and is alive for evermore, and hath the keys of "death and hell." Though conscious of our own sinfulness, we may thus glory in God through Jesus Christ, as having by him received the reconciliation. At the same time we shall learn not to disdain, or despair of, any other sinners; as we shall feel that they are not worse in themselves, or further from God, than we once were, and that they are equally capable of being reconciled in the same way, whatever their character and crimes may heretofore have been.

V. 12—21.

Let us learn habitually to look upon ourselves and the whole human race, as in the ruins of the fall, sinners by nature and practice, exposed to condemnation, and no more able to save our own souls from hell, than to rescue our bodies from the grave. Instead of perplexing ourselves about the deep, but righteous, dispensation of God, in permitting the entrance of sin and death, let us learn to adore his grace for providing so adequate a remedy for that catastrophe, which we are sure consisted with all his glorious perfections. As our children have evidently through us received a sinful, suffering, and dying nature from the first Adam, we should be stirred up, even by their pains and sorrows in helpless infancy, to seek for them the blessings of the second Adam's righteousness and salvation. Though the grace of God and the gift by grace have much more abounded *to many* through Christ, than justice and wrath did through Adam, yet multitudes choose to remain under the horrid dominion of sin and death, rather than seek the blessings of the reign of grace! But there is the fullest encouragement to every sinner, who comes to Christ for his free and holy salvation, and he will in no wise cast out one such humble supplicant. Let all then flee without delay to this righteousness by faith in Christ, whilst grace fills the throne of God, and before the Judge ascends his dread tribunal; let the entrance of the law into the conscience, that sin may be known to abound, impel the sinner to the greater diligence in applying for free salvation; let none be discouraged by the view of their enormous crimes, seeing there is in Christ much more abounding grace; let the unestablished inquirer give diligence to make sure his interest in the Redeemer, and let the thankful and confirmed believer frequently meditate on his obligations, privileges, security, and prospects. Let him contrast his state in Adam with his felicity in Christ; that whilst he gives all the glory to sovereign grace, through that obedience by which he is made righteous, he may look at all enemies and remaining obstacles, and at the king of terrors, with a victorious hope, assured that "grace shall still reign through righteousness, unto "eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord."

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1, 2. The apostle's doctrine might seem to lie open to the objection, which is now continually made to that of salvation by grace. It might be said, that if we be justified of entire mercy, by the imputation of Christ's righteousness and the efficacy of his sacrifice, through faith alone, without works of any kind or in any degree, either before or after believing, are not men set free from all moral obligation, and the flood-gates of licentiousness thrown open? And if God take occasion, from man's excess in wickedness, the more conspicuously to display his abounding grace, may we not safely, and

3 [g] Know ye not, that so many of us [h] as * were baptized into Jesus Christ, [i] were baptized into his death?

4 Therefore [k] we are buried with him by baptism into death; [l] that like as Christ was raised up from the dead [m] by the glory of the Father, [n] even so we also should walk in newness of life.

g 16. vii. 1. 1Cor. iii. 16. v. 6 vi 2, 3. 9 15, 16 19. ix. 23, 24. 2Cor. xiii. 5. Jam. iv. 4.
h Matt xxviii. 19. 1 Cor xii. 13. Gal. iii. 27. 1 Pet. iii 21.
* Or, *are*
i 4, 5. 8 1Cor. xv 29. Gal. ii. 20, 21
k 3 Col ii 12, 13. iii. 1—3
l 9. viii. 11 1Cor. vi. 14. 2 Cor. xiii. 4. Eph. i. 19. 20 ii. 5, 6 —— m John ii. 11. 19, 20. xi. 40. Col i. 11.
n 19. vii. 6. xii 1, 2 xiii. 13. 14 2 Cor. v. 17 Gal vi. 15. 16. Eph. iv. 17. 22—24. v. 8 Phil. iii. 17, 18. Col. i. 9—12. ii. 11, 12. iv. 1. 1 Pet. iv. 1, 2. 2 Pet. i. 4—9.

5 For [o] if we have been [p] planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness* of *his* resurrection:

6 Knowing this, [q] that our old man is crucified with *him*, [r] that the body of sin might be destroyed, [s] that henceforth we should not serve sin.

7 For [t] he that is dead is † freed from sin.

o 8—12 Eph. ii. 5, 6. Phil. iii. 10, 11.
p Ps. xcii. 13. Is. v. 2. Jer ii. 21. Matt. xv. 13. John xii. 24. xv. 1—8.
q Gal. ii. 20 v. 24. Eph. iv. 22. Col. iii. 9, 10.
r vii 24 viii. 3 13. Col. ii. 11, 12.
s 12 22. vi. 25. viii. 4. 2 Kings v. 17 Is xxvi. 13. John viii 34—36
t 2. 8. vii. 2. 4. Col iii. 1—3 1 Pet iv. 1 —— † Or, *justified*. viii. 1.

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even on principle, commit more and greater enormities, and continue in sinful practices, without remorse or amendment, on purpose that the riches of divine grace may be the more glorified in our salvation? This sounds specious; and self-deceived hypocrites, through Satan's suggestions, comment in this manner on the Gospel, and so give some colour to the cavils of infidels and Pharisees. But the apostle has taught us how to answer all such objections, and guard against such abuses. He does not set us an example of keeping out of sight, explaining away, or proposing *cautiously*, the free grace of the Gospel; but while he states his doctrine in the most explicit and decisive language, he shows also the inseparable connexion between justification and sanctification. Let "the thought "be abhorred," says he, "of continuing in sin, that "grace may abound." The unbeliever has no part in that grace, and the believer is "dead to sin," and how then should he live any longer in the practice of it? That view of the glory of God, of the holiness and goodness of the law, and of his own guilt and danger, which, as the effect of regenerating grace, convinced him that he needed the salvation of Christ, and made it precious to his heart, led him also to repent, and to abhor all sin. This change, begun in gracious convictions, was more completely effected, by further discoveries of the grace and experience of the comforts of redemption; so that love and gratitude to the divine Saviour, and other evangelical principles, concur, with hatred of sin, to mortify his affections to its pleasures and interests, and to cause him to separate from iniquity, as a dead man ceases from the actions of life. Not only *ought* this to be the believer's character, but in a measure it *actually* is so; thus it forms the proper evidence, being the inseparable concomitant of his justification. This effectually secures him from abusing the doctrines of grace; he may be seduced into sin, but he cannot live any longer in the habitual practice of known transgression; he cannot take occasion, from abounding grace, to continue in sin, that it may still more abound, but on the contrary, in proportion to his admiring views of the riches of God's mercy in his salvation, he will be "steadfast, unmoveable, "and always abounding in the work of the Lord," and he will only be remiss in duty, when such hopes and affections grow languid and low. 'The benefits of justification 'and sanctification are connected by a perpetual bond; 'each of them flows from Christ, by the grace of God. 'Sanctification is the destruction of sin, that is, of our 'original depravity, in the place of which the purity of a 'renewed nature succeeds. This is the quality, which the 'Spirit creates in the members of Christ our Head.— '"Dying unto sin," 'and "living unto God," 'or Christ, or 'righteousness, answer to each other.' (*Beza.*) It is surprising, that so many learned expositors should interpret the phrase, as if it only meant the *outward profession* made in baptism; and as if all baptized persons were indeed "dead unto sin!"

V. 3, 4. The apostle, by this question, most emphatically shows, that all who had been baptized into the name and religion of Jesus, had received the sign, and made the profession, of communion with him, and conformity to him, in his death, that in virtue of his dying for their sins, they should die to all sin, and have done with their former unholy satisfactions, pursuits, habits, and connexions. This profession was equivalent to "being "buried with Christ," as dead with him; for as his burial was a manifestation that he was really dead, and an introduction to his immediate resurrection by the glorious power of the Father, or for the display of his glory, so the baptism of a converted Jew, or Gentile, was a professed manifestation of his death to sin, and to all his carnal expectations, affections, and pursuits, from which he meant to be entirely secluded, as one buried is from the affairs of life; and it was a professed introduction to his walking "in newness of life," not only as to his outward actions, but with respect to his inward principles. The spiritual meaning of the external sign is the same, when baptism is administered to the infant-offspring of believers; even as the meaning of circumcision was the same, when it was performed on Abraham the aged believer, on Ishmael who perhaps never believed, and on Isaac an infant of eight days old, long before he believed. It was the outward sign of regeneration, or 'a death unto 'sin, and a new birth unto righteousness,' and it sealed justification by faith to all those who ever possessed the thing signified, but to none else. Thus Simon Magus, though baptized adult, derived no more benefit from the outward sign, than the multitudes do, who, having been baptized in infancy, when grown up, despise the inward and spiritual grace of it. Great stress has been laid upon the expression, "buried with him by baptism into death," as proving that baptism ought to be performed by immersion, to which the apostle is supposed to allude: but we are said also to be *crucified* with Christ, and *circumcised* with him, without any allusion to the outward manner in which crucifixion and circumcision were performed; and as baptism is far more frequently mentioned with reference to the *pouring out* of the Holy Ghost, and as the apostle is evidently treating on the inward meaning, not the outward form, of that ordinance, no conclusive argument seems deducible from the expression, that immersion is necessary to baptism, or that baptism was generally thus administered:

8 Now [u] if we be dead with Christ, [x] we believe that we shall also live with him:

9 Knowing that [y] Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; [z] death hath no more dominion over him.

10 For in that he died, [a] he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, [b] he liveth unto God.

11 Likewise [c] reckon ye also yourselves to [d] be dead indeed unto sin, [e] but alive unto God [f] through Jesus Christ our Lord.

u 3–5 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12.
x 1 Cor. xiv 19 2 Cor. iv 10–14 xiii 4. Col iii. 3 2 Thes. iv 11–17.
y Ps. xvi 9–11. Acts ii 24–28. Heb. vii 16 25. x 12, 13. Rev. i. 18
z 14. v. 14 Heb. ii. 14, 15.
a viii. 3. 2 Cor. v. 21. Heb ix. 26–28. 1 Pet. iii. 18
b 11. xiv. 7–9. Luke xx. 38. 2 Cor. v. 15. 1 Pet. iv. 6.
c viii. 18.
d *See on*, 2.
e 13. Gal. ii. 19, 20. 1 Cor. vi. 20. Col. iii. 3–5.
f 23. v. 1. xvi 27. John xx. 31. Eph. ii. 7. Phil. i 11. iv. 7. Col. iii. 17. 1 Pet. ii. 5 iv. 11.

V. 5—7. 'By an elegant metaphor, the apostle compares Christ, who died and was buried, and rose again from the dead, to a plant, which, being covered in the earth, germinates in due time. And then, because he had said that we are dead to sin, and buried with Christ, that we might rise again unto righteousness, in order to intimate that all these things take place by the grace which we derive from Christ, he says that we have grown together with him into one plant, as those things which are "planted together" 'with a tree grow together, and live by one common sap.' (*Beza.*) 'We grow together with Christ, as moss,—misseltoe, or such like, grow up by a tree, and are nourished by the juice thereof.' (*Leigh.*) Sinners become one with Christ, by partaking of the Holy Spirit, which animates his whole mystical body, as the soul does our natural bodies, and by the teaching and influence of the Holy Spirit, they believe unto justification; but the same Spirit also mortifies all their sinful passions, and renews their souls unto holiness. If then a man be planted together with Christ in the likeness of his death, he most certainly will be conformed to him in the likeness of his resurrection, and, by motives and grace derived from him, habitually live a holy life, according to a new rule, and for new ends and purposes. For he will know, that Christ was crucified to atone for sin, in order that he might mortify and destroy it. So that the corrupt nature, (called *a man*, because it comprises a complete system of unholy dispositions and affections, and imparts its baleful influence through all the powers of the soul and members of the body, and *the old* man, because derived from the first Adam, and so in every one prior to grace, or the image of the second Adam,) is in all true believers, crucified with Christ, by the grace derived from his cross. It is deprived of dominion, and proscribed as an enemy and a condemned criminal; its destruction is absolutely determined; it is weakened, confined, and in a disgraced, suffering, and dying state, though it yet lives and struggles for life, and even for liberty and victory. Nor is there the least intention, either in the believer or his gracious Lord, to release the crucified rebel; die he must, though in a lingering manner; the whole body of sin, every kind and degree of inconformity to the holy law of God, must be abolished and destroyed, that the believer may no more be the slave of any sin, and that at length he may be finally delivered from its harassing emotions. For he that is dead to the love and practice of sin is freed for ever from its yoke, he hath passed into the service of another master, sin hath no further claim upon him, and shall never recover its lost authority. Thus the seventh verse is commonly explained; but it is most exactly translated: "He that is dead has been justified "from sin;" and the literal meaning seems still more aptly to coincide with the apostle's argument; he, and he only who is dead to sin, is justified from the guilt of it, "having received the free gift unto justification of life," (v. 18.) His death to sin is the requisite attestation of his being accounted righteous, so that the doctrine, properly understood, is incapable of that perversion which is generally objected to it.

V. 8—10. Conformity to Christ, in his death and resurrection, is the *experimental* ground of hope, that we shall live with Christ for ever in heaven, as partakers of the gift of God, even eternal life, through him. The promise of eternal life is indeed the direct ground of hope in this respect; but all who hear the Gospel do not obtain the blessing, and how shall we know that we, rather than our neighbours, are interested in the promise, except by being conscious of having experienced this 'death unto sin, and new birth unto righteousness?' If a professed Christian is a stranger to this change, his confidence of reigning with Christ in glory is presumptuous. But when we become dead to our once most beloved sinful pleasures, our prospect is clear, and our interest in the righteousness of the Surety is demonstrated. He rose from the dead, no more to be subjected to the dominion of death, seeing the end for which he died was fully answered. He could never have been liable to death, had it not been on account of our sins imputed to him as our Surety, to expiate which he died once; but, having accomplished that grand and gracious design, he rose again, and now in our nature, as one with the Father, he liveth a heavenly life, in unspeakable exaltation and felicity, to the glory of the divine perfections and government, by the conducting and perfecting of his mediatorial work, "as "Head over all things to his church." In like manner, therefore, in conformity to his death and resurrection, we die unto sin, are delivered from its dominion, and rise to a new life, to fall no more under that bondage; but henceforth for ever to live unto God, and to find happiness in his holy service, and in glorifying his name. As the blessed Jesus was in himself wholly free from sin, it seems impossible to find any satisfactory meaning in the words, "He died unto sin once," unless we allow that he died as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of men, which were imputed to him, and "bare them in his own body "on the tree."

V. 11. The preceding verses declare the character and experience of *real* Christians, according to their measure of grace; but the apostle here proceeds to exhort *professed* Christians to evince their sincerity by a suitable conduct, and true believers to live up to their privileges, and in consistency with their profession. For this end, let them account themselves to be "dead indeed unto sin," and be influenced by this to a resolute rejection of all its allurements and temptations; and let them consider themselves as alive unto God, through the redemption of his

12 Let [g] not sin therefore reign in your [h] mortal body, that ye should obey it [i] in the lusts thereof:

13 Neither [k] yield ye your members *as* * instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but [l] yield yourselves unto God, as those that are [m] alive from the dead; and [n] your members *as* instruments of righteousness unto God.

14 For [o] sin shall not have dominion over you: [p] for ye are not under the law, but [q] under grace.

15 [r] What then? [s] shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

16 [t] Know ye not, that [u] to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; [x] whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

17 But [y] God be thanked, [z] that ye were the servants of sin: [a] but ye have

g 16. v. 21. vii 23, 24. Num. xxxiii. 55. Deut vii. 2. Josh. xxiii. 12, 13. Judg ii 3. Ps. xix. 13. cxix. 133. h viii. 11. 1 Cor. xv. 53, 54. 2 Cor. iv. 11. v. 4. i 16. ii 8. viii. 13. xiii. 14. Gal v. 16. 24 Eph. ii. 3. iv. 22. 2 Tim. ii. 22. Tit. ii. 12. iii. 3 Jam. i. 14, 15. iv. 1—3. 1 Pet. i 14 ii. 11. iv. 2, 3. 1 John ii 15—17. Jude 16.——k 16. 19. vii. 5. 23. 1 Cor. vi. 15. Col. iii 5 Jam iii 5, 6. iv. 1.——* Gr. *arms*, or, *weapons*. 2 Cor. x. 4 ——l xii 1. 2 Chr. xxx. 8. Dan iii 28 1 Cor. vi 20. 2 Cor. viii. 5. Phil. i. 20.——m 11. Luke xv. 24. 32 John v. 24. 2 Cor. v. 15. Eph ii. 5. v. 14. Col. ii 13 1 Pet. ii. 24 ——n Ps xxxvii. 30 Prov. xii. 18 Jam. iii. 5, 6.——o 12. v. 20, 21. Ps. cxxx. 7, 8 Mic. vii. 19. Matt. i. 21. John viii. 36. Tit. ii. 14. Heb. viii. 10.

p iii. 19. 20 vii 4—11. Gal iii 23. iv. 4, 5 21 v 18. q 15 iv. 16. v. 21. xi. 6. John i 17. 2 Cor iii 6—9 r *See on*, iii 9. s 1, 2 1 Cor. ix. 20. 21. 2 Cor. vii 1. Gal. v. 13. 17, 18 Eph. ii. 8—10. Tit ii 11—13. Jude 4. t *See on*, 3 u 13 Job xxiv. 15 Matt. vi. 24. John viii. 34. 2 Pet. ii. 19. x 12. 17. 19—23. y *See on*, i. 8 1 Chr xxix 13—16 Ezra vii. 27. Matt. xi 25, 26. Acts xi. 18. xxviii. 15 ——z 1 Cor. vi. 9—11. Eph. ii 5—10. 1 Tim i 13—16. Tit. iii 3—7. 1 Pet ii. 9, 10. iv. 2—5.——a i. 5. ii. 8 xv. 18. xvi. 26. Ps. xviii. 44 *Marg*. 2 Cor. x. 5, 6. Heb. v. 9. xi. 8. 1 Pet i. 22 iii 1. iv. 17.

Son; that they may feel more powerfully the motives of the Gospel, to devote their lives, talents, and powers to his service, and to seek all their happiness in glorifying him.

V. 12, 13. 'The vicious affections, like noxious weeds, sprout up and increase of themselves but too naturally; while the graces of the Christian temper, exotics in the soil of the human heart, like the more tender productions of the vegetable world, though the breath of heaven must quicken them, require on our part also, in order to their being preserved in health and vigour, constant superintendence and assiduous care.' (*Wilberforce.*) Let none therefore, suffer sin to reign in their bodies, (which were become mortal, and which no attention or gratification could preserve from the grave;) that they should obey and comply with its corrupt lustings, to the injury of their immortal souls. If a *professed* Christian did this habitually, he could have no evidence of his conversion; as provision is made in the Gospel for deliverance from the dominion, as well as from the condemnation, of sin: and if a real Christian did this in any particular instances, it must weaken his evidence and confidence, and would be the effect of partial unbelief, unwatchfulness, and forgetfulness of his obligations and privileges. Let then no one of them yield, or consign over, the members, senses, or organs of their bodies, to be employed as the instruments or weapons of the carnal propensities of the soul, in doing the work or carrying on the warfare of unrighteousness, in the commission of sin: by making them inlets to sinful thoughts or affections into their hearts; by communicating the inward evil to pollute others with corrupt words; or by gratifying any sensual, malevolent, covetous, or ambitious inclination. But rather let them yield and give up themselves wholly unto God, as alive from the condemnation and death of sin by his abundant grace; that all their powers of body as well as soul, might be consecrated to his service, as instruments of his work in all righteousness, to his glory; or as weapons with which to fight his battles, against sin, the world, and Satan. Thus our eyes should be employed in contemplating the works, and reading the word, of God; our ears, in hearing his voice, and in attending to the cries of the distressed; our tongues in speaking the praises of God, and in profitable conversation; and even our natural inclinations should be so regulated by his law, and subordinated to superior considerations, that whether we eat, or drink, or whatever we do, we may do it to the glory of God. Is it not evident, that sin is here represented as having its seat in the soul, which employs the members of the body as instruments of accomplishing its vile purposes? And if so, what becomes of that system of interpretation, which supposes animal nature to be the *flesh*, and the rational soul the *spirit?* (*Notes*, vii. 15—25. viii. 1—13.)

V. 14, 15. Hope of victory gives fresh ardour to the courageous; assurance of it would make a coward valiant. The slave emancipated from his yoke, or the captive escaped from his dungeon, will resist all attempts to reduce him to his former abject state, with a vigour proportioned to the prospect of preserving his beloved liberty. Thus the apostle assures believers, that sin shall not reassume its hated dominion over them, in order to animate their opposition to its influence in every instance. He shows that the ground of this assurance of final liberty and victory lies in the nature of the covenant. He could not intend merely to distinguish between the legal dispensation and that of the Gospel, for all were not slaves to sin who were under the former, nor are all free from sin who live under the latter. But the moral law, as the foundation of the covenant of works, is evidently opposed to the covenant of grace. All who remain under the legal covenant must be held under the dominion of sin, and their efforts to emancipate themselves must be unsuccessful, because no grace is by it promised, or communicated to a sinner. But the believer passes from under this covenant, to be under that of mercy and grace; and as motives and encouragements are by it supplied, so effectual help is insured to him, to preserve him from ever again becoming the willing slave of any sin, though he may be sorely harassed, baffled, or even polluted, by those temptations and corruptions, to which he once was wholly subjected. May Christians then safely commit sin, because "they are not under the law, but under grace?" To this the apostle answers with his usual energetic expression of abhorrence. A carnal man taking it for granted that he is not under the law, but under grace, because of some change of notions or flow of affections, may thus abuse the doctrine of final perseverance, as well as that of free justification; but the true believer cannot, his heart rises against the vile suggestion, and he must reject it with decided detestation; or if betrayed to yield to it in any instance, he must abhor himself, and deeply repent of such base ingratitude and perverseness.

obeyed from the heart [b] that form of doctrine * which was delivered you.

18 Being then [c] made free from sin, ye became the [d] servants of righteousness.

19 I [e] speak after the manner of men, [f] because of the infirmity of your flesh: for [g] as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity [h] unto iniquity; even [i] so now yield your members servants to righteousness [k] unto holiness.

20 For when ye were [l] the servants of sin, ye were free † from righteousness.

21 [m] What fruit had ye then in those things, [n] whereof ye are now ashamed? [o] for the end of those things *is* death.

22 But [p] now being made free from sin, and [q] become servants to God, [r] ye have your fruit unto holiness, [s] and the end everlasting life.

23 For [t] the wages of sin *is* death; [u] but the gift of God *is* eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

b 2 Tim. i. 13.
* Or, *whereto ye were delivered.*
c 14. Ps cxvi. 16. cxix. 32 45 Luke i 74, 75. John viii. 32. 36 1 Cor vii. 21, 22 Gal. v 1. 1 Pet ii. 16.
d 19, 20 22. Is xxvi. 13. liv. 17.
e iii. 5. 1 Cor. ix 8 xv. 32. Gal. iii. 15.
f viii. 26 xv. 1. Heb iv. 15
g 13. 17. 1 Cor vi. 11. Eph. ii. 2, 3. Col. iii. 5—7. 1 Pet. iv. 2—4.
h 16. 1 Cor. v. 6. xv. 33. 2 Tim. ii. 16, 17. Heb. xii 15.
i [illegible].——k 22.——l *See on*, 17.——† Or, *to righteousness.*

m vii. 5. Prov. i. 31. v. 10—13. ix. 17, 18. Is. iii 10. Jer. xvii. 13 xliv. 20—24. Gal. vi 7, 8.
n Ezra ix 6. Job xl. 4. xlii 6. Jer. iii 3. viii. 12 xxxi. 9. Ez. xvi 61—63. xxxvi 31, 32. xliii 11. Dan. ix 7, 8. xii. 2. Luke xv. 17—21 2 Cor. vii. 11 1 John ii. 28.
o 23. i 32. Ps. lxxiii 17 Prov. xiv 12. xvi. 25. Phil. iii. 19. Heb. vi 8 Jam. v. 20. 1 Pet. iv. 17. Rev. xx. 14.——p *See on*, 14. 18. viii. 2. 2 Cor. iii. 17. Gal. v. 13.——q vii 25. Gen. l 17 Job i 8. Ps. lxxxvi. 2. cxliii. 12 Is. liv. 17. Dan iii. 26 vi. 20. Gal. i. 10 Col. iv. 12. Tit. i. 1. Jam. i. 1. 1 Pet. ii 16. Rev. vii. 3.
r Ps. xcii 14. John xv. 2, 16. Gal v. 22. Eph. v. 9. Phil. i. 11. iv. 17. Col. i. 10.——s 21. Num. xxiii. 10. Ps. xxxvii. 37, 38. Matt. xiii. 40 43. xix 29. xxv 46. John iv. 36.——t v. 12 viii 17. Gen ii. 17. Ez. xviii. 4. 20 Is. iii. 11. 1 Cor. vi 9, 10. Gal. iii 10. vi. 7, 8. Jam. i. 15. Rev. xxi 8——u ii 7. v. 17 21 John iii 14—17. 36. iv. 14. v. 24 39, 40. vi. 27. 32, 33. 40. 50—58. 68. x. 28 xvii. 2. Tit. i. 2. 1 Pet. i. 3 1 John ii. 25. v. 11, 12.

V. 16—19. It could not but be known and acknowledged, that all believers were the servants of God. The apostle therefore demanded, whether it might not be ascertained whom any man served, by observing the constant tenour of his conduct? A person may do an occasional service for one, to whom he is not a servant; but no doubt he serves that man, to whom he habitually yields and addicts himself, and in whose work he spends his time and strength, day after day, and year after year. The case is the same in spiritual matters; a man may profess Christianity, and in some things appear to serve God, and yet habitually addict himself to sinful pursuits and pleasures. But every one must be judged to be the servant of that master, to execute whose commands he willingly yields himself, whether it be the sinful bias of his own heart, in such actions as lead to death, or the new spiritual disposition to obedience, in habitually performing the righteousness required in the law. The apostle, however, not only congratulated the Romans, but thanked God also, on account of the change which had taken place in them. They had been the willing devoted slaves of sin, which they uniformly obeyed by gratifying their various carnal inclinations, without regard to the authority or glory of God. But they had now cordially obeyed the call of the Gospel, they had *been delivered, or cast into the very fashion of it,* as melted metal receives and retains the exact impression of the mould into which it is poured. Being thus renewed into the nature of the humble, holy, and loving Gospel of Christ, they were set at liberty from the slavery of sin, and became the servants of righteousness, obeying the dictates of that new nature, which is, as it were, God's representative in the heart, even as sin is that of Satan. These things the apostle stated to the Christians at Rome, by similitudes taken from the affairs of men, "because of the infirmity of their flesh;" which rendered them less capable of understanding abstract reasonings, and that he might guard them against those delusions, to which their weakness and remaining sinfulness would otherwise expose them. As therefore, before their conversion, they had yielded their bodies as well as their souls, to be the servants of uncleanness and injustice, thus continually accumulating guilt, adding strength to their evil propensities, and furthering the cause of wickedness and ungodliness in the world; even so ought they now to devote themselves wholly to be the servants of righteousness, or to execute constantly the commands of God, the dictates of his Spirit, and the motions of the new nature; that by progressive sanctification, they might press forward to perfect holiness, and do what they could to render others also holy and happy.

V. 20. The willing slaves of sin, though by no means free from obligations to be righteous, are *yet unrestrained by them* in following their own carnal inclinations; they perform no service to righteousness, they are not influenced by a regard to the glory or authority of God in any of their actions, but uniformly gratify some of their own unholy passions, and seek happiness in so doing.

V. 21—23. The apostle here calls on his readers to declare, what advantages they had acquired in the service of sin? What was the fruit produced by those evil actions, of which, as penitents, they were at length ashamed? They could not but know, that vanity, vexation, disappointment, disgrace, disease, remorse, fear, and sorrow, always attended, or followed sinful indulgences, besides their fatal effects on others; and therefore, if this life alone were considered, they could have no rational inducement to return to them. But, besides all present bad consequences, "the end of these things is death," and it is a mere delusion to suppose, that any creed or profession can preserve the habitual transgressor from this condemnation. As *death* is here opposed to *everlasting life*, and as temporal death is the end of the most godly, as well as the most ungodly life, it is clearly absurd to restrict his meaning to the death of the body; doubtless he meant the future state of final misery, in a total separation from the presence and favour of God, and under his awful wrath and vengeance. From this condemnation the believer is set at liberty, when made free from sin, as the removal of the malefactor's fetters, and the opening of his dungeon, are connected with the pardon of his crimes. Then the Christian becomes the servant of God, thenceforth he has his fruit unto holiness, or the nature and effects of his conduct are holy, and it tends to increasing sanctification, and also to promote the general cause of truth and holiness against that of delusion, sin, and misery; and it terminates in perfect holiness; so that instead of death, at the end of his course, he is put in possession of everlasting life, of which he had many foretastes, in holy consolations, when serving God in newness of life. But this happy event of his conduct is not to be considered as a

CHAP. VII.

The believer's death to the law and union with Christ, that he may serve God in newness of spirit, are illustrated by the law concerning marriage, 1—6. *Through the depravity of human nature, the law, though holy, just, and good, can only occasion sin and death,* 7—13. *The painful conflict of those who delight in the law of God, but are not able to keep it,* 14—24; *and their prospect of deliverance by Christ,* 25.

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merited reward. Indeed death, temporal and eternal, is the stipend, or stipulated and deserved wages, of sin, even of every violation of God's law; this every man hath earned, and every unbeliever will receive. But eternal life is the gift of God to those who condemn themselves, and renounce all dependence on their defective and defiled services, to rely entirely on free grace, through the righteousness and atonement of Jesus Christ; and that holiness, which is the meetness for heavenly happiness, is as much the gift of God through Christ, as that imputed righteousness which is the believer's title to it. Thus the apostle closes his argument concerning justification, and sanctification as the seal and evidence of it.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—4.

Self-righteous pride and antinomian licentiousness are two fatal rocks, on which immense multitudes are continually wrecked, and between which none but the Holy Spirit can pilot us; and the objections of open enemies to the doctrines of grace derive their greatest plausibility from the unholy lives of many professed friends. The mercy of God is indeed glorified in proportion to the abounding sin which is freely pardoned to the penitent, but his justice will be glorified in the deepest condemnation of those, who "continue in sin, that grace may abound." Every true believer abhors the thought of thus perverting the Gospel, and despising the riches of divine grace; and could he be led to think that he might go on in sin with impunity, he would be kept back from it, by a strong aversion; for how can he, in whose heart those principles are mortified, which gave rise to his former sinful courses, continue in those practices, which he now has no pleasure in, but loathes and dreads? Our baptism indeed may instruct us in the necessity of thus dying to sin, and being buried, as it were, from all ungodly and unholy pursuits, and of rising to walk with God in newness of life; and unholy professors of Christianity, (alas, how many are they!) belie and virtually renounce their baptism. They have had only the outward sign of 'a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness,' they have never passed from the family of Satan into that of God, they have never renounced the world, the flesh, and the devil, to believe in Christ, and keep his commandments.

V. 5—15

If indeed we have been so made one with Christ, as to stand accepted in his righteousness, we shall certainly have conformity to him in his death and resurrection; and his grace will enable us to "crucify our old man, with his "affections and lusts," and excite us to determine on the destruction of the whole body of sin, that we may no more serve that hated enemy, which crucified our beloved Lord, nor ever rest satisfied, till it hath no place in our souls. Thus, by looking to our crucified, risen and glorified Redeemer, and believing that we shall live together with him, we should be animated to "reckon ourselves "dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through him." As our *mortal* bodies will at last be raised immortal and incorruptible by the almighty power of the Saviour, so we should never allow sin to reign in them, or obey it in the lusts thereof; but, praying earnestly for help from above, we should refuse to yield any of our senses or members to be the instruments of unrighteousness, and seek to have them all devoted to God, and employed in his service, as those who have already entered on that divine and happy life, which we hope to lead to all eternity. To this we may be encouraged by the nature of the new covenant. If indeed Christians, we are not under the law, which gives no power, and proposes no mercy, but under the grace of the Gospel; and this ensures to the regenerate the liberty, with which Christ hath made him free.

V. 16—23.

The real Christian finds by experience that his heart as well as his state is changed; he has most cordially changed his master and his work; he remembers that once he was the wretched slave of sin, but he thanks God, that he both heard, understood, believed, and obeyed the Gospel; thus he found his mind cast into the form of it; and as *the same metal* becomes a *new vessel*, when melted and cast into the mould, so he became *a new creature*, when he was thus made free from sin, and became the servant of righteousness. Notwithstanding, therefore, "the infir- "mity of his flesh," he aims, and prays to be enabled, to spend all his powers and capacities of body and soul in the service of righteousness, unto increasing holiness, even as he once yielded them to serve his sinful passions, unto abounding iniquity. As they, who now are the servants of God, once were the slaves of sin, so they, who now are the slaves of sin, may become the servants of God, through the Gospel. We ought therefore diligently to use every means with those who are yet unchanged, in dependence on his blessing to render them effectual; and when the change takes place, we should heartily thank him for it. We may boldly inquire of sinners, What fruit they gather from their vices? What real good they derive from ungodliness and iniquity? We may show them that all must be ashamed of such things, either in deep repentance here, or in everlasting contempt and misery hereafter; for the end of them is death, and every wise man will consider in what future consequences his present conduct is likely to terminate. Happy is he, who is covered with shame for his past offences, who is set at liberty from sin, who has his fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life:

[a] KNOW ye not, [b] brethren, (for I speak [c] to them that know the law,) how that [d] the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?

2 For [e] the woman which hath an husband, is bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of *her* husband.

3 So then, [f] if while *her* husband liveth she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law: so that she is no adulteress, [g] though she be married to another man.

4 Wherefore, my brethren, [h] ye also are become dead to the law by [i] the body of Christ; [k] that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead; [l] that ye should bring forth fruit unto God.

[a] See on, vi. 3.
[b] ix. 3. x. 1.
[c] ii 17, 18. Ezra vii. 25. Prov. vi. 23. 1 Cor. ix. 8, 9. Gal. iv 21.
[d] 6. vi. 14.
[e] Gen. ii. 23, 24. Num. xxx 7, 8. 1 Cor. vii. 4. 39.
[f] Ex. xx. 14. Lev. xx. 10. Num v. 13, &c. Deut. xxii. 22 — 24. Matt. v. 32. Mark x. 6—12. John viii. 3—5.
[g] Ruth i. 13. 1 Sam xxv. 39—42 1 Tim. v. 11—14.
[h] 6. vi. 14. Gal. ii. 19, 20 iii 13. v. 18. Col ii. 14. 20.
[i] Matt xxvi. 26. John vi 51. 1Cor x 16 Heb x. 10 1Pet ii 24.
[k] Ps xlv 10—15. Is. liv. 5 lxii, 5. Hos. ii. 19. 20. John iii. 29. 2 Cor. xi. 2. Eph. v. 25—27. Rev. xix 7, 8. xxi 9, 10.
[l] vi. 22 Ps xlv. 16. John xv. 8. Gal. v. 22, 23 Phil. i 11. iv. 17. Col i. 6. 10.

It is of the Lord's mercy, that we have not received as well as deserved, the wages of sin; but thanks be to God for the inestimable gift of his own Son to be our Salvation, and of eternal life through him! May we all forego our boasts and renounce our vain confidences, may we come as condemned criminals, not to buy, merit, or earn, the favour of God, which is life eternal, but to supplicate him, for Christ's sake, to bestow it on us as a free gift, that he may have all the glory both now and for evermore!

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1—4. The apostle had before said, "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not "under the law, but under grace." (*Note*, vi. 14, 15.) and he here proceeds to confirm and illustrate that proposition. In interpreting these verses, the meaning of the word *law* must be first carefully settled, that is, whether the ceremonial law in particular, or the Mosaic dispensation in general, or the moral law, as requiring perfect obedience in order to justification of life, be intended. Most expositors explain it either of the ceremonial law, or the Mosaic dispensation, but they do not assign any satisfactory reason, why sin must have had dominion over a man, as long as he continued under the ceremonial law, or the Mosaic dispensation, or why deliverance from the law *in this sense*, by professing the Gospel, should ensure his liberty from that slavery. No doubt, great numbers under the Mosaic dispensation were both justified and sanctified (by the mercy and grace of the new covenant indeed;) but their relation to the law did not prevent them from being made free from sin. On the other hand, vast numbers remain slaves to sin under the Christian dispensation, and their external privileges and profession do not deliver them. But so long as a man continues under the law, as a covenant, and seeks justification by his own obedience, he inevitably continues the slave of sin, in one form or other, as nothing but "the Spirit of life in "Christ Jesus" can make any one "free from the law "of sin and death;" and on the other hand, every one who is delivered from the law, as a covenant, by living faith in Christ, is, by the "Spirit of life" given to him, delivered from the bondage of sin, which shall never more have dominion over him. The apostle's argument through the rest of this chapter relates exclusively to the *moral* law, and refers especially to the tenth commandment, as they who explain these verses of the ceremonial law, or the Mosaic dispensation, are constrained to admit; and though he speaks in the first three verses of the law in a more general sense, it should be noticed, that he is only illustrating his main subject by an apt similitude. 'When 'the apostle particularly meant the *ceremonial*, in distinc'tion from the *moral*, law, he frequently spoke of it in 'diminutive terms. (*Eph.* ii. 15. *Col.* ii. 20. *Heb.* viii. '13. ix. 10.) But none of these lessening or distinctive 'characters of the law are found in this epistle, to 'restrain it to the ceremonial law, in what is said about 'justification by its works.' (*Guise.*) These remarks may prepare the way for that interpretation of this passage, and of the chapter, which, after mature deliberation, I have given. Many Jewish converts to Christianity resided at Rome, and the apostle, it is probable, more immediately intended these, when he said, "I speak "unto you that know the law." But several of the Gentile converts had doubtless got acquainted with the books of Moses. Now it was well known by them, that the law retained its authority over a man, to enforce obedience or inflict punishment, as long as *he* lived, (or as *it* lived, as the clause may be rendered.) In ordinary cases death alone dissolved the relation between the Jew and the law, yet, in particular instances, the law became dead, and lost its authority to command or condemn a man, through his change of circumstance; and when the Jew became a Christian, and understood his Christian liberty, his relation to the legal dispensation was finally terminated. From this case of a Jew, in respect of the law of Moses, as the condition of the national covenant, they might learn how the matter stood in respect of the moral law, as the condition of the covenant of works. The law respecting marriage also, would aptly illustrate the subject. The married woman was bound to her husband in the strictest bonds, and while the moral law forbad adultery, the judicial law condemned the adulteress to death; but this law became dead to her, and she to it, by the death of her husband. If, before this, she had been married to another man, the law would have condemned her to be stoned; but after her husband's death, she incurred no penalty by marrying another man. The apostle does not, in this place, state the precepts concerning marriage under the Christian dispensation; he merely shows, in one particular, how the case stood under the law; he says nothing concerning divorces or polygamy, neither does he intimate that the man would be an adulterer, who took another wife, while his former was living and not *legally* divorced; yet our Lord hath taught this. (*Notes*, *Matt.* xix. 1—9.) It would therefore be foreign to the apostle's design to interpret his words as meaning, that a woman, who had

5 For when we were [m] in the flesh, the * motions of sins [n] which were by the law, [o] did work in our [p] members to [q] bring forth fruit unto death.

6 But [r] now we are delivered from the law, † that being dead wherein we were held; that we should [s] serve in newness of spirit, and not *in* the oldness of the letter.

m viii. 8, 9. John iii. 6. Gal. v. 16, 17. 24. Eph ii. 3 11. Tit. iii. 3

* Gr. *passions.* i. 26. *Gr.*

n iii. 20 iv. 15. v. 20. 1 Cor xv. 56. 2 Cor. iii 6—9. Gal iii. 10 Jam. ii 9, 10. 1 John iii. 4.

o 8—13 Matt. xv. 19. Gal v. 19—21 Jam. i 15.

p 23. vi 13. 19. Col. iii. 5. Jam. iv. 1.

q vi. 21.——r 4. vi. 14, 15. Gal. iii. 13. 23—25. iv 4. 5.——† Or, *being dead to that.* i. 4

s i 9 ii 27—29. vi. 4. 11 19 22. xii. 2. Ez. xi. 19 xxxvi. 26. 2 Cor iii. 6. v. 17. Gal. ii 19, 20. vi. 15. Phil. iii. 3. Col iii. 10.

7 [t] What shall we say then? [u] *Is* the law sin? God forbid. Nay, [x] I had not known sin but by the law: for I had not known ‡ lust, except the law had said, [y] Thou shalt not covet.

8 But [z] sin, taking occasion by the commandment, [a] wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. [b] For without the law sin *was* dead.

t iii. 5. iv. 1. vi. 15.

u 8. 11. 13. 1 Cor. xv. 56.

x 5. ii. 20. Ps. xix. 7—12. cxix. 96.

‡ Or, *concupiscence.* 8. 1 Thes iv. 5

y xiii. 9. Gen. iii. 6 Ex. xx 17. Deut. v. 21. Josh. vii 21. 2 Sam xi 2. 1 Kings xxi. 1—4. Mic. ii. 2. Matt. v. 28. Luke xii. 15. Eph. v. 3. Col. iii. 5. 1 John ii. 15, 16.——z 11. 13. 17. iv. 15 v. 20.——a Jam i 14, 15.——b iv. 15. John xv. 22. 24. 1 Cor. xv 56.

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been equitably divorced for consanguinity, (which rendered her former marriage a nullity;) or for any other cause, would be guilty of adultery, if she married again during her former husband's life: for neither the law of Moses, nor the precepts of Christ, inculcate any such thing. Now the case of the believer, in respect of the subject under consideration, bore some analogy to that which had been stated. Not only were the Jewish converts dead to the Mosaic law, by its virtual abrogation; but all true Christians were become dead to the moral law, as a covenant of works "by the body of Christ," by his incarnation, obedience, and sacrifice on the cross for their transgressions. He having thus answered its demands as their Surety, it had no further power to condemn; but believers were looked upon to have fully endured its sentence, and fulfilled its righteousness, by their Representative. Thus the relation between them and the law was dissolved, (as marriage is by the natural or legal death of either party;) and this was in order to their being married to Christ as risen from the dead, that being united to him according to the covenant of grace, and interested in all his unsearchable riches, they might, by the supply of his Spirit, bring forth such fruit in their lives, as should bear the holy stamp of God upon it; be meet for his gracious acceptance; and honourable to his name. It should be remembered, that many of the Christians at Rome had been Gentiles, who never were under the Mosaic law; and even the Jewish converts were not as yet required to renounce it: and this consideration still more fully proves that the apostle meant something very different from what many learned expositors have supposed. (*Note, Gal.* ii. 19, 20.)

V. 5, 6. "In the flesh," evidently means an unregenerate state, (*Marg. Ref.*) which is the necessary consequence of being under the covenant of works, and destitute of the grace of the Gospel. While, therefore, both Jews and Gentiles were in this state, the motions of sin, or those carnal desires and affections which the law forbad, powerfully exerted themselves, wrought by the members of the body, or rather in all the constituent parts of the man, to produce such thoughts, desires, words, and works, as subjected them to death by the sentence of the law, instead of entitling them to life, as having fulfilled its righteousness. But when, by faith in Christ, they were delivered from that covenant, and their former relation to the law was dissolved, they becoming dead to it, or it becoming dead to them, they were brought into a new relation to Christ, and God dealt with them by another covenant. Being, therefore, now regenerate, and having sure promises of grace as well as mercy, they were encouraged and enabled to worship and obey God in newness of spirit, from ingenuous principles, according to the spiritual meaning of the precept, in cordial love and gratitude, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and not merely with external observances, moral or ceremonial, according to the mere letter of the precept, and the corrupt glosses of the scribes and elders upon it, of which alone the old nature is capable. (*Notes,* &c. *Matt.* v. 2 *Cor.* iii.) 'Some 'of the works of the flesh do not require the members of 'our body, but only the faculties of our minds, for their 'performance.' (*Locke.*)

V. 7, 8. It might be objected, that if they who were under the law inevitably remained the slaves of sin, and if none could serve God in newness of spirit, till they were dead to it, and it to them, surely the *law* and *sin* were in substance the same, and would not this be a vile aspersion to cast upon the law of God? To this objection, the apostle answered, with abhorrence of such blasphemy, by observing that the law and sin were diametrically opposite to each other, and that the former tended to discover and detect the latter, (iii. 20. v. 20.) so that, in his own case, he should not have known the sinfulness of his affections and actions, but by the law. That exact balance detected the deficiency of his obedience, and that perfect standard showed the obliquity of his heart and life, as well as proved his sins to be more aggravated and numerous, than he had ever before imagined; at the same time that it contained no provision of mercy or grace for him. Thus the wholesome laws of the community shut up the criminal in a dungeon, load him with fetters, and condemn him to death for his contrariety to them; but the clemency of the prince alone can give him a pardon and release. In particular, the apostle observes, that, by his natural conscience without the law, he should not have known that *lust,* or *coveting,* was sinful; he should not have supposed, that, though free from adultery, theft, or murder, yet the desire of a forbidden indulgence, or an object withheld by Providence, was criminal, even so criminal as to expose him to the curse of the law. Nay, he should not have felt so many *lustings* or *covetings,* if the very strictness of the commandment, "Thou shalt not "covet," had not given *occasion* to them. So that *sin,* (his depraved nature, spoken of as an agent,) traiterously watching the opportunity of destroying him, took occasion from the commandment to excite in his heart all manner of concupiscence. The imagination began to rove after forbidden objects, the carnal heart hankered for them, and he was led to conceive of some greater satisfaction in them, than in those which were not forbidden. That man has

9 For [c] I was alive [d] without the law once: [e] but when the commandment came, [f] sin revived, [g] and I died.

10 And [h] the commandment, which *was ordained* to life, I found *to be* unto death.

c Matt. xix. 20. Luke x 25–29. xv 29. xviii 9–12 21. Phil iii 5, 6.
d Matt. v 21, &c. xv 4–6 Mark vii 8–13
e iii 19, 20 x. 5. Ps xl. 12. Gal. iii. 10. Jam. ii. 10, 11.
f 21–23 viii. 7.——g 4–6. *Marg.* 11. iii. 20. Gal. ii. 19.——h x. 5. Lev. xviii. 5 Ez xx. 11. Luke x. 27–29. 2 Cor. iii 7.

11 For [i] sin, taking occasion by the commandment, [k] deceived me, and by it slew *me.*

12 Wherefore [l] the law *is* holy; and [m] the commandment holy, and just, and good.

i 8 13.
k Is. xliv. 20. Jer. xvii. 9. xlix 16 Ob. 3. Eph iv. 22 Heb. iii 13. Jam. i. 22 26.
l 14. iii. 31. xii. 2 Deut iv. 8. x. 12, 13. Neh. ix 13. Ps. xix. 7–12 cxix. 39. 86 127, 128. 137. 140. 172. 1 Tim. i 8 ——m 7.

no deep knowledge of human nature, or the perverse wickedness of his own heart, who does not observe, or is not conscious, of this irrational propensity, to fancy that there is something exquisitely pleasurable in what is out of our reach, or prohibited. Indeed, it seems natural to expect that it would be so with the posterity of those, who could be satisfied with no fruit in the garden of God, except that which he had forbidden; amidst the profusion of Eden, perhaps that tree had been disregarded, if it had not been prohibited. We soon see this propensity in others, especially in our children, though perhaps self-love may make us blind to it in ourselves. "For without "the law sin was dead;" not only the same affections and actions could not have hurt us, if the law had not given sin its condemning power, but the sinful principle lays comparatively in a dead or dormant state, as a frozen serpent is inactive and innoxious, till the warmth enlivens it, and it recovers vigour, and then if provoked its nature becomes apparent. Thus the spiritual precepts and awful sanctions of the law excite the depravity of the heart by their contrariety to it, (as the alkali produces an effervescence by its opposition to the acid;) and so the heart rises in blasphemous enmity to the law, and rushes more impetuously into transgression. In what sense can this be applied to the ceremonial law, the ordinances of which a carnal mind might readily comply with, provided their relation to the Gospel were not perceived? Does the tenth commandment belong to the ceremonial law? Where is the marked transition from the ceremonial to the moral law to be found in this discussion? Is not the apostle evidently throughout illustrating one proposition, namely, that they who are under the law are slaves to sin? The inconsistency of expositors, who set out by confining the meaning to the ceremonial law, or the Mosaic dispensation, and then glide, either imperceptibly to themselves, or at least without hinting it to their readers, to the most spiritual precept of the moral law, must be obvious to every attentive student; and the perplexity which arises from this source is inexpressible. 'It is surprising to me, 'that the learned Mr. Locke, and some others after him, 'should make the sense of the passage to be, "without "the law," (meaning the law given by Moses) "sin is "dead," not able to hurt me, or, without the law of 'Moses, which annexes death to transgression, sin is as 'good as dead, is not able to have its will against me, and 'bring death upon me. For this is contrary to the 'apostle's peremptory assertions, that "by one man sin "entered into the world and death by sin," "that sin "was in the world until," or all along before, "the "law," and that "death reigned from Adam to Moses." '(v. 12–14.) How then could it be said, that sin was 'not able to hurt the apostle, or to bring death on him, 'or upon any other Jew, without the law of Moses; 'since "it had reigned unto death," so many hundred 'years before that law was given; and we are told, that 'the very heathens, who had only the law of nature, 'knew the judgment of God, that the transgressors of 'that law were worthy of death?' (*Rom.* i. 32.) (*Guise.*)

V. 9–12. It seems evident, that the apostle here spoke literally of himself and his own experience. If he personated another man, why did he not give some intimation of his design? In another place he fairly brought forward the Jew, (ii. 17–29.) and ambiguity is no characteristic of his writings. Indeed, I apprehend, that the more humble and spiritual any Christian is, the more clearly will he perceive, that the apostle describes the experience of the true believer, from his first convictions to his greatest progress in grace during this present life. His avowed object is to show that the law can do nothing for a sinner, either to justify or sanctify him, and that the believer feels this daily, as long as he lives. "I was," says he, "alive without the law once;" he was once a Pharisee, ignorant of the spirituality of the law, and only attentive to the outward letter, to the corrupt glosses of the scribes, which served only to limit and explain away even the literal sense of the command, and to ceremonies and traditions; and having some general decency of character, without any acquaintance with his inward corruptions, he concluded that his heart and life were good, and that he was in a state of acceptance with God. But when the commandment came to his conscience, by the convictions of the Holy Spirit, and he perceived its righteous and extensive requirements, and its severe denunciations, he found the lusts of his heart, which before seemed dormant, rise against it, and every endeavour to fulfil its precepts showed him more plainly his inability to do it. Thus his former hopes died away, he found himself a helpless sinner under merited condemnation, and became as a dead man, except as the Gospel revived him from despondency. And the law, of which the promise was, that "The man that doeth these things shall live in them," which was originally ordained to life for holy creatures, and from which he, though a sinner, had expected heaven, was "found to be unto death;" even as the law of the land, which secures the lives of honest men, is found to be unto death by the murderer or robber. The ceremonial law was not ordained unto life, except as it pointed out Christ, the Substance of its shadows, and it was found unto death by none, but those who made it an appendix to the covenant of works, and rejected Christ for the sake of it; and this perfectly coincides with the interpretation above given. For sin, the corruption of fallen nature, being averse to the holy strictness of the law, by its extreme deceitfulness, seduced Paul into various transgressions, and thus slew all his self-righteous hopes, and actually brought him under deeper condemnation. Not that the law *caused*

n viii 3. Gal. iii. 21.
o 8–11. v. 20. Jam i 13–15

13 Was [n] then that which is good, made death unto me? God forbid. But [o] sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

14 For we know that [p] the law is spiritual; [q] but I am [r] carnal, [s] sold under sin.

p Lev. xix 18. Deut. vi 5 Ps. li 6 Matt. v. 22. 28 xxii 37–40. Heb. iv. 12

q 18. 22, 23. Job xlii 6 Ps. cxix. 25. Prov xxx. 2. 5 Is vi. 5. lxiv. 5, 6. Luke v. 8 vii. 6, 7. xviii. 11–14 Eph iii. 8 ——— r Matt xvi 23. 1 Cor. iii. 1–3 ——— s 24 Gen. xxxvii 27. 36. xl. 15. Ex. xxi 2–5. xxii. 3. 1 Kings xxi 20 2 Kings xvii. 17 Is l. 1. lii. 3 Am. ii. 6 Matt. xviii. 25.

this, or even *gave* any just occasion for it: though sin *took* occasion from it, as a wicked man takes occasion from a pious discourse, or a friendly admonition, to scoff, blaspheme, or rage the more. The whole law must therefore be allowed to be perfectly holy, the transcript of the divine character; and each commandment, (especially that prohibiting concupiscence,) most pure, and at the utmost distance from moral evil; most just, as requiring nothing more than what is righteously due to God and our neighbours; and most good, as tending to the true welfare of ourselves, our families, the community, and all mankind: so that the universal observance of it would almost annihilate the evils of the world, and convert earth into heaven. The apostle never passes such eulogiums on the ceremonial law, or the Mosaic dispensation: they had a temporary fitness and goodness; but they made nothing perfect, and consisted of carnal ordinances, which continued in force till the time of reformation.

V. 13, 14. The question here recurred, Was a good law made death to those who were under it? Was this its natural tendency and efficacy? This conclusion the apostle rejects with detestation. Wholesome food, or a valuable medicine, through a diseased state of the body, or when taken improperly, may *occasion* death, contrary to its general and proper tendency: but poison kills, as a *cause* by its native efficacy. The law may *occasion* death through man's depravity; but sin is the poison that *causes* it. It was not therefore the *law*, but *sin*, that was made death to Paul: sin took occasion from the goodness of the law to manifest its own deformity, odiousness, and dire malignity, by working death in him by that which was good, as an intemperate man murders himself, not by a sword or by poison, but by the wholesome gifts of a bountiful Providence. Thus through the commandment "sin became exceeding sinful;" that is, the odious and ruinous nature of sin, as well as the sinfulness of the human heart, were most clearly shown, in order that the abounding grace of God might appear the more glorious. For, says the apostle, we "know and allow that the law is "*spiritual*." It is not like human laws, which only reach to the outward actions, and take no cognizance of the motives, affections, and thoughts: for God chiefly respects these: the law requires an entire conformity to the spiritual excellency of the divine perfections, and such a state of the heart as approves itself to him who is a Spirit; and it allows of nothing but what is done from the most pure and sublime motives, and in perfect love, zeal, gratitude, and delight. Compared with this, the apostle found that he was "carnal, sold under sin:" his nature was perfectly opposite to this spiritual law; and after all his attainments in grace, he found himself so much short of this perfection, and in every respect so unable to attain to it, though he ardently aspired after it; that he seemed comparatively to be *carnal*, and like a man who is sold against his will to a hated master, from whom he can by no means set himself at liberty. Numbers cannot conceive, that St. Paul could mean this of himself as a confirmed believer; and finding it to be inseparably connected with what follows, they would explain the whole of an awakened Jew, or some other convinced sinner, who is seeking justification by the works of the law; or at most of an unconfirmed believer. But such things are spoken as are true of none but real Christians; and the whole is actually verified in their experience. A believer cannot willingly sell himself to work wickedness, as Ahab did; nor will he imitate those slaves, who loved their master and his service, and refused liberty when offered to them: yet when he compares his actual attainments with the spirituality of the law, and with his own desire and aim to obey it, he sees that he is yet to a great degree carnal in the state of his mind, and under the power of evil propensities, from which, (like a man sold for a slave,) he cannot wholly emancipate himself. He is *carnal* in exact proportion to the degree in which he falls short of perfect conformity to the law of God: and he indignantly and reluctantly serves an abhorred master; yet cannot shake off the galling chain, till his powerful and gracious Friend comes to rescue him from it. It is true, this inability lies only in the remaining evil of his heart: yet it is a real, but most humiliating, hinderance to his serving God, as angels and the spirits of just men made perfect do, or as the Saviour did, who could say, "The prince of "this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." To this perfect holiness the zealous believer cannot but aspire, nothing short of it will ever satisfy his "hungering and "thirsting after righteousness," and this proves that in another sense he is made free from sin, and become the "servant of righteousness." As the apostle was far more enlightened and humble than Christians in general are, so doubtless this clog was more uneasy to him, than it is to them, (though some of us find our lives at times embittered by it.) So that this energetic language, which many imagine to describe an unestablished believer's experience, or even that of an unconverted person, seems to have resulted from the extraordinary degree of St. Paul's sanctification, and the depth of his self-abasement and hatred of sin; and the reason of our not readily understanding him seems to be, because we are so far beneath him in holiness, humility, acquaintance with the spirituality of God's law, and the evil of our own hearts. In the former part of the chapter, the apostle had spoken in the past tense, "I was "alive, &c;" but here he uses the present, to which he uniformly adheres in what follows. He had described his state as a blind proud Pharisee, and the manner in which he became dead to the law, as to dependence on it for justification; and here he shows, that even as a confirmed Christian, all his hope and all his holiness must come from Christ, according to the new covenant. Thus, in another place, he says, "What things were gain to me, these I "*counted* loss for Christ, yea, doubtless, and I *count* all

15 For [t] that which I do, I * allow not; for [u] what I would, that do I not; but [x] what I hate, that do I.

16 If then I do that which I would not, [y] I consent unto the law that *it is* good.

17 Now then, [z] it is no more I that do it, but [a] sin that dwelleth in me.

18 For I know [b] that in me, (that is, [c] in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: [d] for to will is present with me, but *how* to perform that which is good, I find not.

19 For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

20 Now if I do that I would not, [e] it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

21 I find then [f] a law, that when I would do good, [g] evil is present with me.

t xiv. 22. Luke xi. 48
* Gr. know. Ps i 6 Nah. i. 7. 2 Tim. ii 19.
u 16 19, 20. 1 Kings viii. 46. Ps xix 12. lxv. 3. cxix. 1—6. 32. 40. Ec. vii. 20. Gal. v. 17. Phil iii 12—14. Jam. iii. 2. 1 John i 7, 8.
x xii. 9. Ps. xxxvi. 4. xcvii. 10. ci 3 cxix. 104. 113. 128. 163. Prov. viii. 13. xiii 5. Am. v. 15. Heb. i. 9. Jude 23 ——y 12. 14 22. Ps. cxix. 127, 128.——z 20 iv. 7. 8. 2 Cor. viii. 12 Phil. iii. 8, 9 ——a 18 20. 23 Jam iv. 5 6.——b Gen. vi. 5. viii 21. Job xiv. 4 xv. 14—16. xxv 4. Ps. li. 5. Is. lxiv. 6. Matt. xv. 19. Mark vii 21—23. Luke xi. 13 Eph ii. 1—5. Tit. iii. 3. 1 Pet iv. 2.——c 5 25. viii. 3—13. xiii. 14. John iii. 6. Gal v. 19—21. 24.

d 15. 19. 25. Ps. cxix 5. 32. 40. 115 — 117. 173. 176. Gal. v 17. Phil. ii. 13. iii. 12.
e 17.
f 23 vi. 12. 14. viii. 2. Ps. xix. 13 cxix. 133. John viii. 34. Eph. vi. 11—13. 2 Pet. ii 19.
g 2 Chr. xxx. 18, 19. Ps. xix. 12. xl. 12. cxix. 37. Is vi. 5 — 7. Zech iii. 1—4. Luke iv. 1, 2. Heb ii. 17, 18. iv. 15.

"things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of "Christ Jesus, &c." (*Note, Phil.* iii. 7—9.) Some indeed make the transition from the experience of the apostle, under his first convictions, to his subsequent conflict with indwelling sin, to be made at the next verse; but the change of tense in this place hardly admits of that construction. In the very same chapter, in which our Lord pronounces Peter *blessed*, as a believer, he says, "Thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those "that be of men," (*Matt.* xvi. 23.) that is, thou art *carnal*, not totally, but in a considerable degree. Humbly to confess and deeply to lament being thus "carnal and "sold under sin," is not the disposition and conduct of a willing slave to his lusts; and the readiness, with which numbers of the most eminent believers adopt the apostle's language, shows that it is very suitable to their strong feelings of self-abasement and abhorrence of sin. "I ab-"hor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." "Wo is me? "for I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips, &c." "My soul cleaveth unto the dust." "Surely I am more "brutish than any man!"

V. 15—17. The apostle here more particularly enlarges on the conflict, which he daily maintained with the remainder of his natural depravity. He was frequently betrayed into such tempers, words, or actions, as he did not approve, or allow, in his renewed judgment and affections. He earnestly desired, and fully determined, if possible, to perform a perfect obedience to the law of God, but he continually fell short; and while he hated and abhorred every kind and degree of sin, he found it impracticable wholly to avoid committing it. In thus doing what he hated, and desired above all things to shun, he "consented to the law, that it was good;" and as the prevailing bias of his soul was to holiness, he was evidenced by it to be a regenerate man, under the covenant of grace, so that it would not be considered that *he* did the evil which he hated, but it would be charged to the account of sin, that dwelt in him as a detested inmate, which he could not expel, though he would not willingly obey it. He certainly did not mean to excuse his sinfulness, as if he might not *justly* have been condemned for it; but to show that righteousness could in no case be by the law, and that, by the grace of the Gospel, a man's state and character are determined according to what habitually prevails in his heart and life, notwithstanding impediments and restraints. A wicked man feels some inward opposition to his crimes from conscience, fear, or shame, and he meets with various obstacles to the gratification of his desires, yet all this is accounted for nothing, whilst sin habitually prevails in his heart and conduct; and a godly man has great hinderances in his holy progress, from indwelling sin and outward temptation, yet this is not imputed to him for *condemnation*, seeing the prevailing state of his heart and tenour of his conduct are holy. Thus Judas, in betraying Christ, acted in character, according to the habitual, though concealed, state of his heart; it was *he* that did it: but Peter, through sudden temptation, acted out of character, and contrary to the habitual state of his heart, in denying Christ; it was "not "he, but sin that dwelt in him," according to the gracious tenour of the new covenant.

V. 18—21. The apostle knew, that in him, as a fallen creature, apart from regenerating grace, no good thing, but sin, and only sin, was found, though its actings were more specious at one time than another. It is evident from the limitation, "that is, in my flesh," that he spoke as a believer, who had grace as well as sin dwelling in him; for it will soon appear, that by *flesh*, in this connexion, he does not mean the body as distinct from the soul, but the old man, or human nature, in unregeneracy, which never concurs with the Holy Spirit in regeneration, or with the new man afterwards, but strives against both. He was more deeply acquainted with this humiliating truth by his experience subsequent to conversion, than he had been before. Formerly, he might have supposed that a little good disposition, or moral ability to holiness, was in man, but this was now experimentally disproved. As regenerate, he had indeed an habitual willingness to obey the law of God, and to accomplish the good required by it; but his corrupt nature, though dethroned and crucified, made such constant opposition to this, that he could by no means perform what he aimed at. So that, in fact, he did not fulfil that measure of good, which he was habitually desirous of doing, but in every thing fell short of his aim; and he was also frequently doing the evil, in some measure or respect, which he was most bent upon avoiding. Now, as he was thus constantly baffled and obstructed, in his earnest persevering desires and endeavours to obey the law, it was evident that it was not properly *he*, as a believer, who did this, but the traitor and enemy that lodged within his heart. He was obliged, contrary to his habitually prevalent inclinations, to live under a sort of necessity of being a sinner, and he could only persist in maintaining the conflict with his inward enemies, without being able

22 For [h] I delight in the law of God after [i] the inward man:

23 But I see [k] another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, [l] and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

h viii 7. Job xxiii. 12. Ps i 2 xix. 8–10 xl. 8 cxix. 16. 24. 35. 47, 48 72. 92 97–104. 111. 113. 127 167. 174. Is li 7. John iv 34. Heb. viii. 10
i ii. 29. 2 Cor. iv 16. Eph. iii. 16 Col. iii 9, 10 1 Pet. iii 4.
k 5. 21 25 viii. 2 Ec. vii 20 Gal v 17 1 Tim. vi. 11, 12. Heb. xii 4. Jam. iii. 2. iv. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 11.——l 14. 2 Tim. ii 25, 26.

24 O [m] wretched man that I am! [n] who shall deliver me from * the body of this death?

25 I [o] thank God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. [p] So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

m viii. 23. 1 Kings viii 38. Ps. vi. 6. xxxii. 3, 4. xxxviii. 8–10. cxix. 20. 81–83. 131. 143. 176. cxxx 1–3. Ez. ix 4. Matt. v. 4 6 2 Cor. xii. 7–9. Rev. xxi 4.
n Deut. xxii. 26, 27 Ps lxxi. 11. lxxii. 12 xci. 14, 15. cii. 20 Mic. vii 19. Zech. ix. 11, 12 Luke iv. 18. 2 Cor. i 8–10 2 Tim. iv. 18. Tit. ii 14 Heb ii 15.
* Or *this body of death* vi 6 viii. 13 Col. ii. 11.——o vi. 14 17 Ps. cvii. 15, 16. cxvi. 16, 17. Is. xii. 1. xlix 9. 13. Matt. i. 21. 1 Cor. xv. 57. 2 Cor ix. 15. xii. 9, 10. Eph. v 20. Phil. iii. 3. iv. 6. Col. iii. 17. 1 Pet. ii. 5 9.——p 15–24 Gal. v. 17–24.

entirely to extirpate them. For, in fact, he found, by painful experience, that there was a law imposed upon him, in his present state of warfare, that when he was most desirous of doing good, evil was present with him, to interrupt, intrude, baffle, discourage, and defile him. Let any man who knows his own heart, and the spirituality of the law of God, compare his actual conduct, comprising his thoughts, affections, words, and works, during any given time, with his purposes, prevailing desires, and earnest persevering prayers; let him take that one duty which he especially aims to perform most perfectly, or that temper or evil propensity which he most longs to rectify or extinguish; let him examine himself very exactly in these respects every night, and he will surely find, that he cannot but be a sinner still, and is subjected to "a law, "that when he would do good, evil is present with him." God has wise reasons for permitting this to be so, especially to give us a deeper sense of the malignity of sin and our own vileness, in order to commend the grace of the Gospel; but they, who are most acquainted with the excellency of the law, and most diligently aim in every thing to obey it, will be most sensible that the case is really thus with them. Yet this opposition to sin, and mortifying disappointment respecting their most ardent desires, must not be confounded with the willing slavery of sin, and the convenient *excuse* of indwelling depravity. The apostle, "daily exercised himself to have a conscience "void of offence toward God and man;" and could call others to witness, "how holily, and justly, and unblame-"ably, he had behaved among them." Yet this was not inconsistent with his being deeply humbled in the sight of God, by the consciousness of wandering thoughts in prayer, want of fervour of love and gratitude to God, zeal for his glory, and enlarged good will to men, the rising of evil tempers, the intrusion of vain imaginations, and the intermixture of selfish motives. All these are *sin*, and as such, hated and abhorred, in proportion to the degree of sanctification; yet no mere man on earth, after all possible diligence, watchfulness, fasting, and prayer, could truly say, that in these respects he was perfectly free from sin, in his worship and obedience. So that even a person, who is not conscious of at any time neglecting one duty, or committing one actual transgression in word or deed, (which is *at least* a most uncommon case,) yet aspiring to be holy as an angel, or as Jesus Christ was, will very painfully feel, that "he doeth not the things that he would, "and find a law, that when he would do good, evil is "present with him;" and the more spiritual the services are, in which he engages, the greater clog and hinderance will it be to him. Had the apostle intended to describe the case of any of those, however distinguished, who habitually live in sin, against the conviction of their own judgment and conscience, it cannot be conceived, that he would not, with his usual concise energy, have reprobated their conduct, as far more aggravated than that of ignorant and thoughtless transgressors; but nothing of this kind appears; on the contrary, he leads on the character, which he is describing, to exultation and joy in believing.

V. 22—25. By the "inward man," the apostle must mean the soul, as renewed by divine grace. He alone uses the term, and concerning believers only. The affections and powers of the soul of fallen man are more opposite to the law of God, than the bodily appetites; nay, the latter are not sinful, except as improperly gratified through the lusts of the heart. (*Marg. Ref.*) But to approve, and even delight in, the law of God, according to the habitual judgment and affections of the soul, through a kind of spiritual sympathy, or congeniality of heart with its most spiritual requirements, must be peculiar to the regenerate, and imply a high degree of sanctification. (*Note*, viii. 5—9.) This the apostle had attained to; yet he found another law in his members, (not the members of his body, but the constituent parts of the old man,) which continually enjoined a conduct, or suggested inclinations, contrary to "the law of his mind;" and this tended to bring him into captivity to the law of sin, and in some cases for a time it produced that effect. This painful conflict was more grievous to him than all his other trials; so that he was led to bemoan himself as a wretched man, who was constrained by invincible necessity to be, and to do, what he most abhorred. This extorted a bitter complaint, which neither bonds, nor stripes, nor tortures, could have done; and with a sort of holy impatience and eagerness, he exclaimed, "O wretched man that I am! "who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" For indwelling sin clogged his motions, offended his senses, and was a nuisance to him, as a spiritual man; even as if any one should be forced to drag about with him a putrifying corpse, as by a refinement of cruelty some have been sentenced to do. He found by experience that he could not deliver himself; and the law, instead of delivering him, *seemed* to make the case still worse; but this made him the more fervently to thank God, for the method of salvation revealed through Jesus Christ, which gave him earnest and sure hopes of final and complete deliverance from this enemy, and a triumphant victory in this spiritual warfare. "So then," says he, "I myself with "my mind," my prevailing judgment, affections, and purposes, as a regenerate man, "serve and obey the law of "God;" but with the flesh, the carnal nature, the remains of depravity, "I serve the law of sin," or that law which wars against the law of my mind. Before

CHAP. VIII.

They, who are in Christ, and walk after the Spirit, are free from condemnation, 1—4. *The carnal, and the spiritual mind,* 5—8. *They, and only they, are the children of God, who have the Spirit of Christ, are led by the Spirit, and mortify the flesh,* 9—14. *The Spirit of adoption testifies with their spirit, and marks them heirs of God, though now exposed to suffering,* 15—18. *The creation, through man's sin, is subject to vanity, and waits for deliverance at the*

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conversion the whole man serves this law, with a very feeble opposition from conscience, fear, and shame; but at length the usurper is dethroned, and grace reigns in the heart. Yet still the usurper lurks in the kingdom, reigns over his own party, makes war, creates immense disturbance, and gains temporary advantages, but he is hated, opposed, proscribed, and shall die. *Delight in the law of* ***God.*** 'This is so sure a trace of real piety, and is represented in Scripture as in this view so decisive, that if it be supposed a true representation of a character, we must surely allow it to have been that of a truly good man.' (***Doddridge.***) It is especially spoken of Christ, and of the man after God's own heart, as the type of him. It is the effect of "the law being written in the heart," and it is the direct opposite of "the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be." (***Marg. Ref.***) "Consenting to the law that it is good," delighting in the holy, just, good, and spiritual law of God, hating all evil, loving all good, and being deeply distressed at not being able to do the good that is loved, are all exclusively peculiar to the regenerate, and widely different from a heathen saying in one particular; 'I see and approve the better, but follow the worse,' which in fact any man might say. Many of the professions and petitions of David in the hundred and nineteenth Psalm, as well as in other places, are of a similar nature. (***Marg. Ref.***) Indeed, such a conflict as is here described, must exist, where sin is hated, and the law of God delighted in, till holiness is perfected; and as abhorrence of evil must increase in proportion to the love of God and holiness, so the least degree of evil rising in the heart, and escaping from the lips, in some passionate or vain word, will necessarily more grieve and burden an eminent saint, than perhaps the grossest crimes did, before his conversion; even as a speck of dirt gives more uneasiness to a very cleanly person, than the most squalid filthiness does to those, who are used to live in it as their element. There is, therefore, no manner of need to have recourse to such unnatural expedients in expounding this chapter, as to imagine, that when the apostle said, "I myself," he meant some other person of a widely different character, or the whole family of Abraham, before and under the law. However these theories have been sanctioned by eminent names, they go upon suppositions for which the Scripture gives not the least ground, which are absurd in themselves, and which are wholly unprecedented and unparalleled in the writings of any good author, sacred or profane. No doubt, numbers have perverted the words of the apostle; and it is fairly allowed, that no man, who is not himself engaged in this conflict, can clearly understand his meaning, or fully enter into those feelings, which dicated his energetic language. But as to the former case, they who want an excuse for sin, "*wrest* the other Scriptures also to their own destruction;" and as to the latter, "The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him," and "The heart knoweth his own bitterness, and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy." It cannot be supposed, that a man who never saw war could enter into the feelings, and fully understand the ardent language, of an experienced soldier, when he related all his conflicts, dangers, hardships, terrors, narrow escapes, victories and triumphs. But I apprehend that many pious persons exclude themselves from the rich source of instruction and consolation in their warfare, provided for them in this chapter, either from fear lest others should pervert it to bad purposes, or because men of great name have affected to reprobate the obvious interpretation, and have tried to force some other meaning upon the words.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

We stand in such a relation to the holy law of God, as the rule of our present conduct and future judgment, that none but he, who formed the union, can dissolve it, and unless "we become dead to the law by the body of Christ," renouncing all expectations from it, that we may be united to Him, who died for our sins and rose again for our justification, we must abide under the dominion and curse of the law for ever. If, however, we are thus delivered, it is not in order to our being lawless, but that the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us may write the law in our hearts, and enable us to bring forth the fruits of holy obedience, to the glory of God. Indeed this is absolutely necessary, in order to our serving God with that newness of spirit, which the law itself demands, for sanctifying grace comes only by the new covenant, without which we must continue *in the flesh*, and our natural concupiscence will work against the law to bring forth fruit unto death; and nothing but a formal obedience to the outward letter of any precept can thus be performed.

V. 7—13.

It is no fault of the law that it cannot justify or sanctify a sinner; nay, it is the necessary effect of its perfection, by which it detects and condemns the least degree of evil, and leaves the transgressor to *merited* ruin, without help or remedy; and the better the law is, the more righteous is the doom of those who break it. We should therefore be very careful, in showing the impossibility of salvation by the law, to avoid all expressions that so much as *seem* derogatory to it. On the contrary, we should bear decided testimony to its righteousness, spirituality, and excellency, and show that it is, on that very account, only suited to *manifestation of the children of God,* 19—22; *who "groan being burdened," are saved in hope, and patiently expect deliverance,* 23—25; *the Holy Spirit aiding their prayers, and thus rendering them acceptable,* 26, 27. *All things work together for their good,* 28; *this springs from their predestination to life, and is secured by the death, resurrection, and intercession of Christ,* 29—34. *Nothing shall separate them from the love of God through Christ,* 35—39.

show the sinner the danger of his case, and to render it still worse, so long as he foolishly cleaves to it, and depends on it. For no man could expect to be either justified or sanctified by a broken law, or according to a forfeited covenant, were he not ignorant of the law, and of himself as compared with it; so that the proudest Pharisee on earth would, from his towering height of vain confidence, sink into despair, if the commandments were at once discovered to his soul in all their spirituality and excellency, without a correspondent view of the salvation of Christ. Ten thousand unobserved transgressions would stand in array against him, his former foibles and infirmities would appear desperate rebellion, ingratitude, and enmity, his admired duties would appear loathsome through pride, selfishness and hypocrisy, and the dormant lusts of his heart, which secular motives or carnal hopes had restrained, would break forth into enmity against God, disdain subjection to his law, work in him all manner of concupiscence, and concur in slaying his hope and his soul. Thus the law, which was "ordained unto "life," would be found to be unto death, through the deceitfulness of sin, and the unsuspected and desperate wickedness of his heart, working death in him by that which was good, and making manifest its exceeding sinfulness. So that a proper knowledge of the holy law of God is the two edged sword, that gives the death wound both to self-righteousness and to antinomianism; for it is perfectly fit to be the rule of our duty, to be written in our hearts, and obeyed in our lives, for the very same reasons, on account of which it cannot justify or save us.

V. 14—25.

The believer knows something of the subject here spoken of by the apostle, when he first flees for refuge to the hope of the Gospel; but his subsequent experience gives him still further insight into it. He is now in a measure *spiritual,* yet in comparison with the spiritual requirements of the law, and the best desires of his heart, he must confess that he "is carnal and sold under sin," and he groans under that clog and those fetters, which, as it were, chain him to the earth, and prevent him from mounting heaven-ward, as he longs to do. "He consents "to the law that it is good," yea, "he delights in it," he would do the good it requires, he allows of no violation of it, he wants no change in it, but longs to have his heart brought into a perfect conformity to it; he abhors all sin, and would serve God as angels do; he watches, prays, strives, and uses every means for this purpose; yet after persevering in this course for many years, he finds that he cannot attain to perfection. Still he sins against his own allowance; he does what he hates, and longs to be preserved from; his will often changes, like the weather-cock, with the wind, that which on his knees he most ardently prayed against, and dreaded more than pain or death, he is betrayed into in the hour of temptation; his resolutions melt like the firm ice before the noon-day sun, and he is counteracted in obeying the dictates of the law of his mind, by the law of sin pervading both body and soul, so that he cannot perform that which he is most willing to do. His views of the beauty of holiness, the excellency of the law, his own obligations to obedience, and his pantings after perfect purity, increase as he grows in grace, so that he seems further from the mark than ever, when at the height of his attainments in this present world. He is more deeply convinced as he proceeds, that in him, as a fallen sinner, dwelleth no good thing, that from nature evil only can proceed, that the law can only condemn him, and that 'none but Jesus can do such helpless sinners good.' This conflict often renders him weary of life, and even impatient of living; he could be content to suffer, but he can hardly bear the thought of continuing a self-abhorred sinner; he groans out frequently, "O wretched man "that I am!" whilst he drags about with him the detested body of sin and death, from which he can find no deliverance; and did he not firmly trust in God's mercy and grace through Jesus Christ, his case would be most deplorable. But with this hope, prospect, and support, he manfully sustains the conflict, he rejoices amidst his humiliations, his groans and tears are mingled with hallelujahs, and his conscious vileness renders the Redeemer's love and free salvation doubly precious to his soul. His very anguish for *such a cause* is the pledge of his felicity; having wrestled and prevailed for the blessing, and seen the face of Emmanuel in peace, he goes on his way *halting,* (*Notes,* &c. *Gen.* xxxii.) his complaints, yea, his *unallowed and deeply repented sins,* are preparing him for singing more loudly and sweetly, "worthy is "the lamb, that was slain;" and, like the dissonance attending on the tuning of a musical instrument, prepare the way for more delightful melody, when patience hath had its perfect work, and he has "overcome by the blood "of the Lamb, and by the word of his testimony;" and it shall in the mean time be graciously pleaded in his behalf, that "it was not *he,* but sin that dwelled in him."—But if a man speak on this subject with indifference or satisfaction, if sin dwelling in him be the excuse for crimes committed without remorse or godly sorrow, if he allow the evil, and desire not the good, presuming that he hath all things in Christ; if instead of consenting to the goodness of the law, condemning himself, and loathing his sins, he depreciates the law and extenuates his own guilt; if his utmost willingness be to escape hell at any rate, without longing to be holy, according to the spiritual and good law of God; if he do not "delight in "it after the inward man," nor serve it with the prevailing desire of his mind, but willingly serve the law of

THERE is therefore now [a] no condemnation to them which are [b] in Christ Jesus, [c] who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

2 For [d] the law of [e] the Spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, [f] hath made me free from [g] the law of sin and death.

3 For [h] what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, [i] God sending his own Son, [k] in the likeness of sinful flesh, and * for sin, [l] condemned sin in the flesh;

4 That [m] the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, [n] who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

5 For they [o] that are after the flesh, do [p] mind the things of the flesh; but

a 33, 34 iv 7, 8. v. 1. vii 17 20. Ps liv. 17. John iii. 18, 19 v 24 Gal iii 13.
b xvi 7. John xiv. 20 xv 4. 1 Cor i. 30. xv 22. 2 Cor v. 17 xii. 2 Gal iii 28. Phil 9.
c 1. 14 Gal. v. 16. 25. Tit. ii. 11—14.
d iii 27
e 10, 11. John iv. 10. 14 vi. 63 vii. 38. 39. 1 Cor. xv. 45. 2 Cor. iii. 6 Rev. xi 11. xxii. 1 —— f vi 18 22. Ps li 12 John viii 32 2 Cor iii. 17. Gal. v. 1. —— g v 21. vii. 21 25 —— h iii. 20. vii. 5—11. Gal. iii. 21. Heb. vii. 18, 19. x. 1—10 14.

i 32. John iii. 14—17. Gal. iv 4, 5. 1 John iv 10—14.
k ix. 3. Mark xv. 27. 28. John ix. 24.
* Or, *by a sacrifice for sin.* 2 Cor. v. 21. Gal. iii. 13.
l vi. 6. 1 Pet. ii. 24 iv. 1, 2.
m Gal. v. 22—24. Eph v. 26, 27. Col i. 22 Heb. xii 23 1 John iii. 2. Jude 24. Rev. xiv. 5.
n 1.
o 12, 13. John iii. 6 2 Cor. x. 3. 2 Pet. ii. 10 —— p 6, 7. Mark viii. 33. 1 Cor. ii. 14. Phil. iii. 18, 19.

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sin; then doubtless he is without Christ, whose name he profanes; he is under the law which he hates; and his presumptuous confidence and quietness in such a state only prove, that he is given over to "strong delusion to believe a lie." Nor does this much disputed and abused chapter, more evidently condemn the hope of the proudest Pharisee on earth, than it does that of such a professor of evangelical truth.

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1, 2. The apostle had shown, that the believer, being earnestly desirous of obeying the holy law of God, was graciously accepted in Christ, and his failures were ascribed to sin dwelling in him, against his habitual and prevalent inclination, and not imputed to him; and he here proceeds further to state this privilege. While men continue under the law as a covenant, every failure is imputed to them for condemnation; but when they become dead to the law and one with Christ, they are in him by faith, as their Refuge from day to day, and there is no condemnation for them. Their past sins are all blotted out, they are fully justified, and, continually exercising repentance, and faith in his blood and righteousness, their lamented transgressions and deficiencies are pardoned. Thus they are preserved from condemnation, and shall be to the end, and for ever. Their character and conduct likewise distinguish them; for, notwithstanding their painful conflict with indwelling sin, they do not walk after the dictates of corrupt nature, but are habitually influenced by the new principle communicated in regeneration; for "that which is born of the "Spirit is spirit." The former, as "the law of sin and "death," (vii. 23—25,) had once commanded their willing service; but regenerating grace, by "the Spirit of "life in Christ Jesus," and by means of the Gospel, had dethroned the usurper sin, and made them free from his law by efficaciously inducing a contrary conduct. So that, though the remaining power of sin greatly harassed them, and in some instances prevailed, yet, on the whole, they were enabled successfully to resist its authority, and to walk at liberty in obedience to God's commandments.—Some explain "the law of the Spirit of life" of the doctrine of the Gospel, through which the Spirit is communicated, rather than of his commanding influence in the believer's soul; but the latter is the more exact contrast to the "law of sin, and death," from which he is by it set free. 'To be in Christ,' says Mr. Le Clerc, 'is often 'used by St. Paul for being a Christian,' (*Marg. Ref.*;) 'but if he means only Christians by profession, or only 'being members of the Christian Church, this will by 'no means agree with this place, or any other of like 'nature; since freedom from condemnation—will not 'follow our being Christians in this sense, but upon a 'lively faith in Christ, our union with him by the Spirit, 'and our being so in him as to become new creatures.' (9. 2 *Cor.* v. 17. *Gal.* v. 6.) (*Whitby.*) They who "are in Christ" are Christians; "they walk not after the "flesh, but after the Spirit:" this describes their character; and it is their grand privilege, that there is no condemnation for them.

V. 3, 4. The good and perfect law of God was weak through the flesh, or by means of man's depravity, so that it was impossible for it to bring man to holiness or liberty, any more than to justify him; even as the wholesome laws of the land cannot make men honest; they can only declare how they should act, and denounce penalties, but cannot change the heart, and therefore their impetuous passions break through the feeble restraint without regard to consequences, as the vehement torrent of some full swollen river breaks through or overflows the mound that was placed to impede its course. As the law was therefore inadequate to man's necessity, God was pleased in infinite mercy to send his own Son, to assume our nature, and appear "in the likeness of sinful flesh." Though free from sin, he became subject to those infirmities to which through sin we are exposed; he was accused of many crimes, and numbered with transgressors, and he was punished by the Father as our Surety, as if he had been the greatest of sinners. Thus he was appointed "for sin," or "for "a sin-offering," that God, having "condemned sin in "the flesh," and shown his abhorrence of it by the sufferings of his Son in our flesh, might pardon and justify the believer's person, and execute the sentence of condemnation on his corrupt nature, by its crucifixion and destruction; that so, through his mercy and grace, even the very righteousness required by the law might be fully written in our hearts, and habitually in all its parts performed in our lives, though too imperfectly to justify us, and that hereafter we might be perfectly conformed to the holy law, in its substantial requirement of love to God and his creatures, and obey it fully for evermore. Many expositors explain this of Christ, as One with us, having fulfilled the righteousness of the law in our stead, and of its imputation to those who walk after the Spirit. But the former sense seems more obvious, and best to answer the apostle's design, who was proving, that deliverance from the law, *as a covenant*, was necessary, in order to our obeying the law *as a rule*. 'Sanctification, begun in us, is the sure 'evidence of our union with Christ, which is the richest 'fruit of a holy life.' (*Beza.*) The completion, however, of sanctification, seems especially intended.

they that are after the Spirit [q] the things of the Spirit.

6 [r] For to * be carnally minded *is* death: but † to be spiritually minded *is* [s] life and peace.

7 Because [t] the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: [u] for it is not subject to the law of God, [x] neither indeed can be.

q 9. 14. 1 Cor. ii 15. Gal. v. 22—25. Eph. v. 9. Col. iii 1—3.
r 13. vi. 21. 23. vii 5 11. Gal vi. 8. Jam. i. 14, 15.
* Gr. *the minding of the flesh.* xiii. 14.
† Gr. *the minding of the Spirit.*
s v. 1. 10. xiv. 17. John xiv. 6. 27. xvii. 3. Gal. v. 22.
t i. 28. 30. v. 10 Ex xx. 5. 2 Chr. xix 2. Ps. liii. 1. John vii 7. xv. 23, 24. Eph iv. 18, 19. Col. i. 21. 2 Tim. iii 4 Jam. iv. 4. 1 John ii. 15, 16 ——u 4. ii. 31. vii 7—14. 22 Matt. v. 19 1 Cor ix. 21. Gal. v. 22, 23. Heb. viii. 10 ——x Jer. xiii. 23. Matt. xii. 34. 1 Cor. ii. 14. 2 Pet. ii. 14.

8 So then [y] they that are in the flesh, cannot [z] please God.

9 But [a] ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, [b] if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not [c] the Spirit of Christ, [d] he is none of his.

10 And [e] if Christ *be* in you, [f] the

y 9. vii. 5. John iii 3, 5, 6.
z Matt. iii 17. John viii. 29. 1 Cor. vii 32. Phil. iv. 18 Col. i. 10 iii. 20. 1 Thes. iv. 1. Heb. xi 5, 6. xiii. 16. 21 1 John iii. 22.
a 2. Ez. xi. 19. xxxvi. 26, 27. John iii 6.
b 11. Luke xi 13. 1 Cor. iii. 16. vi. 19. 2 Cor vi. 16. Eph i. 13 17, 18. ii 22 2 Tim i. 14 1 John ii. 24. iv. 4. Jude 19—21.——c John iii 34. Gal iv. 6. Phil i. 19 1 Pet i. 11 ——d John xvii. 9, 10 1 Cor. iii. 21—23. xv. 23. 2 Cor x 7 Gal v 24 Rev xiii 8. xx 15 ——e John vi 56 xiv. 20 23. xv. 5. xvii 23 2 Cor xiii 5. Eph iii 17 Col i 27 ——f ii. v. 12 2 Cor iv. 11. v 1—4. 1 Thes iv. 16. Heb. ix. 27. 2 Pet. i. 13, 14. Rev xiv. 13.

V 5—9. The discrimination of character before referred to is here more fully stated. The word *flesh*, in this connexion, cannot mean the body as opposite to the soul, for out of man's *heart* proceed even adulteries, fornications and drunkenness; and pride, envy, hatred, are works of the flesh. (*Marg. Ref.*) That wickedness, the seat of which is immediately in the soul, is more contrary to the image and glory of God, than that in which the body seems more concerned; but indeed the body is no more than the instrument, and the soul is the agent in every sin. The soul of an ungodly man is not *spiritual*, but *carnal;* "that which is born of the flesh is flesh." By the flesh we must therefore understand corrupt nature, as derived from Adam to all his posterity, and perhaps this term is used, because the soul is become the caterer to man's fleshly lusts, and the whole man is, as it were, immersed and sunk in the flesh. They, therefore, who are born after the flesh, but not after the Spirit, and who go after the leadings of the flesh, *mind* the things of the flesh; they are sagacious about them; they choose, desire, pursue, savour, and delight in them; they seek their happiness in the riches, pleasures, honours and perishing vanities of this world, or in things of an unholy nature, which must be left at death, and which bear no relation to heavenly felicity. About these, their abilities, imaginations, contrivance, and time, are employed, and they give them a decided preference to spiritual things, in their habitual judgment and conduct. But they, who are "born "of the Spirit," and walk after the leadings of the new and spiritual nature, understand, choose, pursue, relish, and supremely value such things, as pertain to the spiritual and divine life, and such as will endure for ever. The favour of God, communion with him, renewal to his image, and a life spent to his glory, most occupy their imaginations, desires, and attention, and have the pre-eminent place in their choice and conduct, notwithstanding all the opposition from indwelling sin. This habitual prevalency stamps the character as *carnal* or *spiritual;* so that, if a man be *carnal* in the prevailing judgment, temper, and affections of his mind, he is under condemnation, dead in sin, and meet for destruction; but if he be *spiritual* in the habitual prevailing temper of his soul, he is evidently alive to God, and at peace with him, and the spiritual mind is, in proportion as it prevails, the very essence of life and peace. The importance of this distinction is manifest, "because the carnal mind is enmity against God;" man's apostacy originated in his preferring the satisfaction to be found in the creatures through disobedience, to the felicity to be enjoyed in God by obedience. This is in fact the *universal idolatry;* and men thus preferring self-satisfaction and created good to the favour and service of God, not only rebel against him, but become enemies to him and haters of him. For his holy law demanding their whole heart, and forbidding their favourite pursuits, and all his perfections being engaged to execute vengeance on transgressors, the carnal mind disdaining control, being averse from his service, and bent on sinful indulgence, rises in enmity against the authority, precepts, threatenings, power, and perfections of God. Therefore, this carnal mind is not subject to the divine law, and indeed it cannot be so; it is *morally* unable to do any thing but revolt against it, and refuse obedience to it. An enemy may be reconciled, a carnal man may become spiritual; but *enmity* in the abstract cannot be reconciled, and therefore the carnal mind must be crucified and destroyed, (vi. 6.) and as no rational creature of God can please him, who refuses subjection to the holy law, it is evident, that unregenerate men cannot please God in any of their services, by whatever name they are called. Thus evangelical religion is equally remote from self-righteousness, which cleaves to the law as a covenant, and antinomianism, which rejects it as a rule, in doing which men cannot please God. "But," says the apostle, "Ye are not in "the flesh, but in the Spirit," regenerate and spiritual, and therefore willingly, though not perfectly, subject to the law, "if so be the Spirit of God dwell in you," as in his temple; but if any man, Jew, Gentile, or nominal Christian, remain destitute of the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, he certainly does not belong to him as one of his accepted disciples, and dying in that state, he must perish as an enemy of God. If *the flesh* be explained of the *body*, as distinguished from the *soul* or spirit, it follows, that no man can please God while he lives in this world, and that the Romans were disembodied spirits, which is palpably absurd; yet the interpretation of other Scriptures concerning the flesh and spirit, by many learned men, unavoidably lead to this absurdity; nor is it much less unreasonable and unscriptural to aver, that living under the Mosaic dispensation was "being in the flesh," and professing the Gospel, especially if miraculous powers were vouchsafed, was being in the Spirit. (*Matt.* vii. 21—23. 1 *Cor.* xiii. 1—3.) Yet these seem the only ways, by which the above plain and natural interpretation can be evaded.

body *is* dead because of sin; [g] but the spirit *is* life [h] because of righteousness.

11 But if the Spirit of [i] him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, [k] he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your [l] mortal bodies, by * his Spirit that [m] dwelleth in you.

12 Therefore, brethren, [n] we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

13 For if [o] ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: [p] but if ye, [q] through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

[g] John iv. 14. vi. 54. xi 25. 26 xiv. 19. 1 Cor. xv. 45 2 Cor. v. 6—8. Phil. i. 23. Col. iii. 3, 4 Heb. xii. 23 Rev vii 14—17.
[h] v. 21. 2 Cor. v. 21. Phil. iii. 9
[i] 8 iv 24,25 Acts ii. 24. 32, 33. Eph i. 19. 20. Heb xiii 20. 1 Pet. i 21
[k] 2 Is. xxvi. 19. Ez xxxvii 14. John v. 28, 29 1 Cor. vi. 14. xv. 16. 20—22. 51—57 2 Cor. iv. 14. Phil. iii. 21. 1 Thes. iv. 14—17. 1 Pet iii. 18. Rev i. 18 xi. 11 xx 11—13.
[l] vi. 12. 1 Cor xv. 53 2 Cor iv 11. v. 4 ——* Or, *because of* ——[m] 9. John vii 38, 39 xiv. 17.——[n] vi. 2—15 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. 1 Pet. iv. 2, 3.——[o] 1 4—6. vi 21. 23 vii. 5. Gal v. 19—21. vi. 8. Eph. v. 3—5. Col. iii 5, 6 Jam. i 14, 15.——[p] 2. 1 Cor. ix. 27. Gal. v. 24. Eph. iv. 22. Col. iii. 5—8. Tit. ii 12 1 Pet. ii. 11.——[q] 1 Eph. iv. 30. v. 18. 1 Pet. i 22.

14 For as many as are [r] led by the Spirit of God, [s] they are the sons of God.

15 For ye have not received [t] the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received [u] the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, [x] Abba, Father.

16 The [y] Spirit itself beareth witness [z] with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

17 And [a] if children, then heirs; [b] heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; [c] if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

[r] 5. 9. Ps cxliii 10 Prov viii. 20. Is xlviii. 16, 17 Gal iv. 6. v. 16 18 22—25. Eph. v 9
[s] 17 2 Cor vi 18. Gal iii. 26. Eph. i 5. 1 John iii 1, 2. Rev. xxi. 7
[t] Ex xx. 19. Num. xvii. 12, 13. Luke viii. 28 37. John xvi. 8. Acts ii. 37. xvi. 29. 2 Tim i 7. Heb. ii. 15 xii. 18—24. Jam ii. 19. 1 John iv. 18.
[u] 16 Gal. iv. 5—7. Eph. i. 5. 11—14.
[x] Mark xiv. 36. Luke xi. 2. xxii. 42. John xx. 17.
[y] 23. 26, 27. 2 Cor. i. 22 v. 5. Eph. i. 13, 14 iv. 30.——[z] 2 Cor. i. 12. 1 John iii. 19—22 v. 10——[a] 3 29, 30. v. 9, 10. 17. Luke xii 32. Acts xxvi. 18. Gal. iii. 29. iv. 7. Eph. iii. 6. Tit. iii. 7. Heb. i. 14. vi 17. Jam. ii. 5 ——[b] Matt. xxv. 21. Luke xxii. 29, 30. John xvii. 24. 1 Cor ii 9. iii. 22, 23. Rev. iii 21. xxi. 7.——[c] Matt. xvi. 24. Luke xxiv. 26. John xii. 25, 26. Acts xiv. 22. 2 Cor. iv. 8—12. Phil i. 29. 2 Tim. ii 10—14.

V. 10, 11. If the Spirit of Christ dwell in a man, Christ himself is in him, by his power and influence, and by his image renewed in him. In this case, though the body is mortal and must soon die, because of the disobedience of Adam, and the man's personal transgressions, yet the spirit has life abiding in it, the soul is alive to God, and has begun its holy felicity, which shall endure for ever, through the righteousness of the second Adam, in whom it is interested. So that when the body drops into dust, the soul being perfectly delivered from sin will enter heaven; and the almighty God, who raised Jesus from the dead, will raise the mortal body also incorruptible and glorious, by the omnipotence of his indwelling Spirit, who will not always leave his temple to lie mouldering in the dust. (*Marg. Ref.*) Then sin and all its effects will be for ever done with. 'Several readers may be aware, that another 'interpretation has been given of these verses, especially 'by the celebrated Mr. Locke, who explains quickening 'the mortal body by sanctifying the immortal soul.' (*Doddridge.*) But the various, and often unnatural, interpretations given to several passages in these chapters, would require far more time and room particularly to notice them, and make remarks on them, than the nature of this publication can admit of. In general, when the interpretation is plausible, and supported by probable reasons, the author thinks it incumbent on him to notice it, in one way or other; but when, on careful investigation, it appears to him that this is not the case, he is contented to pass it over in silence. He believes, that few, who have impartially considered the subject, will refuse to join him in the following verdict, concerning Mr. Locke's interpretation. 'He hath said nothing of weight against 'the sense.' (*Whitby.*) That is, the sense above given of the passage.

V. 12, 13. As death and all misery resulted from man's having preferred his own inclinations to the will of God, and as all felicity was communicated by the renewal of the soul to holiness, so Christians should not consider themselves to be indebted at all to the flesh, though it still lived and wrought in them. They had already ruined themselves by complying with its suggestions, and it could have no further demands on them, now that Christ had rescued them from merited destruction. Indeed, if any habitually lived according to its corrupt lustings, they would certainly perish in their sins, notwithstanding their profession of the Gospel; but, on the other hand, if through the influences of the Holy Spirit, and according to the tendency of the new nature, they denied, subdued, and proceeded to extirpate their sinful lusts, and so to mortify and lop off those actions which thence arose, they would prove themselves alive to God through Christ, and their spiritual life would proportionably abound. The natural appetites of the body need only to be moderated, regulated, and subordinated, but the carnal desires *of the body* of sin and death, the old Adam, the flesh, with its affections and lusts, must be extirpated, and all its actings terminated. This is to be done by the Holy Spirit, yet we are to do it through him, and by dependence on him. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 14—17. The regenerating work of the Holy Spirit brings us, through Christ, into the family of God, and evidences our sonship according to the choice and purpose of the Father. Therefore all they, and they only, who give themselves up to the leading of the Spirit, are the children of God. The Holy Spirit will lead a man into the knowledge of the Lord and of his own heart, into humble repentance, faith in Christ, holy love, communion with God, and delight in his worship and commandments; and he will lead him away from vanity and iniquity, pride and discord; and in proportion as we willingly give up ourselves to be led in such paths, we may know our adoption. The apostle further observed, that confirmed believers had not received again the spirit of bondage to serve God from slavish fear; this they must do, who continue under the law as a covenant, if they serve him at all. The Mosaic dispensation had a greater tendency to foster this temper than the Christian religion has; and the Jews, too generally considering the whole as a covenant of works, worshipped God in this slavish manner. But most of the Roman converts had not been under the Mosaic law, yet they are spoken of indiscriminately, as having been formerly influenced by the spirit of bondage; we may therefore suppose that their first convictions were intended, under which awakened sinners act more from fear and selfish principles than they do afterwards, ab-

18 For [d] I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time, *are* not worthy *to be compared* with [e] the glory which shall be revealed in us.

19 For [f] the earnest [g] expectation of the creature waiteth for [h] the manifestation of the sons of God.

20 For [i] the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope;

21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, [k] into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

22 For we know that [*] the whole creation groaneth and [l] travaileth in pain together until now:

23 And not only *they*, but ourselves also, [m] which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, [n] even we ourselves groan within ourselves, [o] waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, [p] the redemption of our body.

d Matt. v. 11, 12. Acts xx 24 2 Cor iv. 17, 18. Heb. xi. 25, 26. 35 1 Pet. i. 6, 7.
e Col. iii. 4. 2 Thes. i 7—12. ii. 14. 1 Pet. i. 13. iv 13. v. 1. 1 John iii. 2.
f 23. Phil. i 20.
g Is. lxv. 17. Acts iii. 21. 2 Pet. iii 11—13. Rev. xxi. 1—6.
h Mal iii. 17, 18. Matt. xxv. 31—46. 1 John iii. 2.
i 22. Gen. iii. 17—19. v. 29. vi. 13. Job xii 6—10. Is. xxiv. 5. 6 Jer xii 4. 11. xiv. 5, 6 Hos. iv. 3. Joel i. 18.
k 19 Rev. xxii. 3—5.
* Or, *every creature* 20. Mark xvi. 15.
l Ps xlviii. 5 John xvi 21. Rev. xii. 2
m *See on*, 15, 16. v. 5 Gal. v. 22, 23. Eph. v. 9.
n 26. vii. 24 2 Cor v 2—4 vii 5 Phil. i. 21—23. 1 Pet. i. 7.
o 19 25 Luke xx. 36 Phil iii. 20, 21. 2 Tim iv. 8. Tit. ii. 13. Heb. ix 28. 1 John iii. 2.
p Luke xxi. 28. Eph i. 14. iv 30.

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staining from many sins without hating them, through dread of consequences, and practising duties without loving them. These convictions proceed from the moving of the Spirit of God upon their minds, and prepare them for receiving Christ by faith; but they are very different from their disposition, after they are brought into the full light and liberty of the Gospel, and have received "the Spirit "of adoption." Then they are taught to serve God with filial reverence, confidence, love, gratitude, submission, zeal, and satisfaction; and are especially taught and encouraged to call upon him, as a Father, for all things they want, and in all their trials, notwithstanding their conscious unworthiness. The word *Abba* is Syriac for Father, and the use of different languages in this connexion sweetly indicates the harmony of Jews and Gentiles, and of different nations, in this filial worship of God according to the Gospel. Thus the Holy Spirit, by producing in believers the tempers and affections of children, as described in the scripture, most manifestly attests their adoption into God's family. This is not done by any voice, immediate revelation or impulse, or merely by any text brought to the mind, (for all these things are equivocal and delusory,) but by coinciding with the testimony of their own consciences, as to their uprightness in embracing the Gospel, and giving themselves up to the service of God. So that, whilst they are examining themselves concerning the reality of their conversion, and find scriptural evidence of it, the Holy Spirit from time to time shines upon his own work, excites their holy affections into lively exercise, renders them very efficacious upon their conduct, and thus puts the matter beyond doubt; for while they feel the spirit of dutiful children towards God, they become satisfied concerning his paternal love to them. This being ascertained, they may further infer themselves to be the heirs of the heavenly inheritance, and of God himself as their Portion, even joint heirs with Christ the beloved Son of the Father, being accepted in him, and appointed with him to share the purchased inheritance; and of this they may be still more fully assured, if they patiently endure sufferings, after his example and for his sake, in the hope of being also glorified with him.

V. 18—23. The apostle had an abundant share of these sufferings; but upon the most exact and deliberate computation of them, he found them not worthy to be put in competition with that glorious recompense which will be bestowed on Christians, or that glory which will be revealed to them and accomplished in them. So that it would be the greatest folly imaginable for him to shrink from the pursuit of this promised felicity, through the dread of the most terrible of these transient sufferings. Indeed, the whole visible creation seems to wait with earnest expectation for that important period, when the children of God shall be manifested in the glory which is prepared for them; and in this it resembles a man, who with out-stretched neck looks, and waits with impatient longing, for the arrival of some beloved and expected friend. For the creation itself became subject to vanity and disorder through man's apostacy; not willingly, as he did, but by a kind of constraint, through the guilt and righteous condemnation of Adam and his posterity. By this awful dispensation, the Lord subjected the creatures of this lower world, and even the visible creation, to vanity. Every thing seems perverted from its intended use; the inanimate creatures are pressed into the service of man's rebellion; the luminaries of heaven give him light, by which to work wickedness; the fruits of the earth are sacrificed to his luxury, intemperance, and ostentation; its bowels are ransacked for metals, from which arms are forged for public and private murder and revenge, or to gratify his avarice, and excite him to fraud, oppression, and war. The animal tribes are subject to pain and death through man's sin: and their sufferings are exceedingly increased by his cruelty, who, instead of a kind master, is become their inhuman butcher and tyrant. So that every thing is in an unnatural state; the *good* creatures of God *appear evil* through man's abuse of them, and even the enjoyment originally to be found in them is turned into vexation, bitterness, and disappointment, by his idolatrous love of them and expectation from them. Yet this is "in hope;" God intends to rescue the creation from this confused state, and to deliver it from being thus held in bondage to man's depravity, that it may partake of and minister to the glorious liberty of His children. So that, we are assured, the whole creation groans in every part, as with one sympathizing expression of anguish, (like a woman in the pains of travail, not as one in the agonies of death,) expecting, and impatiently longing for, a glorious event of all these distractions. This it hath done ever since the fall, and will do in a measure till the end of the world. The miseries also of the human species, through their own and each other's wickedness, as well as the state of the inferior creatures, declare the world to be in such a situation, as is not intended always to continue.

24 For we are [q] saved by hope: [r] but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

25 But if we hope for that we see not, *then* do we [s] with patience wait for *it*.

26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our [t] infirmities: [u] for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: [x] but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us [y] with groanings which cannot be uttered.

27 And [z] he that searcheth the hearts, [a] knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, * because [b] he maketh intercession for the saints [c] according to *the will of* God.

28 And [d] we know that all things work together for good, to [e] them that love God, to them who are [f] the called according to *his* purpose.

29 For [g] whom he did foreknow, [h] he also did predestinate [i] *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, [k] that he might be the first-born among many brethren.

30 Moreover, [l] whom he did predestinate, them he also called: [m] and whom he called, them he also justified: [n] and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

31 What [o] shall we then say to these things? [p] If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?

q v. 2 xii. 12. xv. 4, 5. 13. Ps. xxxiii. 18 22. cxlvi. 5 Prov xiv 32. Jer xvii. 7. Zech ix 12. 1 Cor. xiii. 13. Gal. v. 5. Col. i. 5 23. 27 1 Thes. v. 8. 2 Thes. ii. 16. Tit. ii. 11—13. Heb. vi 18, 19 1 Pet. i. 3 21. 1 John iii. 3.
r 2 Cor. iv 18 v. 7. Heb. xi. 1. 1 Pet. i. 11.
s 23 ii. 7. xii 12 Gen. xlix. 18 Ps. xxvii. 14. xxxvii 7—9. lxii 1.5,6. cxxx. 6,7 Is xxv 9. xxvi 8. Lam iii 25, 26. Luke viii. 15. xxi. 19. Col. i. 11. 1 Thes i. 3. 2 Thes. iii. 5 Heb. vi. 12 15 x. 36 xii. 1—3. Jam. i. 3, 4 v. 7—11, Rev. i. 9. xiii. 10 xiv 12 ——t xv. 1 2 Cor. xii. 5—10. Heb iv. 15 v. 2.——u Matt. xx. 22. Luke xi 1, &c. Jam. iv 3 x 15. Ps. x 17. Zech xii 10. Matt x. 20. Gal iv. 6 Eph. ii 18 vi. 18. Jude 20, 21 y vii. 21 Ps vi. 1—9. xlii 1—5. lv 1, 2. lxiv. 3. lxxvii 1—3 lxxxviii. 1—3. cii 5. 20. cxix 81, 82 cxliii 4—7. Luke xxii 44. 2 Cor. v. 2 4. xii. 8 ——z 1 Chr. xxviii 9 xxix. 17. Ps. vii. 9 xliv. 21 Prov. xvii 3 Jer. xi. 20. xvii. 10 xx. 12. Matt. vi. 8 John xxi. 17 Acts i. 24. xv. 8 1 Thes. ii 4 Heb. iv. 13. Rev ii. 23.——a Ps. xxxviii 9. lxvi. 18, 19. Jam v. 16 Gr ——* Or, *that*.——b 34. Eph. ii. 18.——c Jer. xxix. 12, 13. John xiv. 13. Jam i. 5, 6. 1 John iii. 21, 22. v. 14, 15.

d 35—39. v. 3, 4. Gen. l. 20. Deut. viii. 2, 3. 16 Jer. xxiv. 5—7. Zech. xiii. 9 2 Cor. iv 15—17. v. 1. Phil i 19—23. 2 Thes. i. 5—7. Heb. xii. 6—12. Jam i. 3, 4. 1 Pet. i. 7, 8. Rev iii. 19
e v. 5. Ex xx. 6 Deut. vi. 5. Neh. i. 5. Ps. lxix. 36. Mark xii 30. 1 Cor. ii. 9. Jam. i. 12 ii. 5. 1 John iv. 10. 14. 19. v. 2, 3.
f 30 i. 6, 7. ix. 11. 23, 24. Jer. li 29 Acts xiii. 48. Gal. i. 15. Eph. i. 9, 10. iii. 11 1 Thes. v. 9. 2 Thes ii. 13, 14. 2 Tim. ii. 19. 1 Pet. v. 10.
g xi 2 Ex. xxxiii. 12. Jer. i. 5. 2 Tim ii. 19. 1 Pet i. 2 Rev. xiii. 8.——h Eph i. 5. 11 1 Pet. i. 20. lxiii 14. John xvii. 16. 19 22, 23 26. 1 Cor. xv 49. 2 Cor. iii. 18 Eph i. 4. iv. 24. Phil. iii. 21 1 John iii. 2.——k Ps lxxxix. 27. Matt xii. 50 xxv. 40. John xx. 17. Col i. 15—18 Heb. i. 5, 6 ii. 11—15 Rev i. 5, 6 ——l 28 i 6. ix 23, 24 Is. xli. 9. 1 Cor i. 2. 9 1 Pet. ii. 9 2 Pet i. 10. Rev. xvii. 14 xix. 9.——m iii. 22—26. Tit. iii. 4—7.——n i. 17, 18. 33—35. v 8—10. John v. 24. vi 39, 40. xvii 24. 2 Cor. iv 17. Eph ii 6. Col. iii. 4. 1 Thes. ii 12. 2 Thes. i. 10—12. ii 13, 14. 2 Tim. ii 11. Heb. ix 15. 1 Pet iii. 9 iv. 13, 14 v. 10.——o *See on*, iv. 1.——p Gen. xv. 1 Num. xiv 9. Deut. xxxiii. 29. Josh. x. 42. 1 Sam. xiv. 6. xvii. 45—47 Ps xxvii. 1—3. xlvi. 1—3 7 11. lvi. 4 11. lxxxiv. 11, 12. cxviii. 6. Is. l. 7—9. liv. 17. Jer. i. 19. xx. 11. John x. 28—30. 1 John iv. 4.

Nay, not only do all men, and all creatures here below, as it were, groan under the burdens imposed on them through sin, but even the children of God, who have the Spirit of adoption, and his holy consolations as the first fruits and pledge of their everlasting felicity, yet groan within themselves, through manifold pains, conflicts, temptations, and difficulties, and especially through the disquietude of indwelling sin, and in waiting for their adoption, their public admission into the family of God, and to the enjoyment of their inheritance, at that season, when their bodies also shall be redeemed from the grave, incorruptible immortal, and glorious. Then Satan, sin, death, misery, and all wicked creatures, will be confined to hell, and the rest of God's creation will appear glorious, pure, beautiful, orderly, and happy, in every respect answering the end for which it was formed, and in nothing abused to contrary purposes. The sufferings of animals, though many, yet being *unfeared* and *transient*, are doubtless overbalanced by their enjoyments, and to infer an individual resurrection of them, from this passage, is surely one of the wildest reveries that ever entered into the mind of any thinking man.

V. 24—27. True believers have been actually brought into a state of safety, but their comfort consists in hope rather than fruition. Now that which is the object of sight, sense, or enjoyment, cannot properly be called hope; for how can a man be said to hope for the vision or fruition of that which he at present beholds and enjoys? The future felicity of the saints will chiefly consist in seeing God face to face, some glimpses by faith they here see, as in a glass darkly; for the full vision of his glory they hope and wait in reliance on his promise, and by patient continuance in well-doing amidst manifold trials and temptations; and from this hope they cannot be diverted, by the vain expectation of finding satisfaction in the things of time and sense. For, though their infirmities are many and great, and they would soon be overpowered if left to themselves, yet the Spirit of God so helps them and supports them, that they are not entirely overcome. And as their strength and comfort amid conflicts must be obtained by prayer, and as they are so ignorant, forgetful, or unbelieving, that they know not what to ask for, or how to ask for any thing with proper affections, so the same Spirit compassionately assists their memories, excites their desires and hopes, and increases their faith. Thus he becomes an inward intercessor, by suggesting such prayers as are pleasing to God, and meet to be accepted through our heavenly Advocate. These prayers do not consist in copious and fluent expressions, which are often destitute of suitable affections, but in earnest longings for and believing expectations of, spiritual blessings, which are sometimes productive rather of groans than of words, or they are uttered in broken sentences and detached and earnest ejaculations, rather than a continued prayer, as implying more than a man can find words to utter. Perhaps the humble, broken-hearted supplicant, when thus groaning out his desires after pardon and deliverance from sin, is ashamed to offer such incoherent requests; but the heart-searching God understands and approves this energetic language, which expresses the mind of the Spirit, when making intercession for the saints in whom he dwells, according to the will of God, both in his promise, commandment, and providence; and such prayers will surely be answered, when the well-worded addresses of formalists will be rejected. *Mind of*, &c. 'The phrase is here the very same that was used in the sixth verse, and expresses 'not merely the meaning, but the temper and disposition 'of the mind, as under the influences of the divine Spirit, 'pursuing and breathing after such blessings as suit its 'rational and immortal nature.' (*Doddridge.*) The clause in one of the collects of our liturgy seems well to express this, 'That they may love the things which thou com'mandest, and desire that which thou dost promise.' When the Holy Spirit produces this state of the judgment and affections, the prayers which spring from it will be graciously accepted by the holy heart-searching God.

32 He [q] that spared not his own Son, [r] but delivered him up for us all, [s] how

[q] v. 6—10. xi. 21. Gen. xxii. 12. Is. liii 10. Matt. iii. 17. John iii 16. 2 Cor. v. 21. 2 Pet. ii. 4, 5. 1 John iv. 10.

[r] iv 25.

[s] 28. vi. 23. Ps lxxxiv. 11. 1 Cor. ii. 12. iii. 21—23 2 Cor. iv. 15. Rev. xxi. 7

V. 28--31. From the preceding considerations the apostle assuredly concluded, that all events in life or death would concur in promoting the eternal good of every true believer, however bitter and painful they might at present be; as nothing could ever defeat the great end proposed in all the dispensations of God respecting them, even their everlasting salvation. Providential appointments are doubtless primarily intended, but as these often lead men into temptation, and so prove *occasions* of sin, we could have no assurance that they would "all work together for "good," if we were absolutely to except the effects of our own sin and folly. Indeed, the sins even of true believers are not always over-ruled for their increase of present grace, or of future glory; in this respect they suffer loss, and are saved as by fire; yet the whole concurs, as one complex plan, to prepare them for the inheritance intended for them, and many of their own mistakes and miscarriages, being *deeply repented of*, work together eminently for their humiliation and increase of grateful love. As far as they act in character, and live in the habitual exercise of "love to God," all things will concur in augmenting their final recompense. When they act out of character, corrections, and perhaps terrors, will be employed to bring them back again; and if a man allow himself in sin, expecting to derive good from it, he "does evil that good "may come," he "sins on, that grace may abound," he bears the broad mark of a hypocrite, and his damnation will be just. So that we need not invalidate this animating assurance, to guard it from the abuse of wicked men, as some have done, to the great discouragement of humble Christians, who fear nothing so much, even in their sharpest afflictions, as their own lamented propensity to sin. The persons intended once did not love God, but they were called into a state of reconciliation and love to him, according to his eternal purpose and choice of them, which he will never suffer to be frustrated. Having seen good to permit the fall and apostacy of man, he looked upon the whole human species as deserving of destruction, and meet for it: yet purposing to provide and reveal a gracious salvation to them, for the glory of his name, he knew that they would as certainly reject it, as they would break his holy law. For reasons therefore not revealed to us, he determined to leave some *deservedly* to perish in obstinate enmity, and *graciously* to recover others by regeneration. These "he fore-knew," not merely in respect of external privileges, or as a part of favoured nations, but as individually chosen to eternal life; for in consequence of this fore-knowledge, "he predestinated," or *before decreed*, them "to be conformed to the image of his "Son." Here they are in part renewed to his holy image, and walk in his steps, and, having passed like Jesus through many sufferings, they will hereafter be completely conformed to his holy human nature, both in body and soul; that so he may appear among them as the first begotten and Head of the many brethren, which shall constitute the family of God, that being admitted through him to be children and heirs, they may thus be made meet with him to enjoy their inheritance. As this was the determinate purpose and fore-knowledge of God respecting them, so all the intermediate steps were equally predetermined. Thus the Lord calls to repentance, faith in Christ, and newness of life, every one, whom he hath predestinated; he fully justifieth, through the righteousness of Christ, every one whom he calleth; and he will finally glorify every one whom he justifieth.—Sanctification is not expressly mentioned in this golden chain; but predestination to be conformed to the image of Christ, effectual calling, and final glory, so describe the beginning, the progress, and the consummation of sanctification, that no omission can in this respect be imputed to the apostle. In the language of faith and hope, he speaks of the whole work as already done, because ensured by the purposes and promises of God, and he demands what can be said unto, or against, such things? For if God be thus freely and absolutely our unchangeable Friend, and thus determined to bless us with everlasting felicity, who, or what, can be so against us, as to defeat his gracious purpose? Or what need have we to fear the rage and power of all creatures, if they should combine against us? From this and similar passages, some persons have absurdly talked of our having been *justified from eternity*, &c. but the *fixed intention* of doing any thing is perfectly distinct from the *actual performance of it.* God as absolutely determined the final glorification of every believer, as he did the justification of every elect person; we might then just as well say, they have been glorified in body and soul from all eternity; this could not be more absurd or unscriptural, than the notion of being justified from eternity, and probably it would be less capable of abuse. Dr. Whitby says, that all the fathers before Augustine understood this passage of those, *whom God foresaw would love him.*—But does God foresee that any of our race, while unregenerate, will love him? And is not the clause, "called "according to his purpose," of the same import as regenerated? And can this choice of some, rather than others, of our fallen race, because of something spiritually good in them, as the ground of it, in order to their being thus called, possibly consist with the doctrines of original sin, or the total depravity of human nature, and of a regeneration from the death of sin to the life of righteousness? Does not it border on Pelagianism? Again, if all the Gentiles, or all the inhabitants of any one nation, whom God foreknew, and determined to call into his Church, be really conformed to the image of Christ, and justified, and shall, without exception, partake of eternal glory, the interpretation of the passage, as referring to the election of collective bodies, may stand; but not otherwise. So that, if this were the only passage, in which the humiliating subject was expressly mentioned, we might confidently maintain, that the doctrine of individual predestination to eternal life, and the authority of the apostle as an inspired writer, must stand or fall together. Nothing more fully shows this, than the difficulties to which its learned and sagacious opposers are reduced, and the different grounds on which they rest the cause; for they scarcely agree in any thing, but in determining to oppose the most natural and obvious meaning of the words. Perhaps the apostle's doctrine was never more justly expressed by any shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

33 Who [t] shall lay any thing to the charge [u] of God's elect? [x] *It is* God that justifieth.

34 Who [y] is he that condemneth? [z] *It is* Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, [a] who is even at the right hand of God, [b] who also maketh intercession for us.

35 Who [c] shall separate us from the love of Christ? [d] *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 As it is written, [e] For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as [f] sheep for the slaughter.

37 Nay, [g] in all these things we are more than conquerors, through [h] him that loved us.

38 For [i] I am persuaded, [k] that neither death, nor life, nor angels, [l] nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

39 [m] Nor [n] height, nor [o] depth, nor any other creature, [p] shall be able to separate us from [q] the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

t 1. Job i. 9–11. ii 4–6. xxii. 6, &c. xxxiv. 8, 9 xli. 7–9. Ps xxxv. 11. Is. liv. 17 Zech. iii. 1–4 Rev. xii 10, 11.
u Is xlii. 1. Mat. xxiv. 21. Luke xviii. 7. 1 Thes. i 4. Tit. i. 1 1 Pet. i. 2.
x iii. 26 Is. l. 8, 9 Gal. iii 8.
y 1. xiv 3. Job xxxiv. 29 Ps xxxvii 33 cix. 31. Jer. l. 20.
z iv. 25 v. 6–10. xiv. 9 Job xxxiii. 24. Matt. xx. 28. John xiv 19 Gal. iii. 13, 14 Heb. i. 3 ix. 10–14 x. 10–14. 15–22 xii. 2 1 Pet. iii 18. Rev. i. 18 ——a Mark xvi. 19. Acts vii. 56–60 Col iii. 1. Heb. viii. 1, 2. 1 Pet iii. 22.——b 27. Is. liii. 12. John xvi 23. 26, 27. xvii. 20–24 Heb. iv 14, 15. vii. 21 ix. 24 1 John ii 1. 2 ——c 39. Ps. ciii. 17. Jer. xxxi 3. John x. 28. xiii. 1. 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14 16. Rev i. 5, 6.——d 17. v. 3–5. Matt. v. 10–12 x. 28–31. Luke xxi. 12–18. John xvi. 33 Acts xiv 22. xx. 23, 24. 2 Cor. iv. 17. vi 4–10. xi 23–27. 2 Tim. i. 12. iv 16–18. Heb. xii. 3–11. Jam. i. 2–4. 1 Pet. i. 5–7. iv. 12–14. Rev. vii. 14–17.

e Ps xliv. 22 cxli. 7. John xvi. 2. 1 Cor. xv. 30, 31. 2 Cor. iv. 11.
f Is. liii. 7. Jer. xi. 19. xii. 3 li. 40 Acts viii. 32.
g 2 Chr. xx 25–27 Is. xxv. 8. 1 Cor. xv 54. 57. 2 Cor ii 14. xii. 9, 10. 1 John iv. 4. v. 4, 5. Rev. vii. 9, 10. xi 7–12 xii. 11. xvii. 14. xxi. 7.
h Gal. ii 20 Eph. v 2. 25–27. 2 Thes. ii. 16. 1 John iv. 10. 19. Rev. i. 5
i iv. 21 2 Cor. iv. 13 2 Tim i 12. Heb. xi 13.
k xiv. 8. 1 Cor. iii 22, 23. xv. 54–58. 2 Cor. v. 4–8. Phil. i. 20–23.——l 2 Cor xi. 14. Eph. vi. 11, 12. Col. i. 16. ii. 15. 1 Pet. v. 8–10.——m Eph. iii. 18, 19 ——n Ex. ix. 16, 17. Ps xciii. 3, 4. Is. x. 10–14 33 xxiv. 21. Dan. iv. 11. v. 18–23 2 Thes. ii 4. Rev. xiii 1–8 ——o xi. 33 Ps lxiv. 6. Prov. xx. 5. Matt. xxiv. 24. 2 Cor. ii. 11. xi 3 2 Thes. ii 9–12. Rev ii. 24. xii 9. xiii. 14 xix. 20. xx. 3. 7 ——p John x 28–30 Col iii 3, 4 ——q 35. v. 8. John iii. 16. xvi. 27. xvii. 26. Eph. i. 4 ii. 4–7. Tit. iii. 4–7. 1 John iv 9, 10. 16. 19.

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uninspired writer, than in the former part of the seventeenth article of our church. 'Predestination unto life 'is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby, (before the 'foundations of the world were laid,) he had constantly 'decreed, by his counsel, secret to us, to deliver from 'curse and damnation those whom he had chosen in Christ 'out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour. Wherefore 'they, which be endued with so excellent a benefit of God, 'be called according to God's purpose, by his Spirit working in due season, they through grace obey the calling, 'they be justified freely; they be made the sons of God by 'adoption, they be made like unto the image of his only 'begotten Son Jesus Christ, they walk religiously in good 'works, and at length, by God's mercy, they attain to everlasting felicity.'

V. 32—34. The omnipotence and omniscience of God had been, in the preceding verse, opposed to the puny efforts of every enemy; here his former benefits are shown to be assured pledges of final felicity to all real Christians. When the holiness of God and man's sinfulness barred the way to happiness, his free love of such rebels and enemies induced him to give his own Son to be their Surety and Sacrifice, having willingly assumed their nature, in order to bear their sins; and in this, the Father "spared him not, "but delivered him up" to agonies, ignominy, and death, notwithstanding his personal dignity and excellency, the perfection of his obedience, and his own inconceivable love of him. Thus he bore the curse instead of all his people, and so expiated their guilt when enemies; and having, in virtue of that atonement and his own eternal choice, called them into a state of peace with him, and taught them to love and obey him, how can it be supposed that he will now withhold any thing from them? All things in heaven and earth, the universal creation, yea, the everlasting enjoyment of the Creator himself as their Portion, are not so great a display of his free love to them, as the gift of his co-equal Son to be the atonement on the cross for their sins; and the rest necessarily follow upon their union with him, and interest in him. The emphasis is evidently here laid, not on Christ, *as incarnate*, being given up to death for us, but in God's giving his *own* Son (ἰδιου) to become incarnate for such a purpose. Who then can lay any thing to the charge of God's elect, whose election is manifested by their being called to the fellowship of Christ, when it is God, against whom they have sinned, who hath at such a price completely justified them? Satan may accuse them, the world may revile them, their brethren may suspect and censure them, their own consciences may reproach them with many sins, the law may convict and condemn them for many former and latter transgressions; but God himself pleads their cause, he pronounces them righteous, silences their accusers, pacifies their consciences, clears their characters, and shows the law magnified, and justice satisfied, in the obedience and sufferings of their Surety, and who then can make good any charge against them? If we look forward to the day of judgment, who shall then condemn them? The judge himself will be the same Person who loved them, died for their sins, and rose again for their justification, and who now at the right hand of the Father ever liveth to plead in their behalf, and to use his almighty power for their benefit! Even now, he presents their services for acceptance before his Father's throne, he quashes all accusations brought against them, defeats the machinations of their enemies, manages all things for their good, and is perfecting his work in them; and will he then forsake the work of his own hands, and at last condemn them to hell? It is impossible!

V. 35—39. As infinite and unchangeable power and love are engaged in behalf of all believers, and the mercy already shown them is greater than what is further needful, they may even triumph on the field of battle, and exult amidst their conflicts and groans; for who shall separate them from the love of Christ, who hath chosen, redeemed, called, and justified them? Shall trials, persecutions, or calamities of any kind, degree, or continuance? Shall the sword of war, or that of the executioner? Indeed it had been written of old that God's harmless people were, and would be, butchered like sheep, (*Marg. Ref.*) but, instead of being thus separated from his love, they would be brought to the more complete enjoyment of it, and so not

CHAP. IX.

The apostle laments the unbelief of his countrymen, and declares his willingness to endure any thing for their salvation, 1—3. *He shows the privileges of Israel as a nation,* 4, 5; *and the difference between them and the true Israel,* 6—8. *He illustrates his subject by the examples of Isaac, of Jacob and Esau, and of Pharaoh; and thus shows the freeness of God's mercy, and the sovereignty of his election,* 9—18. *He answers objections to his doctrine,* 19—21: *and proves it from the prophets,* 22—29; *and evinces, that the Jews came short of the blessing, (which the Gentiles obtained by faith,) because they sought it by the works of the law, and rejected Christ,* 30—33.

only escape unhurt, or just come off victorious, but also be made more than conquerors, even immense gainers, by their sufferings, through the supporting grace of their loving Saviour. Indeed the apostle was fully persuaded, or assured, (*Marg. Ref.*) that neither the love of life, nor its snares and trials, nor the fear, agony, or separating stroke of death in any form, nor the machinations of evil angels, or of all the principalities and powers of darkness, or the ungodly persecuting princes of this world, nor any present calamities, or future unknown changes or undiscovered scenes, nor the height of prosperity, nor the depth of adversity, nor the highest created power, nor the deepest plots of subtle enemies, nor any creature, nor all creatures, shall ever prevail to separate true believers from the love of God in Christ Jesus towards them; as his purposes are unchangeable, his engagements irrevocable, and his power invincible. It is frivolous to say, that sin, being no creature of God, may separate the believer from his love, notwithstanding all this; for such a restriction wholly invalidates the passage. Tribulation, persecution, the terror of death, the frowns or smiles of the world, and the machinations of evil spirits, have no tendency to separate us from the love of God, except as they prove occasions of sin. *Professed* believers in such circumstances often forsake God and perish, but "all his *saints* are in his hand," and are "kept by his power through faith unto salvation," so that they either resist and overcome every temptation, or, if baffled and foiled, they are brought back by convictions and corrections, with penitent tears and fervent supplications, and they dread suffering, chiefly because they fear lest it should prove the occasion of indwelling-sin gaining some victory over them. If a man take encouragement to sin from such assurances, he renders it extremely probable that he has no interest in them; no one can triumph on this ground, who has not Scriptural evidence of his conversion, or can take the warrantable comfort of them, except he is at present striving against sin, and harassed by fears lest some future event should give that detested and dreaded foe a fatal advantage over him. We must not therefore take the cordials from the weary and almost fainting combatants, because others unwarrantably seize upon, and fatally intoxicate themselves with them. (*Note, John* x. 28—30.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

The terrors of the law, and our own consciousness of guilt, should endear to us the free salvation of the Gospel; and urge us to flee for refuge to Christ, that we may be safe in him, as Noah in the ark, when threatened destruction shall overwhelm all ungodly men. Whilst we desire exemption from condemnation, let us seek for grace to enable us to walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; thus it will be evident, that "the law of the "Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from "the law of sin and death," and that the grace of the Gospel hath already done more toward our sanctification, than the law could ever do for those who desire to be under it. For if we truly rely on the sacrifice of the Son of God, in the likeness of sinful flesh, for our sins, we shall find that our old nature is condemned and must be crucified, we shall join in putting this sentence in execution, and long for the righteousness of the law to be fulfilled in us, even as it was by our Surety. Of this, our present habitual "walk after the Spirit," is an earnest and sure pledge; but a carnal mind and conversation are evidences, that a man is dead in sin and under the curse of the law, however he may speak about the grace of the Gospel; for they, who are alive to God, and at peace with him, are spiritual in their judgment, affections, and habitual walk, though they grieve that they are not more so. But "the carnal mind is enmity against God;" no unregenerate man can delight in his holy law, or be subject to it, and how can it be expected that God should be pleased with such enemies and rebels? We should therefore especially examine ourselves whether the Spirit of Christ dwell in us; for if this be not our case, we belong not to him, are not in his kingdom, and shall have our portion among the servants of Satan, unless this entire change be wrought in our hearts.

V. 10—18.

If the Spirit of Christ have taken possession of our hearts, and renewed his holy image there, the death of our mortal bodies will perfect the life of our immortal souls, which have now eternal life abiding in them, and through the Redeemer's righteousness our bodies too shall be raised again, to share that glorious felicity. What then can a carnal life present to our view, worthy to be put in competition with this noble prize of our high calling? All we owe to the flesh is a holy revenge for the injuries already done, and the hinderances continually given us; and instead of rendering our state doubtful by at all living after it, we should, by the Spirit, continually endeavour more entirely to mortify it, and repress all its actings. Thus giving up ourselves to be led by the Spirit, our adoption

I [a] SAY the truth in Christ, I lie not, [b] my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,

2 That [c] I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.

3 For [d] I could wish that myself [e] were * accursed from Christ for [f] my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh;

a i. 9. 2 Cor. i. 23. xi. 31. xii. 19. Gal. i. 20. Phil. i. 8. 1 Thes. ii. 5. 1 Tim. ii. 7. v. 21.
b ii. 15. viii. 16. 2 Cor. i. 12. 1 Tim. i. 5. 1 John iii. 19—21.
c x. 1. 1 Sam. xv. 35. Ps. cxix. 136. Is. lxvi. 19. Jer. ix. 1. xiii. 17. Lam. ii. 18. iii. 48, 49. 51. Ez. ix. 4. Luke xix. 41—44. Phil. iii. 18. Rev. xi. 3.
d Ex. xxxii. 32.
e Deut. xxi. 23. Josh. vi. 17, 18. 1 Sam. xiv. 24. 44. Gal. i. 8. iii. 10. 13.
* Or, *separated*.
f xi. 1. Gen. xxix. 14. Esth. viii. 6. Acts vii. 23—26. xiii. 26.

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will be manifest; we shall gradually be emancipated from our servile fears, and shall trust, walk with, and obey God, as our reconciled Father; the Holy Spirit will witness with our consciences that we have the temper of loving, obedient children towards him, and support us with the joyful prospect of our inheritance, amidst our sufferings in the way to glory: while our present trials will appear light, compared with the felicity reserved for us.

V. 19—27.

Sin has filled the world with unspeakable disorder and misery, all creatures seem to proclaim man's fatal apostacy, and to recommend the precious salvation of Christ. While men are evidently at war with their Maker and with each other, and the earth is become a great slaughter-house and burying ground to its inhabitants, the inferior creatures are forced into the service of man's lusts by the most abominable perversion of them. Thus the creation groans under bondage to human depravity, every creature seems to abet man's rebellion, or to be an instrument of his crimes; the very heathens could see the strange state of the world, though they saw neither the cause nor the cure of it. But the Gospel opens a brighter prospect, a glorious crisis approaches, of which all things seem in anxious expectation. When the children of God shall be manifested, and separated from his implacable foes, a complete deliverance from this bondage will be given to all; but Satan and his obstinate adherents, and sin, deformity, vanity, and misery, shall be seen no where but in the bottomless pit. May we then give diligence to ensure our interest in this redemption, and to possess the first-fruits of the Spirit! Then our groans under our share of this universal ruin, while we wait for our final adoption, will be in hope; we shall learn to disregard the perishing things which are seen, and patiently to expect and wait for the good things that are unseen and eternal. The spirit of God will in these things help us under our infirmities; and, notwithstanding our own insufficiency, we shall by his influence pray to our heavenly Father, with such large and spiritual desires, and such unutterable pantings after his salvation, as shall ensure a gracious answer, and abundant supplies of every needful blessing.

V. 28—39.

If we are but assured that we really love God, and desire to keep his commandments, we may rest satisfied that all things shall finally terminate to our greatest advantage. For the love of God, in the hearts of those who were once enmity to him, proves that they have been called according to his eternal purpose, in order to be conformed to the image of his Son, and made meet as his brethren to be joint heirs with him. But none can have any ground to think themselves predestinated, called, or justified, or to expect to be glorified, except they love God, bear the image of Christ, walk in his steps, and aim to obey and honour him; and whatever men may object against these things, they, who are thus chosen, called, and justified, shall without doubt be eternally glorified, nor will a single exception be found to this rule, though many will at length appear to have deceived themselves and others. If God has determined to save us, who can destroy us? If he spared not his own Son, but delivered him to death for us, how should he refuse any thing to us? If this was not too large a gift for his enemies, what can he withhold from his friends and children? If he justifies us, who can condemn us? If our crucified and risen Jesus pleads and fights for us, who can plead or fight against us, with any possibility of prevailing? If the Judge himself is our Friend, who can pronounce a sentence against us? Or what can separate us from the love of him who bled for us, when we were so vile, that hell was our desert, and the doom for which we were meet? Whilst therefore we rejoice in these privileges and this security, and cheerfully expect to be more than conquerors in every conflict, and immense gainers by every loss and tribulation, till death be swallowed up in victory, let us show the holiness of the doctrine, by sparing none of our lusts, shrinking from no hardship or expense in the cause of Christ, willingly enduring our cross, obeying his commandments, and being "steadfast, unmoveable, and always abounding in his work, knowing that our labour is not in vain "in the Lord."

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1—3. This appeal is evidently equivalent to a solemn oath. Now, an oath being an act of religious worship, the apostle, by thus appealing to Jesus Christ, and to the Holy Ghost, clearly shows that he considered them as entitled to religious worship. From the apostle's arguing so strenuously for a free salvation by faith alone, without any respect to the Mosaic law, or the peculiar privileges of the Jews, it might have been supposed, that he had no great attachment to his countrymen, or even that the persecutions which he had endured from them had set him against them. Being therefore about still further to discuss the subject, of the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles, and to resolve the whole into the sovereign electing love of God, he introduced these topics, by expressing in the most energetic language his cordial affection for his people. He spoke the truth as in the presence of Christ his Judge, and with a solemn appeal to him, that he did in no degree deviate from it; his conscience also, being enlightened and directed by the Holy Ghost, bare witness to his sincerity in declaring, that the unbelief and rejection of the Jews excited exceedingly great disquietude and depression, and constant grief, in his heart. Insomuch, that he would even willingly submit to be treated as an Anathema, or

4 Who are [g] Israelites; to whom *pertaineth* [h] the adoption, [i] and the glory, [k] and the * covenants, and [l] the giving of the law, [m] and the service *of God*, [n] and the promises;

5 Whose [o] *are* the fathers, [p] and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ *came*, [q] who is over all, God [r] blessed for ever. [s] Amen.

g 6. Gen. xxxii. 28. Ex. xix. 3—6. Deut vii 6. Ps lxxiii. 1. Is. xli. 8. xlvi 3. John i. 47. h Ex. iv 22 Deut. xiv. 1. Jer xxxi. 9. 20. Hos xi. 1. i Num. vii. 89. 1 Sam. iv. 21, 22. 1 Kings viii. 11. Ps lxxviii. 61. k Gen. xv. 18. xvii. 2 7. 10. Ex xxiv. 7, 8. xxxiv. 27. Deut. xxix. 1. xxxi. 16. Neh. xiii 29 Ps. lxxxix 3. 34. Jer. xxxiii. 20—25. Acts iii. 25. Heb. viii. 6—10.——* Or, *testaments*.——l iii. 2. Neh. ix. 13, 14 Ps. cxlvii. 19. Ez. xx. 11, 12. John i. 17.——m Is. v. 2. Matt. xxi. 33. Heb. ix. 1—10.——n Luke i. 54, 55. 69—75 Acts ii. 39. iii. 25, 26. xiii. 32, 33 Eph ii. 12. Heb. vi. 13—17.——o xi. 28 Deut x. 15. p i. 3. Gen. xli. 3. xlix. 10. Is. vii. 14 xi. 1. Matt i 1, &c. Luke iii. 23, &c. 2 Tim. ii 8 Rev. xxii 16.——q x. 12. Ps. xlv 6 ciii. 19. Is. ix. 6. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Mic v. 2. John i. 1—3. x. 30. Acts xx 28. Phil. ii. 6—11. Col. i. 16. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Heb i. 8—13. 1 John v. 20 ——r i. 25. Ps. lxxii. 19. 2 Cor xi. 31. 1 Tim. vi. 15 ——s Deut xxvii. 15, &c. 1 Kings i. 36. 1 Chr. xvi. 36. Ps. xli. 13. lxxxix. 52. cvi. 48. Jer. xxviii 6. Matt. vi. 13 xxviii. 20. 1 Cor. xiv 16 Rev. i. 18. v. 14. xxii. 20.

6 Not [t] as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For [u] they *are* not all Israel, which are of Israel;

7 Neither [x] because they are the seed of Abraham, *are they* all children: but, [y] in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

8 That is, [z] they which are the children of the flesh, these *are* not the children of God: but the children of the promise [a] are counted for the seed.

9 For this *is* the word of promise, [b] At this time I will come, and Sara shall have a son.

t iii. 3. xi. 1. 12 Num. xxiii 19. Is. lv. 11. Matt xxiv 35. John x. 35. 2 Tim. ii. 13 Heb. vi. 17, 18
u ii 28, 29 iv 12—16. John i. 47. Gal. vi. 16.
x Luke iii 8. xvi. 24, 25. 39. John viii. 37—39 Phil. iii. 3.
y Gen. xxi. 12. Heb. xi. 18.
z iv 11—16. Gal iv 22—31.
a Gen. xxxi. 15 Ps xxii. 30 lxxxvii. 6. John i 13 Gal. iii 26—29. 1 John iii. 1, 2
b Gen. xvii. 21. xviii 10. 14. xxi. 2. *Sarah*. Heb. xi. 11, 12. 17.

accursed, *after the manner* of Christ, to be excommunicated from his visible Church, loaded with infamy, crucified, or in any way put to the utmost pain and disgrace; or even for a time to be excluded from all the comfort of communion with Christ, and shut up under the deepest horror and distress of mind which could be endured without sin: if by any personal sufferings of his own, that could consist with his final salvation, he might rescue his beloved brethren and kinsmen from that national and personal destruction, which he saw about to come upon them for their obstinate unbelief. (*Note, Ex.* xxxii. 32.) This seems to be the utmost that the apostle could mean, as it would be utterly unlawful, on any consideration whatever, to wish to be eternally miserable, and *an implacable enemy of God*, as all who perish will be. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'I 'could even wish, (if it were proper to make such a wish, 'if it would avail to make so great a multitude happy,) 'I *could even wish* so great a blessing to my brethren, 'though with the loss of my own happiness.' (*Whitby.*) —The preposition απο, here translated *from* Christ, may be rendered, *after the example* of Christ. "Whom I serve "from my forefathers;" that is, *after the example* of my forefathers. (2 *Tim.* i. 3.)

V. 4, 5. The apostle was peculiarly grieved, to think that all the distinguished favours shown to his people should terminate in the rejection of them for opposing Christ. They were the descendants of Israel, who wrestled with God and prevailed; they had long been the professed worshippers of JEHOVAH, to whom the *typical* adoption pertained. The covenants made with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Aaron, and David, the law given at mount Sinai, and the national covenant grounded on it, belonged to them, and were so many peculiar honours and advantages towards their becoming the spiritual people of God. The worship at the temple, which was both typical of Christ's salvation, and the means of grace and communion with God, and the ark of the covenant, the symbol and pledge of the Lord's gracious presence with them, had for ages been their glory. All the promises concerning Christ and his salvation were immediately given and preserved to them: they were honourable by their descent from the ancient patriarchs, who walked with God, and were accepted by him; and finally, the expected Messiah had been born among them, as one of their nation according to the flesh; even He, who is also "God over all" creatures, blessed and praised throughout all worlds, and to all eternity; to this the apostle affixed his cordial Amen. The expression, "according to the flesh," implies that Christ had a far higher and nobler nature; even as when Paul used it concerning the Jews his brethren, &c. (3.) he intimated his sorrow that they were not his brethren, as the children of God, born of the Spirit, and believers in Christ. This, with every other consideration, undeniably proves, that the apostle here meant, in the most decided manner, to attest the Deity of Christ, as one with the Father, and equally the object of universal and everlasting adoration. —There is no example, either in the New Testament, or in the Greek translation of the old Testament, in which the doxology, "Blessed be God," is expressed in the same words, and arranged in the same manner, as in this place. So that the only way, in which the Socinians and Arians have attempted to evade the conclusion, unavoidably deducible from this text, namely, by rendering the clause, "Who is over all, God be blessed for evermore;" rests on a most harsh and unnatural construction, of which no example can be adduced, at the same time that it destroys the antithesis, without which the verse would be destitute of propriety and animation.

V. 6—9. Though the Jews had rejected the Gospel, and were cast off by the Lord, it must not be supposed that his word had failed of accomplishment. Their national covenant had been fulfilled to them, till it was finally forfeited; the promises respecting the Messiah had been performed, and the spiritual covenant and promises did not belong to them as a nation, but to such of them only as believed, in common with other believers; for all were not the true "Israel of God," who were naturally descended from Jacob. Indeed, this had been intimated in the case of Abraham and his seed; for the special covenant, made with him in favour of his children, did not include all his posterity; but it was limited to the line of Isaac, when the Lord assured him, "that in Isaac should his "seed be called." So that his children, in the ordinary course of things, were not all adopted as the children of God even *in a typical sense;* but those only, who sprang from him according to the promise, and by the extraordinary power of God performing it, when Sarah was naturally past child-bearing. (*Marg. Ref.*) The apostle evidently speaks of a true Israel among the descendants of Israel, a remnant, as distinguished from the nation at

10 And [c] not only *this*; [d] but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, *even* by our father Isaac,

11 (For [e] *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, [f] that the purpose of God [g] according to the election might stand, [h] not of works, [i] but of him that calleth,)

c v. 3. 11. Luke xvi. 26.
d Gen. xxv. 21. *Rebekah.*
e iv. 17. Ps li. 5. Eph. ii. 3.
f viii. 28—30. Is. xiv. 24. 26, 27. xxiii. 9. xlvi. 10, 11. Jer. li. 29. Eph. i. 9—11. iii. 11. 2 Tim. i. 9.
g xi. 5—7. Eph. i. 4, 5. 1 Thes. i. 4. 2 Pet. i. 10.
h xi. 6. Eph. ii. 9. Tit. iii. 5.——i viii. 28. 1 Thes. ii. 12. 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14. 1 Pet. v. 10. Rev. xvii. 14.

12 It was said unto her, [k] The * elder shall serve the † younger.

13 As it is written, [l] Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I [m] hated.

14 What [n] shall we say then? [o] *Is there* unrighteousness with God? God forbid.

k Gen. xxv. 22, 23. 2 Sam. viii. 14. 1 Kings xxii. 47.
* Or, *greater.*
† Or, *lesser.*
l Mal. i. 2, 3.
m Gen. xxix. 31. 33. Deut. xxi. 15. Prov. xiii. 24. Matt. x. 37. Luke xiv. 26. John xii. 25.
n *See on*, iii. 1. 5.
o ii. 5. iii. 5, 6. Gen. xviii. 25. Deut. xxxii. 4. 2 Chr. xix. 7. Job viii. 3. xxxiv. 10—12. 18, 19. xxxiv. 2. Ps. xcii. 15. cxlv. 17. Jer. xii. 1. Rev. xv. 3, 4. xvi. 7.

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large; and he introduces the case of Abraham and his two sons, and afterwards that of Esau and Jacob, not as *examples*, but as *illustrations* of his main subject. If this were carefully noted, the perplexity which involves the reasonings of many learned men on this passage would in a great measure vanish. "The children of the pro" mise" are 'those, whom God gives to Abraham, by 'a spiritual generation, whether alone, as in the case of 'us Gentiles, or added to the carnal generation, as in the 'case of Isaac, and of all believing Jews.' 'They who 'interpret "the children of promise" 'to mean those, 'who by faith embrace the promise; say indeed, what is 'fact, but do not speak with suitable precision; for the 'apostle does not in this place distinguish the children of 'Abraham from others by their faith as known; but he 'discourses concerning the primary cause, that is, the 'fountain of their faith itself, namely, the eternal purpose 'of gratuitous election.' (*Beza.*) Isaac was promised some time before his birth; and the faithfulness and power of God having fulfilled that promise, he was "the child "of promise," in whom Abraham's "seed should be "called;" and in whose "Seed the nations should be "blessed:" but Ishmael was not thus previously promised, and the chosen nation, which was to inherit Canaan, and from whom the Messiah was to spring, would not descend from him, but from Isaac. In like manner, all the descendants of Israel were not entitled to the spiritual blessings of the covenant, but only "the remnant according "to the election of grace," which was found among them; and these, being regenerated and having believed in Christ, were brought into the family of believing Abraham, as the children of promise, in whom the promises to him, concerning his numerous posterity and their extraordinary privileges, should be especially fulfilled. (*Notes*, iv. 9—17. *Heb.* vi. 13—17.) In thus adducing the case of Isaac and Ishmael, the apostle certainly did not decide on the eternal state of either of them; yet the subject, which he thus illustrated, namely, a remnant of believers among an unbelieving nation, must refer, not to outward advantages and disadvantages, but to eternal salvation or damnation, for "he that believeth and is baptized shall "be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." And this is equally clear, whether it be held, that this remnant believed, in consequence of their being elected, or that they were chosen in consequence of their faith, either as foreseen, or as actually exercised.

V. 10—14. As Isaac was Abraham's only son by Sarah his wife, it might have been supposed that the covenanted blessings were limited to him on that account. Yet not only Ishmael, Abraham's son by Hagar the bondwoman, and his children by Keturah, were excluded, but even Esau and his posterity, though the elder son of Isaac and Rebekah, and twin-brother to Jacob. Even before they were born, and consequently before they had done good or evil, it was said to Rebekah that the elder should serve the younger, (*Note, Gen.* xxv. 22, 23.) which certainly implied the special favour of God to Jacob above Esau, and that the covenanted blessings would be restricted to him. This denoted that the purpose of God, in respect of the heirs of promise, would be established according to the sovereign election of God, who calleth men to partake of the blessing as he pleaseth, and not of any works which they would perform. Doubtless, God foresaw that Esau's works would be profane and evil, and Jacob's in a measure pious and holy; but the latter could only be foreseen *as the effect* of his election and consequent regeneration, and so they could not be considered *as the cause* of them. God foresaw them both as born in sin, and he knew, that if they were left to themselves they would continue in sin through life; but, (for reasons best known to himself,) he purposed to change Jacob's heart, and to leave Esau to his native perverseness, because he freely loved Jacob, but did not in the same manner love Esau. Wickedness foreseen is doubtless the cause of the Lord's purpose to condemn, because it is of a man's self by nature; but holiness foreseen in a *fallen creature* cannot be the cause of his election, because it is the effect of special grace, and never comes from any other source. This instance of Esau and Jacob was intended as an illustration of the divine conduct towards the fallen race of man. It has often been urged, that Jacob and Esau were not so much personally intended, as their posterity, and that temporal, and not eternal, things are spoken of; and this is certainly true. Jacob never had dominion over Esau personally, but his posterity ruled over Esau's. The election, the prediction, the birth-right, and the blessing, however, secured to Jacob and his seed the same religious advantages, as the promise of God secured to Isaac and his seed, and excluded Esau, as well as Ishmael, from them; and this, without determining any thing of Esau's eternal state, though his character, and the epithet *profane* annexed to his name by the apostle, seem to indicate that he was not a believer; yet it is evident, that the subject illustrated related to individuals, and to their eternal state, whether as believers or unbelievers. As Esau, that "the purpose of God according to election "might stand," had no inheritance in Canaan, and was not the progenitor of Christ, so those Israelites, who did not belong to "the election of grace," were excluded from the true Church, had no part in Christ, and no inheritance in heaven: but the reverse is true of "the "election of grace." They were called, and in consequence believed; they were justified in Christ and glorified, 15 For he saith to Moses, [p] I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

16 So then [q] *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

17 For [r] the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, [s] Even for this same purpose have [t] I raised thee up, [u] that I might shew my power in thee, and that [x] my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

18 Therefore [y] hath he mercy on whom he will *have mercy*, and whom he will, [z] he hardeneth.

p 16. 18, 19. Ex. xxxiii. 19. xxxiv. 6, 7. Is. xxvii. 11. Mic. vii. 18.

q 11. Gen. xxvii 1—4. 9—14. Ps. cx. 3 Is. lxv. 1. Matt xi. 25, 26. Luke x. 21. John i. 12, 13. iii 8. 1 Cor. i. 26—31. Eph. ii. 4, 5. Phil ii. 13 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14. Tit. iii 3—5. Jam. i. 18. 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10.——r xi 4. Gal. iii. 8. 22. iv. 30.

s *See on*, Ex. ix. 16.

t 1 Sam. ii, 7. 8 Esth. iv. 14, 15. x 5, 6. xlv. 1—3. Jer. xxvii 6, 7. Dan. iv. 22. v 18—21.

u Ex x. 1, 2. xiv. 17, 18. xv. 14, 15. xviii. 10, 11. Josh. ii. 9, 10. ix. 9. 1 Sam. iv. 8. Ps. lxxxiii. 17, 18. Prov. xvi. 4. Is xxxvii 20.——x John xvii. 26.——y 15, 16. v. 20, 21. Eph. i 6.——z i. 24—28. xi. 7, 8. *See on*, Ex iv. 21. vii. 13. Deut. ii. 30. Josh. xi. 20. Is. lxiii. 17. Matt. xiii 14, 15. Acts xxviii. 26—28. 2 Thes. ii. 10—12.

(*Note*, viii. 28—31.) and the same is the case in respect of men in all other ages and nations. If indeed there were any of our race, not fallen like other men; or not by nature dead in sin, and children of wrath, even as others; if there were any *inclined, without preventing grace*, to repent, and to believe the humbling holy Gospel of Christ, to love God and obey his will; then indeed the election might be made with respect to their foreseen faith and obedience. But then what ground would there be for the objections, which the apostle evidently supposes would be made to his doctrine? Or what reason to silence them, in the manner which he afterwards does; when he might easily and consistently with truth have given an answer far more satisfactory to the objectors, by clearly explaining his meaning? It is then inquired, First, Are all men, as born of Adam, equally depraved? and secondly, Is man willing of himself to do what is spiritually good, or does the grace of God make him willing? When these questions are answered, according to the scriptures and the articles of our church, it will readily be perceived, that no good, foreseen either in the hearts or lives of sinners, could be the cause of their election to eternal life. If then God loved Jacob, and hated Esau, (or showed him far less favour,) without reference to their works, as comparatively good or bad, could any injustice be objected to him? By no means; he did Esau no wrong in leaving him to his own choice, and he and his posterity received more favours than they deserved; nor did the unmerited love of God to Jacob and his posterity in any measure injure Esau. Even in respect of holy creatures, we must either allow, that God may *justly* permit them to sin, and punish them for it, and so at least foreknow both the permission and the punishment; or else we must deny that he can act as a moral Governor of the universe. For if this were not just, God would be bound to prevent all his creatures from sinning; and if they were left to sin, He only would be the cause of it. So that men are not aware what blasphemy is involved in their bold objections on this subject. Much more then may God righteously leave fallen creatures to themselves, to proceed in rebellion, and sink into destruction. He might justly have thus left all; it is of infinite mercy that any are saved; and their salvation can be no injury to those, who are only punished according to the desert of their own sins: and it is probable, that most of the objections brought against these doctrines originate from the want of a deep conviction, that God would have been just, had he left our whole fallen race under final condemnation. The election of nations to special privileges and religious advantages, not vouchsafed to other nations, which some expositors suppose to be here meant, (contrary to the whole tenour of the context,) is liable to the same objections as personal election; and can only be vindicated in the same way. All might *justly* be left without them; and when some are *mercifully* favoured with them, "that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth," no wrong is done to the others.

V. 15—18. 'Mercy pre-supposes misery, and this sin, or the voluntary corruption of the human race; and this corruption pre-supposes a creation in purity and uprightness.' (*Beza.*) Moses, for whom the Jews professed the highest deference, had written as strong language concerning the sovereignty of God in showing mercy, as the apostle used, when JEHOVAH declared, "I will have mercy on whom *I have mercy;* and I will have compassion on whom I *have* compassion:" for the latter clause is in the present time, which implies, that he would by no influence be induced to alter his fixed purpose of showing mercy, or executing vengeance. (*Note, Ex.* xxxiii. 19.) In the case of Jacob, it indeed appeared, that he was willing to obtain the blessing, and he ran at his mother's word; thus he prevented Esau, and Isaac, contrary to his purpose, blessed him: but the whole transaction was disgraceful, and merited the indignation rather than the favour of God. (*Notes, Gen.* xxvii.) The establishment, however, of the covenant with him and his posterity did not originate from this, but from the electing love of God; whose purpose respecting him had been made known long before. Thus believers greatly desire the salvation of Christ, and labour to secure it; yet these are streams from the fountain of electing love. They "were by nature children of wrath, even as others: but God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved them, even when they were dead in sins, hath quickened them together with Christ." Thus he makes them willing by regeneration; and they are disposed to the diligent use of means, and through these they are made partakers of salvation; the sinfulness attending their very diligence being graciously forgiven. Whereas they, who are not *thus* willing and diligent, are not made *unwilling* by any positive act of God; but it is the consequence of their own pride, self-will, love of sin, and aversion to holiness; it springs from innate depravity, and is increased and strengthened by habits of disobedience, and can never be removed, except by an act of almighty power, which God cannot be bound *in justice* to perform for any of his rebellious creatures. Men are indeed naturally willing to be saved from misery and made happy, and are often very diligent in proud and unbelieving endeavours in order to it; but this is widely different from a cordial willingness to be saved from sin as well as misery, and made holy and happy, in the humbling method of the Gospel. This

19 Thou [a] wilt say then unto me, [b] Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?

20 Nay but, [c] O man, [d] who art thou that * repliest against God? [e] Shall the thing formed say to him that formed *it*, Why hast thou made me thus?

21 Hath not [f] the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make [g] one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?

22 *What* it God, [h] willing to shew *his* wrath, and to make his power known, [i] endured with much long-suffering [k] the vessels of wrath † fitted to destruction;

23 And that he [l] might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which [m] he had before prepared unto glory,

a iii. 8. 1 Cor. xv. 12. 35. Jam. i. 13.
b i. 5—7. Gen. i. 20. Job ix. 12—15. 19. xxiii. 13, 14. Ps. lxxvi. 10. Is. x. 6, 7. xlvi. 10, 11. Dan. iv. 35. Mark xiv. 21. Acts ii. 23. iv. 27, 28.
c ii. 1. Mic. vi. 8. 1 Cor. vii. 16. Jam. ii. 20.
d Job xxxiii. 13. xxxvi. 23. xxxviii. 2, 3. xl. 2. 5. 8. xlii. 2—6. Matt. xx. 15.———* Or, *answerest again.* Job xiv. 3. Tit. ii. 9. or, *disputest with God.* 1 Cor. i. 20. 1 Tim. vi. 5.———e Is. xxix. 16. xlv. 9—11.———f 11. 18. Is. lxiv. 8. Jer. xviii. 3—6.————g 22, 23. Jer. xxii. 28. Hos. viii. 8. Acts ix. 15. 2 Tim. ii. 20, 21.

h 17. i. 18. ii. 4, 5. Ex. ix. 16. Ps. xc. 11. Prov. xvi. 4. Rev. vi. 16, 17.
i Num. xiv. 11. 18. Ps. l. 21, 22. Ec. viii. 11, 12. Lam. iii. 22. 1 Pet. iii. 20. 2 Pet. iii. 3. 9. iii. 8, 9. 15. Jude 4. Rev. vi. 9—11.
k 21. 1 Thes. v. 9.
† Or, *made up.* Gen. xv. 16. Matt. xxiii. 31—33. 1 Thes. ii. 16.
l ii. 4. v. 20, 21. Eph. i. 6—8. ii. 4. 7. 10. iii. 8. 16. Col. i. 27. 2 Thes. i. 10—12.————m 1 Chr. xxix. 18. Luke i. 17. Eph. ii. 3—5. Col. i. 12. 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14. 2 Tim. ii. 21. Tit. iii. 3—7. 1 Pet. i. 2—5.

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subject was exemplified in the case of Pharaoh. God the Creator advanced him to great authority and prosperity, and spared his life through the several plagues of Egypt; but at the same time he left him to harden himself in enmity and rebellion. This he declared to be intended, that in his destruction he might make known his power and glory throughout the earth. So that it must be allowed, that he hath mercy on such of our apostate race as he sees good; and that he hardeneth whom he will, by leaving them to themselves and under the power of Satan, by ordering his dispensations respecting them in such a manner as he knows will exasperate their enmity and embolden their presumption, and by judicially sentencing them to final obduracy, that his justice in their punishment may become the more conspicuous. (*Notes*, &c. *Ex.* iii—xv.) 'This hardening also is voluntary, because the Lord, 'offended by their depravity, makes use of their own will, 'in executing this judgment on those whom he hardens. 'Then follow the fruits of this hardening, namely, unbelief 'and sins, which are the real causes of the condemnation of 'the reprobate.' (*Beza.*)

V. 19—21. The unhumbled objector would be sure here to cavil, and to inquire, Why the Lord blamed or punished Pharaoh, or indeed any man, for his sins? Who had resisted his sovereign will and appointment? Even they, who most rebel against his precepts, fulfil his decrees; his will is therefore universally done, and no creature makes any opposition to it. As if the secret purpose of God could be a rule of duty to his creatures! Or as if a man could mean to do the will of God, by breaking his express commandments, out of enmity to him, and to gratify his own lusts! To this presumptuous caviller, (and such are very numerous, when both avowed enemies and false friends of these doctrines are included,) the apostle answered, by demanding of him, (a man, a sinner,) who he was, that he should deem himself authorized to reply against God, and to charge him with injustice or want of wisdom, for those things which he had expressly spoken and done? Was it proper for the creature to call his Creator to an account, for having formed him as he saw good? Would not men allow the infinite God the same sovereign right to manage the affairs of the creation, as the potter exercises in disposing of his clay, when of the same lump he makes one vessel to a more honourable, and another to a meaner, use? (*Notes*, *Is.* lxiv. 6—8. *Jer.* xviii. 6—10.) Would they give the Lord no credit for his justice, wisdom, truth, and goodness, when they could not fully comprehend them? Nor infer from his infinite perfection, that he could not do wrong, however it might appear to them? And could there be any danger from the exercise of absolute sovereignty by infinite excellency? Would they dare to dictate to the Lord, to determine what he ought to do, or to call him to an account for what he had done? It is plain, from the whole context, that the apostle did not mean, that God might justly make innocent creatures miserable by prerogative, as some seem at least to suppose; for he goes upon the supposition that the divine sovereignty is that of infinite wisdom, justice, truth, and goodness. The words, "have mercy on whom he "will have mercy," imply that all deserved wrath; so that the lump of clay in the hands of the potter must refer to men, already existing in God's foreknowledge as fallen creatures. But the apostle intended to repress the arrogance of ignorant presumptuous worms, who venture to speak about injustice, cruelty, tyranny, &c. in discoursing of their offended Creator and Judge; who conceive in their own imagination how the infinite God ought to act; and then, forgetting who He is, and who they are, charge him foolishly, and say, that if such and such doctrines be indeed true, then God is—but their words ought not to be repeated. This very common practice is such a compound of arrogance, irreverence, and folly, that it seems the most glaring proof of human depravity, which even this wicked world exhibits; especially when it is added, that many pious men appear, in the violence of controversy, sometimes to be betrayed into it. It is wonderful that the great Mr. Locke should confidently assert, that the apostle here speaks of men *nationally*, and not *personally*, in reference to their eternal state, when the rejection of the Jewish nation, with the reservation only of a remnant "ac"cording to the election of grace," was the main subject, to illustrate which all the other examples are introduced. This remnant consisted of a small number of individuals, not of a nation; and the Gentile converts were individuals out of their several nations, forming, with the Jewish converts, the Christian Church; and not whole nations, or one whole nation, chosen, as a collective body, to succeed to the external advantages which the nation of Israel had forfeited: and surely "the vessels of mercy before prepared "unto glory," which the apostle next mentions, must have been chosen, not to external advantages, but to eternal life. (*Note*, viii. 28—31.)

V. 22, 23. Suppose that God was pleased, (as in the instance of Pharaoh,) in order more conspicuously to display his powerful wrath against his enemies, to endure their provocations with patience for a long time, till they

24 Even us, [n] whom he hath called, [o] not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

25 As he saith also [p] in Osee, [q] I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her [r] beloved, which was not beloved.

26 And [s] it shall come to pass, *that* in the place where it was said unto them, Ye *are* not my people; [t] there shall they be called the children of the living God.

27 [u] Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, [x] Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, [y] a remnant shall be saved:

28 For he will finish the * work, [z] and cut *it* short [a] in righteousness; because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.

29 And as Esaias said before, [b] Except the Lord of [c] Sabaoth had left us a seed, [d] we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrah.

30 What [e] shall we say then? That [f] the Gentiles, which [g] followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, [h] even the righteousness which is of faith.

31 But Israel, which [i] followed after the law of righteousness, [k] hath not attained to the law of righteousness.

32 Wherefore? [l] Because *they sought it* not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For [m] they stumbled at that stumbling-stone:

33 As it is written, [n] Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone, and rock of offence: [o] and whosoever believeth on him shall not be † ashamed.

n viii. 29—30. 1 Cor. i. 9. Heb. iii. 1. 1 Pet. v. 10 Rev. xix 9
o iii. 39, 30. iv. 11, 12 x. 12. xi. 11—13. xv. 8—16. Gen. xlix. 10. Ps xxii 27. Acts xiii. 47, 48. xv. 14. xxi. 17—20. Gal. iii. 28. Eph. ii 11—13. iii 6—8. Col iii. 11.
p Hos. i. 1, 2. *Hosea.*
q Hos. ii. 23 1 Pet. ii 10.
r i. 7. Ez. xvi. 8. John xvi. 27.
s Hos i 9, 10
t viii. 16. Is. xliii. 6 John xi. 52. 2 Cor. vi. 18. Gal. iii. 26. 1 John iii. 1—3.
u Is. i. 1 *Isaiah.*
x *See on*, Is x. 20—23.
y xi. 4—6. Ezra ix 8. 14. Is. i. 9 x. 20, 21. xi. 11. xxiv 13 Jer. v. 10 Ez vi. 8. Mic. v. 3—8.
* Or, *account.*
z Is. xxviii. 22. xxx. 12—14. Dan. ix. 26, 27. Matt. xxiv. 21, 22.——a Ps. ix. 8. lxv. 5. Is. v. 16. Acts xvii. 31. Rev. xix. 11.——b Is. i. 9. vi. 13. Lam. iii 22.
c Jam. v. 4.
d Gen. xix 24. 25. Is. xiii 19 Jer. xlix. 18 l. 40 Lam. iv 6. Am. iv 11 Zeph. ii. 9 2 Pet ii. 6. *Sodom. Gomorrah.* Jude 7.
e *See on*, 14. iii 5.
f i 18—32. x 20. Is. lxv. 1, 2. 1 Cor. vi. 9—11. Eph. ii. 12 iv. 17—19. 1 Pet. iv 3.
g 31 Prov. xv. 9. xxi. 21. Is li. 1. 1 Tim. vi. 11.
h i 17. iii. 22. iv. 9 11 13. 22. v. 1 x 10. Gal. iii. 8. v. 6. Phil. iii. 9. Heb. xi. 7.
i 30 32. x. 2—4. Gal. iii. 21. Phil. iii. 6.
k iii. 20 iv. 14, 15. xi. 7. Gal. iii. 10, 11 v. 3, 4. Jam. ii. 10, 11.
l iv. 16. x. 3. Matt. xix. 16—20 John vi 27—29. Acts xvi. 30—34 1 John v. 9—12
m xi. 11. Matt. xiii. 57. Luke ii. 34. vii 23. 1 Cor i. 23——n Ps cxviii. 22 Is viii 14, 15. xxviii 16. Matt xxi 42. 44 1 Pet ii 7, 8.——o v. 5 x. 11. Ps xxv 3, 4. 20. Is. xlv. 17. 25. liv. 4 Joel ii 26, 27. Phil i 20. 2 Tim. i. 12. 1 John ii. 28.——† Gr. *confounded.* 1 Pet. ii. 6.

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had acted out the desperate wickedness of their hearts, and filled up the measure of their sins, and so became ripe for signal vengeance; what injustice could there be in this? In allusion to the potter's vessels, they were in themselves vessels of wrath, and their wicked dispositions and actions rendered them fitted for destruction. Nor could they have been preserved from it, but by an act of omnipotent power, as well as by the exercise of unmerited mercy; this God was not bound, and did not see good, to bestow; and they were too proud and wicked to ask, or desire it, or even to accept of it. They despised the riches of that long-suffering that spared them; they treasured up wrath in the impenitency of their hearts; and at length received their due recompense. (ii. 4—6.) And if, on the other hand, the Lord chose to display the abundance of his glorious power, truth, and love, in his dealings with some of the same lump, whom he had selected to be vessels of mercy, what was this to others? They were not any more meet for the felicity intended them than the former; but he was pleased to prepare them before for it, by his converting and sanctifying grace: as well as to make them capable of actively glorifying him here on earth. But did his free love to *them* imply injustice to *others?* Their cause for gratitude is immense; but have those, who suffer no more than they deserve, any ground for complaint? while he withholds from none their due, he has surely a right to do what he will with his own. (*Notes, Matt.* xx. 1—16.) The different language used concerning "the vessels of wrath, and the vessels of "mercy," is of vast importance in stating this doctrine solidly and scripturally; the former are "fitted for de- "struction;" it is not said that God had fitted them. For he saw them, in themselves, both deserving wrath, and fit for the place of torment, and the society of fallen angels; but God himself before prepared the vessels of mercy for that glory to which he intended to advance them. The term, "vessels of mercy," implies, that they too had deserved wrath; and the preparation before-hand for glory, shows that in themselves they had been unprepared. (*Notes, Eph.* ii. 1—10. *Tit.* iii. 3—7.)

V. 24—29. The vessels of mercy, or converts to Christianity, had been called forth from among both Jews and Gentiles; this gave great offence to the unbelieving Jews, yet their own prophets had foretold it. Hosea had predicted, that *they* would be beloved of God as his people, who had not been so; and Isaiah had shown, that but a remnant would be saved from the innumerable multitudes of Israel; and that God would finish his work with that nation, in a righteous but compendious manner; or by taking a short account of the chosen people among them, and consigning the rest to just destruction throughout *the whole land.* The passages referred to have already been considered; and though the version is somewhat different, being from the Septuagint, yet the meaning is nearly the same. (*Notes, Is.* i. 7—9. x. 22, 23. *Hos.* i. 8—10. ii. 21—23.) *A seed* is here put for "a very small "remnant," in Isaiah; but the twenty-eighth verse considerably differs from the passage, as it stands in the original of the prophecy. 'From comparing the original 'with the Septuagint, no one can deny, that the Greek 'interpreters have in fact rendered the passage very neg- 'ligently, as far as words are concerned. Should any one 'ask, why the apostle nevertheless used that translation, I 'answer, that he did this very properly, because they to 'whom he wrote had been used to that translation; and 'that, as far as the sentiment is concerned, in support of 'which Paul adduced this testimony, the Greek interpreters 'had preserved it sufficiently faithful. Nor does it signify 'any other, either in the Hebrew or the Greek, than that 'God had determined to render the number of an ungrateful 'people extremely small.' (*Beza.*)

V. 30—33. The apostle, having shown that both the purposes and predictions of God were fulfilled, in the rejection of the unbelieving Jews and the calling of the

CHAP. X.

The apostle again shows his earnest desire of Israel's salvation; testifying to their zeal, stating wherein it was erroneous, and distinguishing between the righteousness of the law and that of faith, 1—11. *He maintains that Jews and Gentiles were in this respect on equal terms,* 12, 13; *that it was proper to preach to all, though many would not believe,* 14—18; *and that the prophets had foretold the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles,* 19—21.

Gentiles, here proceeds to show by what means this had been effected, which tended to prove that the Lord had acted righteously, and the Jews wickedly, in this matter. The Gentiles, who before lived in the grossest ignorance, idolatry, and wickedness, without at all inquiring or following after righteousness, had suddenly, through the surprising grace of God, been brought into a state of acceptance with Him, being called to partake of "the "righteousness of God by faith." But Israel, who had the law, which contained the rule of righteousness, and shadowed forth the way of justification, and who had sedulously paid regard to it as "a law of righteousness," had not attained to the righteousness for which they sought. Not living up to their law, they were condemned by it, yet cleaving to it, they rejected Christ and his salvation. Wherefore then had they failed of acceptance? Was it merely through God's decree? Or did he refuse to receive them in the same way as the Gentiles were justified? No, truly; but they refused to seek the blessing by faith, as an unmerited favour, and persisted in claiming it by the law, as a matter of right. This they did, *as it were*, by the works of the law; they did not think that they perfectly kept the law, but they expected to make up their deficiency in one respect, by abounding in others, or by repentance and amendment, and the legal sacrifices, or by superstitious additions and observing the traditions of men. Thus they sought the blessing from that, which denounced a curse upon them, and refused to trust wholly in Him who was raised up to bless them. At this stumbling stone they fell, as it had been predicted. (*Notes, Is.* viii. 11—15. xxviii. 16.) Their obstinate pride and unbelief were the immediate cause of their ruin, and God had only decreed, in righteousness, to give them up to the lusts of their own hearts. Some expositors think, that the apostle had reference to a *race*, in which the Jews, with all their advantages, were so far from coming in before the Gentiles, that they were left far behind; "for the last shall be "first, and the first last." Mr. Locke, and many others, argue, that the apostle only meant, that the Gentiles had embraced the true religion, not that they were brought into a state of salvation; but surely, if they "attained to "righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith," they were justified persons, children of Abraham, children of God, and heirs of heaven; and though all who professed the Gospel were not of this character, yet none else were partakers of "the righteousness which is of faith." It is also allowed, as these learned expositors maintain, that the dealings of God with the Jews, and not his general conduct towards mankind at large, as to their eternal concerns, is the *primary* subject of the chapter; but the dispensations of God with Israel are explained, illustrated, and justified, on such principles, as establish in the clearest manner the method of his dealings with mankind at large. And if we are not allowed to infer general conclusions from the commands, testimonies, promises, and dispensations of God, in respect of individuals, it does not appear how we can use the Scriptures, or a great proportion of them at least, either for doctrinal or practical purposes, either for encouragement, warning, or instruction in righteousness. "Whatsoever things were "written aforetime, were written for our learning." "All these things happened unto them for ensamples, and "they are written for our admonition, upon whom the "ends of the world are come. Therefore let him that "thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." (*Rom.* xv. 4. 1 *Cor.* x. 11, 12.) The Jews, as a nation, had outward privileges, so have Christians as a collective body. Most of them trusted in these outward privileges, and rejected the salvation of Christ, and so do the bulk of professed Christians. A remnant, however, believed and were saved, while the rest were hardened and rejected; the case is the same with professed Christians. This remnant was "the election of grace," and so is the remnant of true Christians.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

The command of loving our neighbour as ourselves, and the example of Christ, require us to mourn over obstinate transgressors, especially when near to us according to the flesh; at the same time that we vindicate the justice of God in his dealings with them. This sorrow and heaviness, springing from natural affection, will indeed alloy our present consolations; but they are active principles, exciting us to use proper means for the conversion of those around us, and to submit to hardship, reproach, loss, or suffering, in our compassionate endeavours for their good; and the more such affections rule in our hearts and influence our conduct, the more we resemble Him, who was made a curse for us, to redeem us from the curse of the law. We cannot now know the purposes of God respecting others; it will be soon enough for us to be "without natural affection," when perfected in holiness, and to rejoice in the destruction of his enemies *individually*, when the event makes them known to us. In the mean time insensibility to the eternal condition of our fellow creatures is contrary both to the love required by the law, and the mercy of the Gospel; and the more we can appeal to our heart-searching Judge, through the testimony of his Spirit in our conscience, that we sincerely pity, pray for, and would suffer any thing to save, our most virulent despisers and persecutors, the greater confidence we may use in affectionately warning them of their danger, and of the delusions into which they are fallen. For no external forms, notions, means, promises, or intercourse with emi-

BRETHREN, [a] my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

2 For [b] I bear them record, [c] that they have a zeal of God, [d] but not according to knowledge.

3 For they being ignorant of [e] God's righteousness, and going about [f] to establish their own righteousness, have not [g] submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

4 For [h] Christ *is* the end of the law

a ix. 1–3. Ex. xxxii. 10–13. 1 Sam xii. 23. xv. 11. 35. xvi. 1. Jer. xvii. 16. xviii. 20. Luke xiii. 34. John v. 34. 1 Cor. ix. 20–22.
b 2 Cor. viii. 3. Gal. iv. 15. Col. iv. 13.
c 3. 32. 2 Kings x. 16. John xvi. 2. Acts xxi. 20. 28. xxii. 3 22 xxvi. 9, 10 Gal. i 14 iv. 17, 18. Phil. iii. 6.——d Ps. xiv 4. Prov. xix. 2. Is. xxvii. 11. 2 Cor. iv. 4 6. Phil. i. 9.

e i. 17. iii 22. 26 v. 19. ix. 30 Ps. lxxi. 15, 16. 19. Is. li. 6. 8 lvi. 1. Jer. xxiii 5, 6. Dan. ix. 24. John xvi. 9, 10. 2 Cor. v. 21. 2 Pet i. 1
f ix. 31, 32. Is. lvii. 12 lxiv. 6 Luke x. 29. xvi. 15. xviii. 9–12. Gal. v. 3, 4 Rev iii 17, 18.——g Lev. xxvi. 41. Neh. ix. 33. Job xxxiii. 27. Lam. iii. 22. Dan. ix 6–9. Luke xv. 17–21.——h iii 25–31. viii 3, 4. Is liii. 11. Matt iii. 15. v. 17, 18 John i. 17. Acts xiii. 38, 39. 1 Cor. i. 30. Gal. iii. 24. Col ii. 10 17. Heb. ix. 7–14. x. 8–12.

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nent saints, can profit such as have not the power of godliness. Nay, if we stood related to Christ himself, according to the flesh, we should be no better for it, unless we submitted to him, trusted and worshipped, and obeyed him, as "God over all blessed for ever."

V. 9—21.

The whole Scripture shows the difference between the professed Christian and the real believer. Outward privileges are bestowed on many, who are not the children of God. These are born of the Spirit, according to the promise and "purpose of him," who "worketh all things "after the counsel of his own will," and not because they were any better by nature or of themselves than others. For "the Lord hath mercy on whom he pleases "to have mercy," "and it is not of him that willeth, "nor of him that runneth, but of God, that showeth "mercy." Yet is there abundant encouragement to the use of means. The promises, invitations, and exhortations of Scripture are perfectly consistent with the secret purposes of God. Where there is a willing mind, and humble diligence in seeking him, the blessing will certainly be given: and the happy believer will in due time ascribe even this willingness to electing love. But if men wilfully harden themselves in disobedience and impenitence, he will show his power and vengeance in their destruction, and cause all their abused prosperity to increase their condemnation and his own glory in it. Who could have previously thought, that any of our race would have presumed to say, that there is unrighteousness with God! To quarrel with his judgments, and pretend that none hath resisted his will! Shall criminals cite their offended Sovereign to their blasphemous tribunal? If they do, let them see to it, for evil is before them. He that sitteth in heaven will deride their folly, and vex them in his hot displeasure; he will go on with his own plan, exercising his holy sovereignty as he sees good, and distinguishing between those who adore, and those who blaspheme, the depths which they cannot fathom; and he will number with the latter such as pretend to believe the doctrines in question, and then take occasion from them to sin with greater presumption. But surely all who love and fear God, however such truths may dazzle and dismay them, should reverently keep silence before him. And even if they hear them stated unscripturally or licentiously, they should take care what words they use in disputing against those who thus pervert the truth, that they may not appear to countenance the impieties of infidels and ungodly men. In short, modesty, caution, humility, and profound awe of the holy Majesty of God, should restrain and guide the tongues and pens of all, who speak or write on such subjects, however satisfied they may be with their own views of them.

V. 22—33.

Sinners need no preparing for destruction; they are vessels of wrath, and God's long-suffering towards them is very wonderful. But the vessels of mercy were originally of the same lump, and that new creation, by which they are "afore prepared unto glory," is as great a display of the riches of God's grace and mercy, as the inheritance which he freely bestows upon them. If we have experienced something of this change, surely, *in our own case*, we must allow that the Lord alone hath made us to differ; and, instead of disputing against that free electing love, whence all our happiness flows, we should be employed in adoring his pardoning mercy and new-creating grace, or in giving diligence to make our calling and election sure. And they, who know nothing of this change, ought to be far otherwise employed than in disputing either for or against this doctrine. Let them strive to enter in at the strait gate, before the door be for ever shut, and leave such discussions to those who are walking with God in the way to heaven. As many of us have now obtained mercy, and are the people and children of the living God, who once were far off from him, so we may pray, and use means that this may be the case with others throughout the earth. For, alas! even among the vast number of professing Christians, it is to be feared that but a remnant will be saved, and the Lord will be righteous in the destruction of an immense majority of them. Blessed be his name, that he hath left us also a seed of true believers, to preserve our land from being as Sodom and Gomorrah, yet this will not prevent many individuals from perishing with still deeper destruction. Whilst numbers care for none of these things, and perish through open impiety, and while some are snatched from among them by an unexpected conversion, and pass from death to life, through the righteousness of faith and the grace of the Gospel, others, who seem intent on following after the law of righteousness, attain not to it, "because they seek it not by faith, but, *as it were*, by the works of the law," by some confused observance of an imaginary rule, and expecting to atone for sin by forms, sacraments, alms, and superstitions, and by some general notion of Christ's making up the rest. At this stumbling-stone how many fall, and lose the race! Being offended at the humbling, levelling doctrines of free grace, they even make the precious foundation for our hope, which God himself hath laid, and on which whoever trusts shall never be ashamed, a Stone of stumbling, and a Rock of offence, and so perish with an aggravated destruction. From such a downfall good Lord deliver us! Amen.

for righteousness to every one that believeth.

5 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, [i] That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.

6 But [k] the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, [l] Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, [m] to bring Christ down *from above:*)

7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, [n] to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

8 But what saith it? [o] The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, [p] the word of faith, which we preach;

9 That [q] if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, [r] and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

10 For [s] with the heart man believeth [t] unto righteousness; [u] and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

11 For the scripture saith, [x] Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

i Lev. xviii. 5. Neh. ix. 29. Ez. xx. 11. 13. 21 Luke x. 27, 28 Gal. iii 12

k iii. 22. 25 iv. 13 ix. 31, 32 Phil. iii. 9. Heb. xi. 7.

l Deut xxx. 11–13. Prov. xxx. 4.

m John iii. 12, 13. vi. 33. 38 50, 51 58 Eph iv. 8–10 Heb. i. 3

n iv.25 Heb. xiii. 20 1 Pet. iii. 18 22. Rev. i. 18.

o Deut. xxx. 14.

p 17. i. 16, 17 Is. lvii. 19. Mark xvi. 15, 16 Acts x. 43 xiii 38, 39. xvi. 31. Gal. iii 2. 5 1 Tim. iv. 6. 1 Pet i. 23. 25.

q xiv 11. Matt. x. 32, 33. Luke xii. 8. John ix. 22 xii 42, 43. Phil. ii. 11. 1 John iv. 2, 3. 2 John 7

r viii. 34. John vi. 69–71 xx. 26–29 Acts viii. 37. 1 Cor xv. 14–18. 1 Pet. i. 21.

s Luke viii 15. John i 12, 13. iii 19–21. Heb. iii 12. x 22.

t Gal ii. 16. Phil. iii 9

u 9. 1 John iv 15. Rev. ii. 13.

x ix. 33 Is. xxviii. 16. xlix. 23 1 Pet. ii. 6.

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1—4. Aware of the offence which his doctrine would give the Jews, and even many of the Jewish Christians, the apostle repeated his protestation of his earnest desires and fervent prayers for the salvation of his people, notwithstanding their prejudices against him, and the persecutions which he had endured from them. He was also ready to bear testimony for the Jews, that they had "a zeal of God," or a very great zeal in things relating to God and religion; they were very zealous for the worship of God, according to the law of Moses, as they understood it; but it was with a misguided and ignorant zeal, founded on a misconstruction of the law itself, and of their national covenant, and so leading them fatally to oppose the kingdom and salvation of their promised Messiah. For they, not being acquainted with the perfect justice of the divine character, law, and government, and not understanding the nature of that righteousness, which God had provided for the justification of sinners consistently with his own glory, had gone about by various devices to establish their own righteousness, as the meritorious ground of their justification; in doing which, they had actually refused to acknowledge the justice of God in their condemnation, and to submit to seek righteousness as his free gift by faith alone. The expression, "establish their own righteousness," seems to be taken from a person, who allows his house to be out of repair and in some danger of falling; but will not be convinced that the foundation is destroyed, and that it must come down, and be entirely rebuilt on a new foundation. He therefore endeavours, by props and buttresses, and various repairs, to make the house stand; but all his expense and labour are thrown away; and if he persist in his vain endeavour, it will be likely to fall down and bury him in its ruins. Thus the Jews, (and immense numbers in every age do the same,) when convinced of defects in their moral righteousness, endeavoured to repair them by ceremonial or superstitious observances; nor would they be convinced that they were building upon a false foundation, that they must totally give over such vain and perilous endeavours, and come for a free salvation to Christ, even as the poor Gentiles did. To this they would not submit, because they did not know that Christ was the end and scope of the law for the justification of all believers. The strictness and sanction of the moral law showed men their need of a free salvation, and the ceremonies shadowed forth Christ and his work, as fulfilling the righteousness, and bearing the curse, of the law; so that even under the law, all, who were justified before God, obtained that blessing by faith, which interested them in the perfect righteousness of the promised Redeemer. Some argue, that if the apostle had, in the preceding chapter, meant, that the reprobation of the Jewish nation was absolutely decreed, he would not have prayed for them; but he knew that a remnant was excepted; he did not know to what number this extended, and his *good will*, (so the original word signifies,) towards them was so strong, that he prayed for the conversion of Israelites, in a way which implied a longing desire that they all might be saved. Had it depended on him, this would have been the case; he prayed according to the knowledge which he had, and left secret things to God, adoring his wisdom and justice, even in those events which were contrary to the feelings and desires of his heart.—The author can answer for one, that the belief of personal election and the divine decrees does not in the least interfere with his joining heartily in that prayer of our excellent liturgy, 'That it may please God to have mercy upon 'all men.'

V. 5—11. Moses had repeatedly stated the righteousness which the law demanded of a man, in order to his justification; (*Marg. Ref.*) and his description showed, that without a sinless obedience to every precept, no man could be accepted by it, and effectually cut off all transgressors from every hope in this way. But the righteousness of faith might be introduced as using the words of Moses on another occasion. (*Note, Deut.* xxx. 11—14.) The self-condemned sinner needs not to perplex himself with inquiries, how it could be obtained; he needs not say in his heart, Who shall ascend into heaven, to fetch down one who may introduce such a righteousness? For Christ has already come down, and finished that work. Nor need he inquire who should descend into the grave, or the place of departed spirits, to bring back the crucified Saviour from the dead; for that also was done, and he was exalted at the right hand of the Father, to confer the blessing on all who applied for it. Nor was the informa-

12 For [y] there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same [z] Lord over all is [a] rich unto all that [b] call upon him.

13 For [c] whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

14 How then [d] shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? [e] and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

15 And [f] how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, [g] How beautiful are the feet of them that preach [h] the gospel of peace, [i] and bring glad tidings of good things!

16 But [k] they have not all [l] obeyed the gospel: for Esaias saith, [m] Lord, who hath believed * our report?

17 So then [n] faith *cometh* by hearing, [o] and hearing by the word of God.

18 But I say, [p] Have they not heard? Yes, verily, [q] their sound went into all the earth, and their words [r] unto the ends of the world.

19 But [s] I say, Did not Israel know? [t] First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by *them that are* no people, *and* by a [u] foolish nation I will anger you.

20 But Esaias is [x] very bold, and saith, [y] I was found of them that sought

y iii. 22. 29, 30. iv. 11, 12. ix. 24. Acts x. 34, 35. xv. 8, 9 Gal. iii.28. Eph. ii. 18—22 iii.6 Col. iii. 11.

z xiv. 9. xv. 12. Acts x. 36. 1 Cor. xv 47 Phil. ii. 11. Rev. xvii. 14. xix 16

a ii.4. ix.23. 2 Cor. viii 9. Eph i 7 ii. 4. 7. iii 8. 16. Phil. iv. 19. Col. i 27 ii. 2, 3.

b Ps. lxxxvi. 6. cxlv. 18. Is. lv 6. Acts ix. 14. 1 Cor. i. 2.

c Joel ii 32 Acts ii. 21

d 1 Kings viii. 41—43. Jon. i 5. 9—14 16. iii. 5—9. Heb. xi. 6. Jam. v 15.

e i. 5 xvi. 25, 26. Mark xvi. 15, 16 Luke xxiv. 46, 47. John xx. 31. Acts xix. 2. xxvi. 17, 18 2 Tim. iv. 17. Tit i 3——f Jer. xxiii. 32. Matt. ix. 38. x. 1—6. xxviii. 18—20 Luke x. 1. John xx. 21. Acts ix. 15. xiii 2—4 xxii 21. 1 Cor xii. 28, 29. 2 Cor. v. 18—20. Eph. iii. 8 iv. 11, 12. 1 Pet i. 12.——g *See on*, Is lii 7. Nah i. 15.——h Is. lvii. 19. Luke ii. 14. Acts x. 36. Eph. ii. 17. vi. 15.——i Is. xl. 9. lxi. 1. Luke ii. 10. viii. 1 Acts xiii. 26.

k iii. 3. xi. 17. John x. 26. Acts xxviii. 24. Heb. iv 2. 1 Pet ii 8.

l i. 5. ii 8. vi. 17. xvi 26. Is. l 10. Gal iii. 1. v. 7. 2 Thes i. 8. Heb. v. 9. xi. 8. 1 Pet. i. 22 iii. 1.

m Is liii 1 John xii. 38—40.

* Gr. *the hearing of us; or, our preaching*

n 14. i: 16. Luke xvi. 29—31. 1 Cor. i. 18—24. Col. i. 4—6. 1 Thes. ii. 13. 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14. Jam. i 18—21. 1 Pet. i 23—25. ii. 1, 2.

o Jer. xxiii. 28, 29 Mark iv. 24. Luke viii 11. 21. xi. 28. 2 Cor. ii. 17. Heb iv. 12, 13. Rev. i. 9.

p Acts ii. 5—11. xxvi. 20. xxviii 23——q .. 8. xv. 19 Ps. xix 4. Matt. xxiv. 14. xxvi. 13. xxviii. 19. Mark xvi 15 20. Col. i 6. 23.——r Ps. xxii 27 xcviii. 3 Is xxiv. 16. xlix 6 lii. 10. Jer xvi, 19.————s. 18. iii. 26. 1 Cor i 12. vii. 29. x. 19 xi. 22 xv. 50————t xi. 11. *See on*, Deut xxxii. 21. Hos. ii 23. 1 Pet. ii. 10——u i. 21, 22. Ps. cxv 5—8 Is. xliv. 18—20. Jer x. 8. 14 1 Cor. xii 2. Tit. iii. 3.——x Prov. xxviii. 1. Is. lviii. 1. Eph. vi. 19, 20——y ix. 30. Is. lxv. 1.

tion respecting the means of obtaining an interest in it at a distance, that men should travel into far countries to inquire after it; on the contrary, it was nigh to them, in the word of faith which the ministers of Christ were sent to preach; it was in the mouth of all who professed the Gospel, and in the hearts of all that believed it. In short, if a man confessed his belief in Jesus, as the Lord and Saviour of lost sinners, and really believed in his heart that God had raised him again from the dead, in attestation of having accepted his atonement, he should certainly be saved, by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him through faith. For that faith, which interests a sinner in the merits of Christ, has its seat especially in the heart of a humble penitent, and produces cordial desires after him and love to him; and the bold confession of his name and truth among enemies, and in the face of danger, evidences a man's faith to be genuine, and gives a sure hope of complete salvation, according to the prophecy before referred to. (ix. 33.) The distinction, between *confessing with the mouth*, and *believing in the heart*, shows that the apostle was discoursing, not of a mere profession of Christianity, but the genuine sincerity of him who made that profession. On the other hand, they who refused to make this open profession, in times of persecution, had little reason to conclude, that in their hearts they truly believed in Christ for righteousness and salvation.

V. 12—17. In respect of the subject spoken of, there was no difference between Jews and Gentiles; for as none of them could be justified by their works, or saved in unbelief, so the infinite Creator and Governor of the world, being rich and plenteous in mercy towards all who humbly call on him for salvation, would never exclude any from justification who believed on his Son. Thus the prophet had foretold, concerning the times of the Messiah, that "whosoever should call on the name of the LORD should "be saved." (*Notes*, *Joel* ii. 28—32. *Acts* ii. 16—21.) The Jews in general called upon JEHOVAH for temporal deliverance and eternal salvation, even while they rejected Christ; but they called in vain; this therefore could not be the intent of the prophecy. By calling on the name of the Lord, we must understand, either invoking the Lord Jesus personally, as the incarnate Word, the co-equal Son of God, "God manifest in the flesh," or calling upon the Father by faith in the Son, and through his intercession; but the former sense best accords to the apostle's argument, and is by far the most obvious construction of the words. All believers thus called on the name of the Lord Jesus, and none else would, that is, humbly and sincerely; therefore all, whether Jews or Gentiles, who thus sought help from him, would be saved. But how should any call on the Lord Jesus, the divine Saviour, who had not believed in him as such? Or how could any believe in him, who had never heard of him or his salvation? Or how could the Gentiles hear the things pertaining to Christ, if none of the Jews, to whom they were immediately revealed, were sent by God and his Church to preach to them? Why then should the Jews blame the apostle and others, for engaging in this needful and benevolent work, to which God had called them? The necessity and importance of preaching the Gospel had been stated in strong terms by the prophet, (*Note*, *Is.* lii. 15.) who had poetically described even the feet of those who proclaimed the Gospel of peace to be beautiful; and though the Gentiles had not generally welcomed the salvation of Christ (any more than the Jews,) so as to receive it with an obedient faith, yet that too had been intimated by the same prophet, when he expressed his grief and surprise at men's general inattention to the glad tidings of salvation by a suffering Messiah. (*Note*, *Is.* liii 1.) And even the phrase which he used, when he called the Gospel "our report," confirmed the foregoing argument, that faith generally came by men's hearing *a report* of Christ, brought to them by the faithful preaching of the word of God. This is the means which God hath appointed and chiefly blessed for this purpose, and it is therefore man's duty to use it, in expectation of his blessing. The manner, in which the apostle applies the words to Christ, which Isaiah spake of JEHOVAH, forms a strong proof of our Lord's Deity.

me not; [z] I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.

21 But to Israel he saith, [a] All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto [b] a disobedient and gainsaying people.

z Is. xlix 6. lii. 15 lv. 4, 5. Mat xx 16. xxii 9, 10 Luke xiv 23. 1 John iv. 19

a Prov. i. 24 Is. lxv. 2—5 Jer. xxv. 4. xxxv. 15. Matt xx. 1—15. xxi. 33–43. xxii. 3–7. xxiii. 34—37. Luke xxiv. 47 Acts xiii. 46, 47.

b Deut. ix 13. xxxi 27. 1 Sam. viii 7, 8 Neh. ix. 26 Jer xliv. 4—6 Acts vii. 51, 52. 1 Thes. ii. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 8.

V. 18—21. As, then, the hearing of the report concerning Christ was so necessary to faith in him, could it be said, that the Jews had not had an opportunity of hearing it? Indeed, the Gospel had been so generally and extensively diffused by the ministers of Christ, that the words of David, respecting the instructions conveyed to all nations by the luminaries of heaven, (as typical of the Sun of righteousness,) might be well applied to what had already taken place. (*Note, Ps.* xix. 4.) But the Jews especially had almost universally heard it. The apostles, the seventy disciples, and others, by the express command of the Lord, preached in the cities and villages of Judea and Galilee, for a long time, before they addressed the Gentiles; and even St. Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, constantly first preached to the Jews, in every city whither he went. Very few of that nation therefore could plead, that they had had no opportunity of hearing this report; and their unbelief was not the effect of ignorance or want of instruction, but of obstinate enmity against the truth. Again, could the Israelites pretend, that no intimations had been given them, that God intended to cast them off for their unbelief and disobedience, and to take others in their stead? Even Moses, in that prophetical song which all were commanded to learn throughout their generations, had represented Jehovah declaring that he would excite them to jealousy, by those who had been no people to him, and raise their indignation by his favours shown to a nation, which had been despised as foolish, because idolatrous. This had been remarkably accomplished, in the virulent opposition to the Gospel, which the calling of the Gentiles had excited in the Jews; when it should have stirred them up to an emulation, not to be surpassed in faith and holiness by those who had before been so ignorant and far from God. (*Note, Deut.* xxxii, 21.) Isaiah, also, in very bold language, which must have given very great offence to his contemporaries, had introduced Jehovah declaring that he was found as a Saviour, and acceptably worshipped, by those who just before had not so much as sought for him; and that he had freely bestowed his favour and conferred his special grace on those who had not previously made any inquirers after him; but in respect of Israel, he declared, that he had stretched out his hands full of blessings, and with most earnest and affectionate invitations to disobedient and perverse people. (*Note, Is.* lxv. 1, 2.) *Their voice.* (18.) Learned men have shown, that the word rendered in the nineteenth Psalm, "their "line," may signify "their loud voice," as the apostle here quotes it from the Septuagint.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

Faithful ministers bear most affectionate good will to those from whom they receive the greatest injuries; and offer their fervent and persevering prayers for the salvation of the very persons, against whom they denounce the wrath of God, if they persist in unbelief. Not only are careless and shameless profligates, infidels, and blasphemers, in the broad road to destruction, but many also who have a zeal for God and religion; and while we should inculcate earnestness in that important concern, we must also insist upon the absolute necessity of its being regulated by the word of God, without which it can only the more speciously deceive and ruin the souls of men. Sinners could never persist in their vain endeavours to repair the baseless edifice of their own righteousness, if they knew either the justice of God as a Governor, or his righteousness as a Saviour. But being ignorant, through heedlessness, pride, and prejudice, of both the law and the Gospel, they stand out against their partial convictions, they do not allow the justice of the sentence denounced against them, as sinners deserving the wrath of God, and they will not submit to be saved by "the righteousness of faith," in the same way with the vilest of the human species. Manifold are their devices and endeavours to establish a legal righteousness of their own; but all their labour is lost, and their souls continue in the most imminent danger; for in opposition to all other methods of obtaining the divine favour, whether forged by ignorance, superstition, philosophy, enthusiasm, or grave morality, we must still insist upon it, that "Christ is the end of the law for "righteousness to every believer," and that every unbeliever remains under the curse of the law and the wrath of God. If a man object to this, and dispute about the difference between moral and ceremonial obedience, and argue that the former may help to justify a man, though the latter cannot, let him hear Moses describe the righteousness of the law, and then let him inquire whether he can claim eternal life according to it. Let him take the law of God, (for rules that men prescribe to themselves and to each other are out of the question,) and, having produced a sinless obedience to it, through the whole of his continuance here, in thought, word, and deed, let him then demand the reward as a debt. But if this be a desperate attempt; let him submit to the degradation of a condemned criminal, and apply for pardon to the clemency of his offended Lord, and for eternal life, as his free gift through Jesus Christ and by faith in him. The humble trembling sinner has, however, no cause for discouragement. The righteousness of faith, invites him as it were, to accept of it; the Surety hath finished his obedience and atonement, and is risen and exalted to be our all-prevailing Advocate. Nor need we cross the seas, or explore far distant climes in quest of divine knowledge; this is brought nigh to us in the Gospel, and if we receive it by living faith in our hearts, and confess that faith with our mouths in this evil world, without doubt the blessing is ours. But we should not trust in a faith, of which we are afraid or ashamed to make a confession; much less ought we to depend on any mere confession of faith, or assent to divine truths, which we have not believed in our hearts. For no faith is justifying, which is not efficacious in sanctifying the heart, and regulating all its affections in subserviency to the love of Christ. Of such a faith no sinner

CHAP. XI.

The apostle shows, that God had not so cast off Israel, but that a remnant would be saved by grace, not by works, 1—6; *while the rest were blinded, as foretold by the prophets,* 7—10. *He predicts that this rejection would not be final, and states the consequences to the Gentiles, both of the fall of the Jews and of their recovery,* 11—15. *He cautions the Gentile converts not to boast against the Jews, but humbly to profit by this example of God's severity and goodness; and foretels glorious times which would at length arrive,* 16—32. *He adores the depths of the divine wisdom, and the glory of his unsearchable judgments, his underived all-sufficiency, and his universal sovereignty,* 33—36.

I SAY then, [a] Hath God cast away his people? [b] God forbid. [c] For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, *of* the tribe of Benjamin.

2 God hath not cast away his people [d] which he foreknew. [e] Wot ye not what the scripture saith * of Elias? how he [f] maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying,

3 Lord, [g] they have killed thy prophets, and [h] digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.

4 But what saith the answer of God unto him? [i] I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to *the image of* [k] Baal.

5 Even so then [l] at this present time also there is a remnant, according to the [m] election of grace.

6 And [n] if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

a 1 Sam. xii. 22. 2 Kings xxiii. 27. Ps. lxxvii 7. xciv. 14. Jer xxxi. 36, 37. xxxiii. 24—26. Hos ix. 17 Am ix 8, 9
b *See on,* iii. 4.
c ix. 3. Acts xxii 3 xxvi 4. 2 Cor xi. 22. Phil iii 5
d viii. 29. 30. ix. 6. 23. Acts xiii. 48. xv. 18 1 Pet i. 2
e Gen xliv 15. Ex xxxii 1. Acts iii. 17. vii. 40. Phil. i. 22.
* Gr. *in Elia.*
Neh ix 30
f Num xvi. 15. Jer. xviii 19—23. Jon. iv. 1—3. 11.
g 1 Kings xviii 4. 13 xix 10 14. Neh ix. 26. Jer. ii 30.
h 1 Kings xviii. 30. 31
i *See on,* 1 Kings xix 18.
k Num. xxv. 3. Deut. iv 3. Judg ii. 13. 1 Kings xvi 31. 2 Kings x. 19, 20. Jer. xix. 5. Hos. ii. 8. xiii. 1. Zeph i 4.
l 6, 7. *See on,* ix. 27.
m 28. ix 11 Eph. i 5, 6.
n iii. 27, 28. iv. 4, 5. v. 20, 21. Deut. ix. 4—6. 1 Cor. xv 10. Gal ii. 21. v 4 Eph. ii. 4—9. 2 Tim. i. 9. Tit iii. 5.

shall be ashamed before God; and he ought therefore to glory in it before man.

V. 12—21.

In the great concerns of eternal salvation there is now no difference between one nation and another; for our rich and gracious Lord most willingly regards the desires of all who call upon him, and none receive the less, because of the numbers who share the blessings with them. As therefore faith, (whence all true prayer proceeds,) comes by hearing the word of God, we should be careful to be found among those who obey the Gospel, and we should zealously and diligently endeavour to communicate the same blessing to others, even to the ends of the earth, with all the influence which we have, that the Sun of righteousness may diffuse his healing beams, wherever the sun in the firmament gives light to mankind. When we hear of the success of the Gospel among the ignorant, the barbarous, or the profligate, instead of being displeased, as proud Pharisees are, we should cordially adore the riches and power of the grace of God, in his being thus found of them who sought him not; and we should excite ourselves and each other to a holy jealousy and increasing diligence, lest we should be left behind by those who once were so far below us in spiritual advantages. Thus we shall obtain the assurance, that we are not of that immense number, to whom the Lord says, "All day long have I stretched "out my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people."

NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1—6. The apostle next supposes that it would be inquired, whether God had utterly cast away his chosen people, and so failed of performing his promises to their Fathers. This inference from his doctrine he decidedly disavowed. Indeed, the Lord could not so properly be said to have cast them off, as they to have cast him off, by their determined opposition to the kingdom and salvation of the promised Messiah, by which they of course forfeited their privileges. This appeared from the ready reception with which all met, who were willing to become the disciples of Christ; of this St. Paul himself was a most remarkable instance, for, being a descendant of Abraham, and notwithstanding his furious persecution of the Church, he was now become the apostle of Christ to the Gentiles. God had not therefore cast away his people, whom he had foreknown as in due time to be called and justified, to whom especially his promises had respect: though he had left the rest to fall by their unbelief. (*Note,* viii. 28—31.) But as a considerable remnant was reserved to the Lord in the days of Elijah, when the prophet was ready to conclude that he alone was left to serve him, and used such words in prayer, as might be considered as pleading against Israel, (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* xix. 10—14.) even so there was a remnant reserved of many ten thousand Jews, yea, a far greater proportion than was generally supposed, at that very period when the nation was cast off from being the people of God. This remnant was reserved "according "to the election of grace;" not because they were less undeserving of such favour than others, but because God was pleased to have mercy on them for reasons best known to himself; otherwise they too would have perished in unbelief. If then this election were of grace, it could no more be pretended to be of works, either performed or foreseen, as this would imply that something *naturally* in the objects chosen determined the Lord's preference, and that it did not originate in his mere grace. For if, in any sense or degree, it were of works, it would in part at least

7 [o] What then? [p] Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; [q] but the election hath obtained it, [r] and the rest were * blinded,

8 (According as it is written, [s] God hath given them the spirit of † slumber, [t] eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear,) [u] unto this day.

9 And [x] David saith, Let [y] their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block, and [z] a recompense unto them:

10 Let [a] their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, [b] and bow down their back alway.

11 I say then, [c] Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: [d] but *rather* through their fall salvation *is come* unto the Gentiles, [e] for to provoke them to jealousy.

12 Now, if the fall of them be [f] the riches of the world, and the ‡ diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more [g] their fulness!

13 For I speak to you Gentiles, in as much as I am [h] the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:

14 If [i] by any means I may [k] provoke to emulation *them which are* [l] my flesh, and [m] might save some of them.

15 For if [n] the casting away of them *be* [o] the reconciling of the world, what *shall* the receiving *of them be*, [p] but life from the dead?

o ii 9. vi. 15 1 Cor x. 13. Phil. i. 18.
p ix. 31, 32 x. 3 Prov i. 28 Luke xiii. 24 Heb. xii. 17.
q 5. viii. 28—30 ix. 23. Eph. i. 4. 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14. 1 Pet i 2.
r Is. vi 10. xliv 18 Matt xiii. 14, 15 John xii. 40 2 Cor. iii 14. iv. 4 2 Thes. ii. 10—12.
* Or, *hardened*. See on, ix. 18
s Is. xxix. 10.
† Or, *remorse*.
t Deut. xxix. 4. Is. vi. 9 Jer. v. 21. Ez. xii. 2. Mark iv 11, 12. Luke viii 10. Acts xxviii. 26, 27.
u 2 Kings xvii 34. 41. 2 Cor iii 14, 15.
x Ps. lxix. 22.
y Deut. vi. 10—12. xxxii. 13—15. 1 Sam. xxv. 36—38. Job xx 20—23. Prov. i 32. Is. viii 13, 14. Luke xii. 20 xvi 19—25. 1 Tim. vi. 17—19.——z Deut. xxxii. 35. Ps. xxviii. 4 Is lix. 18 lxvi 6. Heb ii. 2.——a 8. | i. 21. Ps lxix. 23. Zech. xi. 17. Eph iv. 18. 2 Pet. ii. 4. 17 Jude 6. 13.——b Deut. xxviii 64—68. Is. li. 23. lxv. 12 ——c Ez. xviii. 23. 32. xxxiii. 11.
d 12. 31. Acts xiii. 42. 46—48 xviii. 6. xxii. 18—21. xxviii. 24—28.
e 14. x. 19.
f 15. 33. ix. 23. Eph. iii. 8. Col. i. 27.
‡ Or, *decay*, or, *loss*.
g 25. Is. xi. 11—16. xii. lx. lxvi. 8—20. Mic. iv. 1, 2. v. 7. Zech. ii. 11. viii. 20—23. Rev. xi. 15—19.
h xv. 16—19 Acts ix. 15. xxii. 21. xxvi. 17, 18. Gal. i. 16. ii. 2 7—9. Eph. iii. 8. 1 Tim. ii. 7. 2 Tim. i. 12.
i 1 Cor. ix. 20—22. 2 Tim. ii. 10.
k 11.
l ix. 3. Philem. 12.
m 1 Cor. vii. 16. 1 Tim. iv. 16. Jam. v. 20.
n 1, 2. 11, 12.
o v. 10. Dan. ix. 24. 2 Cor. v. 18—20. Eph. i. 10. Col. i. 20, 21.
p Ez. xxxvii. 1—14. Rev. xi. 11. xx. 4—6.

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be of debt, and not of entire free favour; otherwise *work*, as it stands related to election and justification, would lose its very nature. For an entire free favour must be absolutely distinct from a reward, conferred in consequence of some work performed; as the price of one farthing, paid for what is worth a thousand pounds, must in exact propriety of speech essentially distinguish it from an entirely free gift. This text is so decisive on the subject, that great pains have been taken to explain it away; but really the arguments of the most able and learned men on the other side, prove nothing so much as the weakness of their cause. I shall therefore only observe, in general, that *in fact they* are not called, who to our apprehension are best disposed to perform good works, but often the contrary, as the examples recorded in Scripture alone undeniably demonstrate; that every real good disposition in an apostate creature must be the *effect*, and cannot therefore be *the cause*, of the grace of God bestowed on him; that God did not act without reason in choosing one rather than another, though we are not made acquainted with his reasons; and that the display of the infinite riches of his mercy, the omnipotence of his grace, and the glory of his own sovereignty, in converting the most unlikely persons in the world, are far more probable reasons of his choice, than any foreseen comparative goodness of natural disposition in those who are saved, above those that perish. "The "election of grace." (5.) 'Not those who chose grace, 'but those whom grace chose; that is, those whom God 'freely chose.' 'Neither would grace be grace, if we 'were in the smallest degree chosen for our foreseen good 'works; nor would work be work, if in any measure it 'needed the help of grace.' (*Beza.*) (*Note*, iv. 4, 5.)

V. 7—10. What then was the precise state of the Jewish nation? In general, they had not obtained that justification unto life which they sought for, because they clave to their own devices, and rejected the Gospel of God; but "the election," or the chosen remnant among them, had obtained it, whilst the rest were blinded; so that the rejection of the latter was the punishment of their own sins; but the calling of the former was neither the consequence, nor reward, of their own works. The election here mentioned, as distinct from Israel, God's chosen people, (that is, an election within an election,) clearly marks the difference ***between a collective choice of a people to special external privileges, and a personal choice of individuals to eternal life;*** and it fully refutes the sentiments of those, who would confine all these scriptures to the former kind of election, because they know not what else to do with them. This judicial blindness of the enemies of Christ had been clearly foretold, and might therefore have been previously expected. (*Notes*, *Deut.* xxix. 4. *Ps.* lxix. 22—28. *Is.* vi. 9, 10. xxix. 9—12.) These scriptures have already been explained in this sense; but we may add, upon the version here given of David's words, that the provision made for the souls of the Jews, (as well as their temporal plenty,) were, in righteous judgment, made the occasion of their being more deeply ensnared in guilt, and sinking under more dreadful condemnation, as the recompense of their unbelief; till at length they were totally blinded, and given up as slaves to the oppression of their enemies, to be bowed down continually with the heavy burdens laid upon them; an emblem of their base and ruinous bondage to sin and Satan. The apostle seems rather to have given the sense of several prophecies to this effect, than the exact words from the Septuagint, or the literal translation from the Hebrew. *God hath given*, &c. (8.) 'This by no means implies, that God infuses any 'new viciousness; but that he, as a just Judge, delivers 'up those, who are destitute of grace, unto Satan and 'to their own lusts, to be more and more blinded.' (*Beza.*) This venerable reformer certainly adopts what is generally called the supralapsarian doctrine; and ventures on expressions, which few modern Calvinists, (as they are called,) would subscribe; yet he by no means admits those consequences, which numbers, who speak evil of what they understand not, indiscriminately charge on all who hold the doctrine of personal election to eternal life.

V. 11—15. The apostle next inquired whether the

16 For [q] if the first-fruit *be* holy, the lump *is* also *holy:* [r] and if the root *be* holy, so *are* the branches.

17 And if [s] some of the branches be broken off, and thou, [t] being a wild olive-tree, wert graffed in * among them, [u] and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree;

18 [x] Boast not against the branches: but if thou boast, [y] thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.

19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, [z] that I might be graffed in.

20 [a] Well; [b] because of unbelief they were broken off, [c] and thou standest by faith. [d] Be not high-minded, [e] but fear:

21 For [f] if God spared not the natural branches, *take heed* lest he also spare not thee.

[q] Ex. xxii. 29. xxiii. 16. 19. Lev. xxiii. 10. Num. xv. 17—21. Deut. xviii. 4. xxvi. 10. Neh x 35—37 Prov. iii 9, 10. Ez xliv. 30 Jam i. 18. Rev xiv. 4.

[r] 17. Gen xvii. 7. Jer. ii 21. 1 Cor vii 14.

[s] Ps. lxxx. 11—16. Is. vi 13. xxvii 11. Ez. xv. 6—8 Matt viii 11, 12. xxi. 43. John xv. 6.

[t] Acts ii. 39. Gal. ii. 15. Eph. ii 11—13. iii. 6. Col. ii. 13

* Or, *for them*

[u] Deut. viii. 8. Judg. ix. 8, 9. Ps. lii. 8. Zech iv 3 John i 16. Rev xi. 4

[x] 20. iii 27. 1 Kings xx. 11. Prov. xvi. 18. Matt. xxvi. 33 Luke xviii. 9—11 1 Cor. x 12.

[y] iv. 16 Zech. viii. 20—23 John x. 16 Gal iii 29. Eph ii 19. 20

[z] 11, 12 17. 23, 24.

[a] John iv. 17, 18. Jam. ii. 19.

[b] iii 3. Acts xiii. 46. 47 xviii 6. Heb. iii. 12. 19. iv. 6. 11.

[c] v. 1, 2. 2 Chr. xx. 20 Is. vii. 9 1 Cor. xvi. 13 2 Cor i. 24. Col. ii. 7. 1 Pet. v. 9. 12

[d] 18 xii 16 Ps. cxxxviii 6 Prov. xxviii. 26. Is. ii. 11 17. Hab. ii. 4 Zeph iii 11. Luke xviii 14. 2 Cor. x. 5 2 Thes. ii 4. 2 Tim. iii. 3—5 Jam. iv 6. 1 Pet. v 5. 6. Rev. iii. 17. xviii. 7

[e] Prov. xxviii. 14. Is lxvi 2. 1 Cor x. 12. Phil ii. 12 Heb iv. 1 1 Pet i. 17.

[f] 17. 19. viii. 32. Jer. xxv. 29. xlix. 12. 1 Cor. x. 1—12. 2 Pet. ii. 4—9. Jude 5.

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nation had so stumbled, as *finally* to be excluded from all further share in the blessings covenanted to their fathers; or whether God had no further end in that mysterious dispensation, than merely their fall and ruin. He would by no means admit either of these suppositions; for it actually appeared, that the Lord intended through the fall of the Jews to communicate his salvation to the Gentiles. The persecution of the Christians in Judea drove them into other regions; and the Jews, in every place rejecting the Gospel, excited the preachers more speedily and openly to address the Gentiles; by which means vast multitudes had been turned from idols to serve the living God. Yet even this was suited to excite the Jews to a holy jealousy, and an emulation with the Gentile worshippers, in zeal for the service of JEHOVAH, and earnestness in seeking the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom; though it too generally had the contrary effect, through their pride and bigoted prejudices. If then their fall had been over-ruled for the enriching of the world in general with the blessings of the Gospel; if the diminution of the numbers of that long-favoured people, by the expulsion of so large a part of them from the visible Church, and the subsequent judgments inflicted on them, was the occasion of communicating such rich blessings to immense numbers of the benighted Gentiles, how much more would their conversion, when the whole nation should in one full body acknowledge and submit to their long despised Messiah? For this they have ever since been preserved a distinct people, almost by a continued miracle; and as their conversion will probably be effected by the fulfilment of other prophecies, so it is likely that it will conduce to the conversion of the nations in general. For Paul, addressing himself to the Gentile converts, (though he was aware that both the Jewish Christians and the unconverted Jews would read his argument,) spake in the character of the apostle of the Gentiles by the special designation of Christ, and aimed to commend and magnify that office, as honourable to himself, (though he was vilified for it,) and most important for the good of mankind. At the same time, by a most judicious and delicate turn, he represented his zeal for the conversion of the Gentiles as animated by the desire of stirring up his brethren the Jews, whom he regarded as his own flesh, to emulate their faith and aspire to their privileges; that thus he might be instrumental in saving some of them also, though he knew that the sentence denounced upon the nation was irreversible. The English word *provoke*, being now fixed in common use to the idea of exciting indignation, is very apt to confuse the reader's mind, and to prevent his clearly seeing that the apostle spoke of exciting them to holy, and not to unholy, passions; though the latter was generally the effect of his conduct, contrary to his intentions. As therefore the righteous rejection of the unbelieving Jews had proved the occasion of such multitudes of the Gentiles, throughout the world, being reconciled to God and walking at peace with him; what would their future reception into the Church introduce, but such a change as would resemble a general resurrection of the dead in sin to a life of righteousness, in every part of the world; and a proportionable increase of spiritual life to all who before had believed? This event will accomplish so many prophecies in so open and signal a manner, that infidelity in every form must be finally confuted and silenced; and the attention of the most heedless must be excited to the astonishing display of God's power in performing his word; and as he delighteth in mercy, he will effectually concur with these impressions, by pouring out his Holy Spirit to convert the nations, and to render genuine Christianity universally triumphant.

V. 16—21. The apostle here speaks of Israel as the visible Church of God, the repository of his oracles and ordinances; the vineyard which he had enclosed and planted, but which he was now about to leave desolate and exposed. The attentive reader will readily perceive, that relative holiness, or consecration to God, is here exclusively meant. The first fruits of the dough, being presented to God, sanctified, as it were, the whole lump to the use of his people; thus the patriarchs, the first-fruits of Israel, being chosen and set apart, with their seed after them, as a holy people to the Lord through all their generations, a measure of this relative sanctity attached to their posterity, notwithstanding their rebellions and visitations; in consequence of which, all their males were circumcised on the eighth day, as the professed people and worshippers of JEHOVAH. But another similitude still more aptly illustrated this subject; if the root of the tree were holy, the branches must be supposed to be the same. Now Abraham was, as it were, the root of the visible Church in all subsequent ages. After Ishmael and the sons of Keturah had been broken off, the tree grew up in Isaac; then Esau being broken off, it shot forth abundance of branches in Jacob and his twelve sons. When any Gentiles were proselyted, they were grafted into this tree by circumcision, as long as the legal dispensation lasted; (but by baptism after the Christian dispensation entered;) and they with their posterity were from that time considered as branches

22 Behold [g] therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, [h] if thou continue in *his* goodness: [i] otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

23 And they also, [k] if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graft them in again.

24 For if [l] thou wert cut out of the olive-tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive-tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural *branches*, be graffed into their own olive-tree!

g ii. 4, 5 ix 22, 23. Num xiv. 18—22. Deut xxxii. 39—43. Josh xxiii 15, 16. Ps. lviii. 10, 11. lxxviii 49—53. cxxxvi. 15—22. Is lxvi 14.
h ii. 7 Luke viii 15. John viii. 31 xv. 4—10. Acts xi. 23. xiv. 22 1 Cor. xv. 2. Gal. vi. 9. 1 Thes. iii. 5. 8. Heb. iii 6. 14. x. 35—39. 1 John ii. 19. Jude 20, 21.——
i Ez iii. 20. xviii 24 xxxiii. 17—19. Matt. iii. 9, 10 John xv. 2 Rev. ii 5.——
k Zech. xii. 10. Matt xxiii. 39. 2 Cor. iii. 16.
l 17, 18. 30.

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of the tree, a part of the visible Church as springing from Abraham. Notwithstanding all former rebellions, the Jews were the branches of this tree, till as a nation they rejected the Messiah; (though the most of the ten tribes had before been broken off;) but after that, their relation to Abraham and to God, was, as it were, suspended; they were broken off from the olive-tree in vast multitudes; they were cast out of the Church, as the children of the bond-woman, or as profane Esau; neither they nor their posterity any longer retained even the outward seal of the covenant; (for circumcision lost its validity, and baptism became the sign of regeneration;) and they were thenceforth deprived of the ordinances of God. At the same time the Gentiles were grafted into this tree in their room; by professing faith in Christ, and being baptized into his name, they were admitted into the visible Church of God, and attained a relative holiness; they were favoured with the means of grace, and the ordinances of God, "for their good, and "that of their children after them," as the Jews formerly had been; and multitudes, that had been the branches of the wild unfruitful olive-tree, were thus made heirs of Abraham's faith, holiness, and blessedness. Yet the Gentile Christians ought by no means to copy the Jews, in being proud of their distinction, or in boasting over those who had been rejected to make room for them. But if any of them were disposed to do this, they should recollect, that they were not the root of this well-cultured fruitful tree; nor had they naturally sprung from it, but of free grace had been grafted in to share its advantages. Abraham's race had derived no spiritual good from them; but they derived all from Abraham's race. They might indeed say that the natural branches had been broken off to make way for them, and it was indeed true that God had preferred them; yet it was not on account of their works, but of mere grace. Through unbelief, the offspring of pride, the Jews had been broken off, and through faith the Gentiles had been grafted in; they ought therefore to beware of self-confidence, self-preference, and every kind of pride or ambition, lest, having only a dead faith, and an empty profession, they should apostatize from God and forfeit their privileges. For if he had not spared the natural branches, they ought surely to fear lest they too should be broken off. This doubtless refers to the collective body of professing Christians, and not to individual believers; the latter are indeed preserved through humility and holy fear, yet there is no real danger of their being cut off. It has also a peculiar *prophetic* energy, when we consider it as addressed to the Roman Church, which, so soon attempting to domineer over other Churches, to be the metropolis of the Christian world, and at length to be infallible, fell, through pride and presumption, till it became "the mother of harlots, and of abominations of "the earth." It is obvious to observe, that, though the illustration of grafting excellently suited the apostle's purpose, yet the reverse takes place in the case before us, than in natural grafting; for there, the good Cion communicates its changing efficacy to the wild stock; here, the good stock imparts its efficacy to the corrupt branches, which by divine power are grafted into it. The apostle's reasoning in this place strongly evinces the *oneness* of the visible Church under every dispensation; and the change of the initiatory ordinance since the coming of Christ is manifest; his statement therefore implies more substantial arguments in favour of infant-baptism, than has generally been supposed. 'We ought indeed to glory in God; 'but not so as to despise the Jews, whom it becomes us 'rather to excite to a holy emulation. And they doubt'less do suffer, and will suffer, the punishment of this 'neglected duty, who at this day call themselves Chris'tians, and yet, impelled only by their own wickedness 'and perverseness of mind, by all means vex that *holy* 'people, (as it respects their fathers;) and also harden 'them more and more, by setting before them the ex'amples of the basest and most insane attachment to 'idols. But, indeed, I would daily and most willingly 'thus pray for the Jews: O Lord Jesus, thou indeed justly 'avengest the contempt of thyself, and that ungrateful 'people is worthy of thy severest judgments; but, O Lord, 'remember thy covenant, and pity them for thy name's 'sake. And grant unto us, the most unworthy of all 'men, whom nevertheless thou hast distinguished by 'thy mercy, that, making proficiency in thy grace, we 'may not be the instruments of thine anger against them; 'but that rather, both by the knowledge of thy word, and 'by the example of a holy life, we may, through the 'power of thy Spirit, recall them into the right way; that 'thou mayest be glorified for ever by all nations and 'people. Amen.' (*Beza.*)

V. 22—24. Instead of boasting over the rejected Jews, or glorying in themselves, the Gentile converts should contemplate with wonder, awe, and gratitude, the unmerited goodness, and righteous severity, of the Lord; on the fallen Jews severity, but to themselves most astonishing goodness. Yet, considering them as professors of Christianity, concerning whom there was no absolute demonstration that they were all true believers, it was proper to add, "if ye continue in that goodness;" that is, if in humble faith they received and lived upon the grace displayed in the Gospel. But if any of them, either personally or collectively, were unbelieving and presumptuous, and renounced the truth, they too would be cut off. Whereas, if the Jews were not obstinate in their unbelief, they would be grafted in again, which might be easily accomplished by the divine power. For if God had

25 For [m] I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of [n] this mystery, ([o] lest ye should be wise in your own conceits:) [p] that * blindness in part is happened to Israel, [q] until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

26 And so [r] all Israel shall be saved: as it is written; [s] There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, [t] and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

27 For [u] this *is* my covenant unto them, [x] when I shall take away their sins.

28 As concerning the Gospel, [y] *they are* enemies for your sakes: [z] but as touching the election, [a] *they are* beloved for the fathers' sakes.

29 For [b] the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance.

30 For [c] as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now [d] obtained mercy [e] through their unbelief;

31 Even so have these also now not † believed, [f] that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy.

32 For [g] God hath ‡ concluded them all in unbelief, [h] that he might have mercy upon all.

33 O [i] the depth of the [k] riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! [l] how unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

34 For [m] who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?

35 Or [n] who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?

36 For [o] of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things: [p] to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.

m Ps. cvii 43. Hos. xiv. 9. 1 Cor x. 1. xii. 1. 2 Pet iii 8.
n xvi. 25. Eph iii. 3, 4. 9. Rev x 7.
o xii 16. Prov. iii. 5—7. xxvi. 12. 16. Is. v 21.
p *See on*, 7, 8. 2 Cor. iii. 14—16.
* Or, *hardness*.
q Ps. xxii 27. lxxii 8—14 17 cxvii. Is. ii. 1—3. lx. lxvi. 18—23 Mic iv. 1—3 Zech viii. 20—23. xiv. 9—21. Luke xxi 24. Rev. xi. 15. xx. 2—4
r Is. xi 11—16. xlv. 17. liv 6—10. Jer iii. 17—23 xxx. 17—22. xxxi. 31—37. xxxii. 37—41. xxxiii 24—26. Ez xxxiv 22—31. xxxvii. 21—28. xxxix 25—29. xl—xlviii. Hos iii. 5. Joel iii. 16—21 Am. ix. 14, 15. Mic. vii. 15—20. Zeph. iii. 12—20. Zech. x 6—12.
s Ps. xiv. 7 cvi. 47. Is. lix. 20.
t Matt. i. 21. Acts iii. 26. Tit. ii. 14.
u Is. lv. 3. lix. 21. Jer. xxxi. 31—34. xxxii. 38—40. Heb. viii. 8—12. x. 16.
x Is xxvii. 9. xliii. 45 Jer. l 20 Ez xxxvi. 25—29. Hos. xiv. 2. John i. 29.
y 11. 30. Matt. xxi 43. Acts xiii 45, 46. xiv. 2. xviii 6. 1 Thes. ii. 15, 16.
z 7. Is. xli. 8, 9.
a Gen. xxvi. 4. xxviii. 14. Lev. xxvi. 40—42. Deut. iv 31. vii. 7, 8. viii. 18. ix 5 x. 15. Ps. cv. 8—11. Jer. xxxi. 3. Mic. vii. 20. Luke i. 54, 55. 68—75.
b Num. xxiii. 19. Hos xiii. 14. Mal. iii. 6.
c 1 Cor. vi. 9—11. Eph. ii. 1, 2. 12, 13. 19—21. Col. iii. 7. Tit. iii. 3—7.
d 31. 1 Cor. vii. 25. 2 Cor iv 1. 1 Tim. i. 13. 1 Pet. ii. 10.
e 11—19.
† Or, *obeyed. See on*, x. 16.
f 15. 25
g iii 9. Gal iii 22
‡ Or, *shut them all up together.*
h John i. 7. xii. 32. 1 Tim. ii. 4—6
i Prov. xxv. 3. Eph iii 18.
k ii 4. ix 23. Eph. i. 7. ii. 7. iii. 8 10. 16 Col. i. 27 ii. 2 3.
l Job v. 9. ix. 10. xi. 7—9. xxvi. 14. xxiii. 13. xxxvii 19. 23. Ps. xxxvi 6. xl. 5. lxxvii. 19. xcii 5. xcvii 2. Ec iii. 11. Dan. iv. 35
m Job xv. 8. xxxvi 22, 23. Is. xl. 13 Jer. xxiii 18. 1 Cor. ii 16.
n Job xxxv. 7. xli. 11. Matt xx. 15. 1 Cor. iv. 7.
o 1 Chr. xxix. 11, 12. Ps. xxxiii. 6. Prov. xvi. 4. Dan. ii. 20—23. iv. 3. 34. Matt. vi. 13. Acts xvii. 25, 26. 28. 1 Cor. viii. 6. Eph iv. 6—10 Col. i. 15—17. Rev. xxi. 6
p xvi. 27. Ps. xxix. 1, 2. xcvi. 7, 8. cxv. 1. Is. xlii. 12. Luke ii. 14. xix. 38. Gal. i. 5. Eph. iii. 21. Phil iv. 20. 1 Tim. i 17. vi. 16. 2 Tim. iv. 18. Heb. xiii. 21. 1 Pet. v. 11. 2 Pet. iii. 18. Jude 25. Rev. i. 5, 6. iv. 10, 11. v. 12—14. vii. 10—12. xix. 1. 6, 7.

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taken the Gentiles, as branches of the wild olive-tree, the descendants of those who for so many ages had been ignorant and licentious idolaters, and had, by his word and Spirit, grafted them in among his own people and worshippers; doubtless he would much more in due time graft the Jews, the natural branches, into their own Olive-Tree. This was spoken prophetically, both respecting the apostacy of the Roman Church, and the future conversion of the Jews. 'This "grafting in again," 'seems to import, 'that the Jews shall be a flourishing nation again, professing Christianity in the land of promise; for that 'is to be reinstated again in the promise made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This St. Paul might, for good 'reasons, be withheld from speaking out here; but in 'the prophets there are very plain intimations of it.' (*Locke.*)

V. 25—32. Perhaps the apostle was aware, that the mystery of iniquity already wrought in the Church at Rome, (2 *Thes.* ii. 7.) and therefore he laboured the more to check its fatal progress. He would not have them ignorant of the mysterious purposes of God respecting his ancient people, lest their present distinction should render them proud of their own wisdom. The Lord, in his righteous sovereignty, had permitted blindness *in part* to happen even to Israel; not a *partial*, but a *total* blindness; but it extended only to a *part* of the nation, for the election was preserved from it. This would continue to be the case till the happy period arrived, for the conversion of the fulness of the Gentiles. In the intermediate ages vast numbers of them would be gathered into the Church; but about the time of the last great harvest of the nations, the blindness will be removed from Israel, and the nation saved from its rejected dispersed state, and be brought in a body to embrace the Gospel; probably it will be restored to the holy land, and most of the Jews *at least* will become true believers. This accords to a prophecy, which, as here quoted, not materially differing from the original in Isaiah, predicts the spiritual coming of Christ, to turn away from the Jewish nation ungodliness, impenitence, unbelief, and enmity to his kingdom and salvation; that, by thus removing the guilt and power of their sins, his covenant may again be ratified with them. (*Note, Is.* lix. 20, 21.) For though in respect of their rejection of the Gospel, and their indignation at its being preached to the Gentiles, they were considered as enemies to God, which was over-ruled for the calling of the Gentiles, through special love to them; yet in regard to the original election of that people in Abraham, and the immense number of elect persons, that are yet to spring from them, they are still to be favoured, for the sake of their pious fathers; seeing God will, in his persevering love and kindness to that race through all ages, show, that however he is said to repent of his threatenings and judgments, and is thus better than his word, yet he never repents, or is said to repent, of his special gifts, or distinguished favours, bestowed on, or promised to, fallen man. So that as the Gentiles, who had once no knowledge of God, had at length obtained mercy, through the unbelief of the Jews, and by means of their preachers, even so the unbelieving Jews might at length obtain mercy, through the mercy shown to the Gentiles, and receive the Gospel from them in their turn. For God had alternately left both of them in unbelief, shut up as in a prison, for the appointed time, in order that at length he might have mercy upon them all, by bringing both Jews and Gentiles and all nations to the knowledge of his salvation, by faith in Jesus Christ.

V. 33—36. 'The apostle breaks forth in this exclamation, as filled with astonishment at the exceedingly

CHAP. XII.

The apostle exhorts Christians by the mercies of God, to be devoted to him, and conformed to his holy will, 1, 2; *to think humbly and soberly of themselves, as members of one body in Christ,* 3—5; *to exercise faithfully their different gifts, and perform the duties of their several stations for the common benefit,* 6—8; *to mutual love, diligence, patience, hope, prayer, hospitality, compassion, and condescension,* 9—16; *to a peaceable, forgiving, and becoming conduct towards all men, and to a persevering kindness to enemies,* 17—21.

'admirable wisdom of God, which he also thus teaches 'should be piously and reverently adored, and not profanely and curiously searched into beyond the boundaries 'of revelation.' (*Beza.*) He had gone as far in unravelling, illustrating, and vindicating the mysterious designs of God, as was proper or profitable; yet he well knew that much darkness and difficulty must still rest on them, and that presumption, pride, and unbelief, would still multiply inquiries and objections. Thus he gave no countenance, either to those who, with absurd arrogance, pretend to reduce all possible existence, truth, and knowledge, to the size of their own intellect, and to believe no more than they can comprehend, or to those who know no end of speculating and disputing, and of arguing from revealed truths to their unrevealed causes and consequences, as they suppose them to be. Instead of this he closed the subject, by breaking forth into admiration and adoration of the unfathomable depth, and infinite treasures, of the wisdom and knowledge of God. His views are immense and eternal, and his reasons for every part of his vast designs are taken from himself, and his purpose of glorifying his own perfections; to us therefore they must be impenetrable and inexplicable, but they are all consistent with the riches, or infinite abundance, of his justice, truth, and love. His judgments and determinations, and his wisdom in them, cannot be fully investigated or comprehended by any created being, much less by us sinful worms. His dealings with his creatures cannot be traced out, for they are a vast deep, where his footsteps cannot be known. We should then be satisfied to understand, and receive by faith, the information which he graciously reveals; and to believe that he acts with perfect wisdom, justice, truth, and goodness, when we cannot comprehend what he is doing; or when his dispensations *seem to us* not reconcileable to these his essential perfections. This must be the duty of created intelligences; for what being hath an intuitive acquaintance with the mind of the great Creator, that he should be able to discover his unrevealed designs? Or who can pretend, that he hath counselled the Most High, and therefore understands his intentions, and can unravel his decrees? Or who hath *first* given any thing to the Lord, or rendered him any service, previous to his having received so much from him, as to be bound by the strongest obligations to devote his all to him? If any can prove that the Lord is thus indebted to him, he shall certainly be recompensed: but all such claims, and all men's disputations against his decrees, dispensations, truths, and precepts, involve in them the most irrational arrogance and horrible blasphemy. For *of* Him, as the self-existent, all-sufficient, and eternal Fountain of being and perfection, all creatures were originally derived: *by* and *through* Him they all subsist, are provided for, and disposed of, and *to* Him they all are, or ought to be, wholly devoted, and in one way or other they all shall proclaim, or display, the glory of his perfections, and the honour of his great name. Instead therefore of murmuring and objecting, all men should, and all believers will, most cordially say, "To "Him be glory for ever, Amen."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

God never casts away those whom he hath foreknown and predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son; and if this seal be affixed to our souls, we may be assured of his everlasting favour. We may also cheerfully hope, that he hath reserved for himself a larger proportion of such persons in the worst of times, than fall under our cognizance, or comport with any of our computations; and instead of reviling, or making intercession against, the multitudes of worthless professors of Christianity, with whom we are surrounded, we should still hope and pray, that "a remnant, according to the election of grace," may yet be gathered from among them. For as our salvation originates wholly from the free grace of God, without any respect to our works, so we may expect to see that grace abound, in the conversion of the chief of sinners of every description. But though grace must have the whole glory of our salvation, yet sinners perish for their own wickedness; and they who seek the favour of God in unauthorized ways, will never obtain it. Numbers are thus left to be blinded, and given up to the spirit of slumber and to presumptuous confidence; till all their advantages ensnare and harden them, and bind them fast in the bondage of Satan; and it is only by the mercy of God, that any of us are preserved from these strong delusions, which might justly have been awarded us as the recompense of our pride and ungodliness.

V. 11—15.

The Lord over-rules the fall and ruin of some, to the salvation of others. His awful judgments on daring transgressors frequently warn their companions or neighbours to flee from the wrath to come; and, on the other hand, the conversion of notorious sinners sometimes excites others to inquire after him. But what extensive, permanent, and most glorious effects may be produced, in the whole creation of God, through eternal ages, by the fall of angels and men; by our redemption in Christ, and by the dispensations of God towards his Church and the world, we cannot tell. However, a hint of this, a glimpse

I [a] BESEECH you therefore, brethren, [b] by the mercies of God, [c] that ye present your bodies [d] a living sacrifice, holy, [e] acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

a xv. 30. 1 Cor. i. 10. 2 Cor. v. 20 vi. 1. x. 1. Eph iv. 1. 1 Thes. iv. 1. 10 v. 12. Heb. xiii. 22.——b ii. 4 ix 23. xi. 30, 31. Ps. cxvi. 12. Luke vii. 47. 2 Cor. iv. 1. v. 14, 15. Eph. ii. 4–10. Phil. ii. 1–5. Tit. iii. 4–8. 1 Pet. ii. 10–12. c vi. 13. 16. 19. 1 Cor. vi. 13. 15. 19, 20. Phil. i. 20 Heb. x. 22.

d Ps lxix. 30, 31. Hos. xiv. 2. 1 Cor. v. 7, 8 2 Cor. iv. 16. Phil. ii. 17 Heb x. 20–22. xiii. 15, 16. 1 Pet. ii. 5 ——e 2. xv. 16. Ps. xix. 14. Is. lvi. 7. Jer. vi. 20. Eph. v. 10. Phil. iv. 18. 1 Tim. ii. 3. v. 4. 1 Pet. ii. 5. 20.

as it were, into the invisible world, should remind us, that the Lord may have ten thousand wise and gracious reasons for his most severe and terrible judgments, of which we can form no conception. Thus the fall of the Jews was the occasion of the Gentiles being enriched with the unsearchable treasures of Christ; and his justice, truth, and wisdom, were glorified in that awful dispensation; yet their eyes were so blinded, that they could see no glory in it. We, the ministers of the Gospel, however mean and unworthy in ourselves, should magnify our office, as tending unspeakably more to enrich and bless mankind, (provided it be faithfully executed,) then all arts, sciences, commerce, or improvements whatsoever, unitedly can do. Whilst we labour for the conversion of those among whom we are called to minister, we should have an eye also to others, and even to those who are most prejudiced against us, if by any means we can excite them to emulation, or do any thing to save some of them, for they too are our own flesh. Though the Lord over-rules his works of judgment, to the reconciling of sinners to himself, yet he most delighteth in mercy; and he will ere long display his glorious power, by making the salvation of one people the introduction to that of others, till it shall be as life from the dead to all the nations of the earth.

V. 16—24.

While we wait and pray for the approaching happy times to the Church, let us be thankful for our engrafting, as branches of the wild olive-tree, into the holy tree of God's Church, to partake of the root and fatness of it, that the blessing of Abraham might come on us Gentiles by faith. But let the state of those who were the natural branches of this tree, warn us not to rest in external profession or advantages; not to boast, or prefer ourselves to others, or indulge carnal security. If we stand at all, it is "by faith;" this implies that we are guilty, polluted, and helpless, in ourselves; and warns us to be humble, watchful, and afraid of deceiving ourselves, or of being overcome by temptation. Alas, how hath the once flourishing church of Rome fallen, by neglecting the apostle's caution! And how many other churches, and individuals, have, in a measure, trodden the same path! But blessed are they who fear always, and walk humbly with God; who contemplate, with holy awe and fervent gratitude, the severity and the goodness of the Lord, as revealed in his word, and displayed in his providence; who are thus led to "be sober, and to "watch unto prayer;" who, by living faith, "continue in "his goodness," and wait for its complete effect in their eternal salvation. But if any presume themselves to be the peculiar people of God, and despise others, though themselves strangers to his new-creating grace, they will at length be cut off, and cast as unfruitful branches into the fire; while such as have been most estranged from the truth will find admission to all the privileges of the Gospel, if they abide not in unbelief.

V. 25—36.

As pride is the genuine offspring of ignorance, so a *spiritual* knowledge of the mysterious truths and dispensations of God will tend to prevent our being "wise in our "own conceits." His dealings with his creatures appear very different, when viewed in detached parts, from what they will do, when seen as constituting a most glorious whole. Zion's great Deliverer saves none from wrath, but those who are separated from ungodliness; for his covenant with his people ensures their sanctification, as well as their justification. His "gifts and calling are without re-"pentance," in respect of his true Church; this he hath shadowed forth in his dealings with Israel as a nation. Their captivities, dispersions, and exclusion from the Church, are emblems of the believer's corrections, and rebukes for his transgressions; and the continued favour of the Lord towards that people, and the final mercy intended for them, denote the persevering patience, and victorious love of God to those whom he hath "chosen *in Christ* "before the foundation of the world," and will finally save *for his sake*. As we therefore have obtained mercy, through the unbelief of the Jews, let us pray, and use proper means as we can, that through our mercy they may speedily obtain mercy; (*Notes, Hos.* i. ii. iii.) instead of perplexing our minds about secret things, let us walk in the light which the Lord hath graciously afforded us; and, conscious of our inability to comprehend his deep designs, let us adore the riches of his wisdom and knowledge, whose judgments are not to be investigated, nor his ways traced out, whose mind none can penetrate or comprehend, who needs and regards no counsellor, who first gives life and all things to every one, and to whom none can render any thing which he hath not first received from him. "For "of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things, "to whom be glory for ever, Amen." (*Dan.* iv. 34—37.)

NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1. The apostle having closed the doctrinal and argumentative part of his epistle, (which is so carefully guarded as to be of a very practical tendency,) proceeds here to enforce more particularly a variety of important duties from evangelical principles. He entreated or exhorted the Romans, as his brethren in Christ, in the most earnest and affectionate manner, by the mercies which God had shown to them in their election, redemption, conversion, and abundant privileges, that they would evidence the sincerity of their love, and honour the Gospel, by presenting themselves as a living sacrifice unto him. The allusion seems to be made to the living animals, which were presented as sacrifices before the altar, that they might be slain, and thus offered to God upon it. Thus Christians should present their bodies before God, to be employed in his service, and to be spent and worn out by hardships or labours for him, that so they might be wholly devoted to his glory. The body, with its mem-

2 And [f] be not conformed to this world: but [g] be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may [i] prove what *is* that [k] good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

3 For [l] I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, [m] not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think * soberly, [n] according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

4 For [o] as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office;

5 So [p] we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

f Ex xxiii 2 Lev. xviii.29,30. Deut. xviii.9—14 John vii.7. xiv 30. xv. 19. xvii 14. 1 Cor. iii. 19. 2 Cor iv 4. vi. 14—17 Gal i. 4. Eph. ii 2. iv. 17—20. Jam. i. 27 iv 4 1 Pet i. 18. iv. 2 2 Pet i. 4. ii. 20. 1 John ii. 15—17 iii 13. iv. 4, 5. v. 19. Rev. xii 9. xiii. 8.——g xiii. 14. Ps. li. 10. Ez. xviii. 31. xxxvi. 26 2 Cor. v. 17 Eph iv. 22—24 Col. iii. 10 Tit iii. 5.——i 1. Ps. xxxiv. 8. Eph. v. 10 17. 1 Pet. ii. 3 ——k 1. vii. 12. 14. 22. Ps. xix. 7—11 cxix 47, 48. 72. 97. 103. 128. 174. Prov. iii. 1—4. 13—18. Gal v. 22, 23 Eph. v. 9 Col. iv. 12 1 Thes iv. 3. 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. 1 6—8. i 5 xv 15, 16 1 Cor. iii. 10. xv. 10. Gal ii. 8, 9. Eph. iii. 2. 4. 7, 8. iv. 7—12. Col. i. 29. 1 Tim. i. 14. 1 Pet. iv. 11.

m xi 20, 25 Prov. xvi. 18, 19. xxv. 27. xxvi. 12. Mic. vi 8. Matt. xviii 1—4 Luke xviii. 11. 1 Cor. iv. 7, 8. 2 Cor. xii. 7. Gal. vi. 3 Phil. ii. 3—6. Col ii 18 Jam. iv 6. 1 Pet v. 5. 3 John 9.

* Or, *to sobriety*.

1 Tim ii. 9 15. Tit. ii. 2. 4. 6. 12. 1 Pet. i 13. iv 7. v. 8 n 6. John iii. 34. 1 Cor. iv 7. xii. 7 — 11. 2 Cor. xii. 13. Eph. iv. 7 13. 16.——o 1 Cor. xii. 27. Eph. iv. 15, 16.——p 4 1 Cor. x. 17. xii, 12—14. 27, 28. Eph. i. 23. iv. 25. v. 23. 30. Col. i. 24. ii. 19.

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bers, senses, and organs, is the instrument of the carnal mind, in executing its purposes and gratifying its evil inclinations; when therefore the mind is made spiritual, the body should, in like manner, execute its holy purposes, and express its spiritual affections. (*Notes*, vi. 12—16. *Marg. Ref.*) Thus the soul becomes the consecrated priest, and the body the living sacrifice unto God, through Jesus Christ. In general this sacrifice must be presented alive, to be employed in the worship and work of God, though sometimes at length it must also be offered up to death by martyrdom. As the legal sacrifices, (which that of Christ had now superseded,) were to be without spot or blemish, so the bodies of believers must be separated from the practice of all iniquity, or they cannot be fit to be living sacrifices to God; but, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit, the worship and obedience performed by them, as the instruments of the renewed soul, are far more pleasing and honourable to God, than legal sacrifices could be. This is a reasonable service and worship, suited to rational creatures, and to their relations and obligations to God, as redeemed sinners; whereas the oblation of bulls and goats, when separated from its typical meaning, was not, in this sense, a reasonable service.

V. 2. In thus wholly dedicating themselves to the service of the Lord, Christians must go entirely against the course of this evil world, and incur the censure, ridicule, and enmity of ungodly men, which would greatly interfere with their worldly interests. They must not therefore seek happiness from the world, or conform to the maxims, customs, and fashions of mankind in general. They must not comply with common usages, as to their pursuits or employments, in any respect, where such usages were contrary to the holy commands of God, the spirit of the Gospel, the interests of piety, and prosperity of their own souls, and the improvement of their talents. In all these things the reproach of singularity is honourable, the want of it suspicious, and to be *fashionable* is to be *unchristian*. A serious regard to this rule, and a few others of a similar nature, would soon show men, in what things they "must not be conformed to this world;" and it would easily convince them, that, on the one hand, affected singularity, in things minute or indifferent, comes far short of the spirituality of the exhortation; and on the other, that they excuse their vain amusements, splendid decorations, expensive feastings, eager pursuit of wealth, power, or distinction, waste of time, and other parts of their conduct, because they love the friendship of the world, savour earthly things, and cannot endure self-denial, or the cross; not because they can fairly prove that the maxims and customs of the world in these respects are so agreeable to the spirit of the Gospel, that they may safely conform to them. In order to escape these and other snares, the apostle called on the Christians at Rome "to be transformed by the renewing of their mind." (*Marg. Ref.*) This transformation of the soul into the holy image of Christ, this daily renovation of the judgment and affections by the power of the Holy Spirit, is the only effectual cure of "conformity to this world," because it produces conformity to "the spirits of just men made perfect," and a capacity for delighting in such society and employments, as most resemble the inhabitants, worship, and joys of heaven. Animated, urgent, and affectionate exhortations to seek this inward transformation, as essential to duty and happiness, are the appointed means of leading Christians to plead the promises, and attend on the ordinances, of God, in order to attain unto it more and more. Thus they prove, or make trial of, and experience the happiness to be found in obeying the salutary, excellent, and holy will of God, made known in his spiritual law, and now enforced by the blessed Gospel; they manifest their cordial approbation of it, and show to others its excellency and beneficial tendency. This alone can be an acceptable service to God, being perfect in its own nature, and suited to the perfecting of the soul in holiness, and then the body will indeed be presented as a living sacrifice unto him. There does not appear in these verses any distinction intended between the Jewish and Gentile converts; or any reason to conclude, as some have done, that the Gentiles were especially addressed. The customs and practices of the unbelieving Jews were as little to be conformed to by the Christians, as those of the heathen were; and the case is the same in respect of a vast majority, in countries called Christian. *This world.* 'Thus he calls the 'state of unregenerate men, without any exception." (*Beza.*) The Jews were no longer required to offer the legal sacrifices, the Gentiles must renounce their idolatrous sacrifices, and were not required to keep the ritual law; but both were bound to devote themselves to God in holy obedience.

V. 3—5. The preceding general exhortation was in the affectionate style of brotherly love, but this is in that of apostolical authority. According to the distinguishing favour shown to him in his call to be the apostle of the Gentiles, St. Paul charged the Romans to beware of spiritual pride, to which their distinguished situation might peculiarly expose them. (xi. 20. 25.) Let no one of them, however eminent for rank, abilities, learning, or spiritual gifts, think more highly of himself, than con-

6 Having [q] then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, [r] whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* [s] according to the proportion of faith;

7 Or [t] ministry, *let us wait* on *our* ministering: [u] or he that teacheth, on teaching:

8 Or [x] he that exhorteth, on exhortation: [y] he that * giveth, *let him do* [z] *it* † with simplicity; [a] he that ruleth, [b] with diligence; [c] he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

q 3. 11. 1 Cor. i. 5—7. iv. 6, 7. xii. 4—11. 28—31. xiii. 2. 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11.

r Matt. xxiii. 34. Luke xi 49 Acts ii. 17 xi. 27, 28. xiii. 1. xv 32. xxi. 9. 1 Cor. xii 28. xiv 1 3—5 24. 29. 32 Eph iii. 5. iv. 11 1 Thes. v. 20.——s 3. Acts xviii. 24—28 2 Cor viii. 12. Phil iii. 15.——t Is. xxi 8 Ez iii 17—21 xxxiii. 7—9 Matt. xxiv. 45—47. Luke xii. 42—44. Acts xx. 20 28 Col. iv. 17 1 Tim. iv 16. 2 Tim. iv. 2. 1 Pet. v. 1—4.——u Deut. xxxiii. 10. 1 Sam xii. 23. Ps. xxxiv 11. li. 13 Ec. xii. 9. Matt. xxviii. 19. John iii 2. Gal. vi 6. Eph. iv. 11. Col. i. 28, 29 1 Tim. ii. 7. iii. 2. v. 17. 2 Tim. ii. 24.

x Acts xiii. 15. xv 32. xx 2. 1 Cor. xiv. 3. 1 Thes. ii. 3. 1 Tim. iv. 13. Heb. x. 25. xiii. 22.

y 13. Deut. xv 8—11. 14. Job xxxi. 16—20. Ps cxii. 9. Prov. xxii. 9. Ec xi. 1, 2. 6. Is. xxxii. 5. 8. lviii. 7—11 Matt. vi. 2—4. xxv. 40. Luke xxi. 1—4. Acts ii. 44—46. iv. 33—35. xi. 28—30. 2 Cor. viii. 1—9. 12. 1 Pet. iv. 9—11.

* Or, *imparteth.* 1 Thes. ii. 8.——z 2 Cor. i 12. xi. 3. Eph. vi. 5 Col. iii. 22.——† Or, *liberally* ——a xiii. 6. Gen. xviii. 19. Acts xiii. 12. xx 28 1 Cor. xii 28. 1 Thes. v. 12—14. 1 Tim iii. 4, 5. v. 17. Heb. xiii. 7. 17. 24 1 Pet. v. 2, 3.——b Ec. ix. 10. c Deut. xvi. 11. 14, 15. Ps. xxxvii. 21. Is. lxiv. 5. 2 Cor ix. 7.

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sisted with the truth of his case and character, as a lost sinner saved by sovereign grace. Let none forget the Giver of his peculiar distinctions, the end for which they were bestowed, and the improvement required of them. Let none over-rate his own talents, as if they entitled him to superiority over others, or authorized his emulation or ambition. But let every one soberly and prudently estimate his own gifts and attainments, according as the Lord had dispensed to every man his proportion of faith, and the benefits connected with it; that he might neither bury his talent in the earth, as undervaluing it, nor yet grow proud of it, or above the duties of his proper station in the Church, or disposed to aspire after those places for which he was not qualified, or to envy and oppose such as filled them. In short, every one of them ought to be in the Church, as the members are in the human body, where each is fitted for its place, and as it were contented in it, and there quietly performs its proper function, for the good of the whole. Thus united unto Christ our Head, animated by one Spirit, and endued with different gifts, Christians are the members of one mystical body, and should seek its welfare, in humble diligence, disinterested love, and unambitious quietness. (*Notes*, 1 *Cor.* xii. 12—31.) *Think more highly*, &c. (3.) 'That he be not 'immoderately pleased with himself, as proud and ambi'tious persons are, who seem to themselves more wise 'than they really are.' (*Gr.*) 'It behooves every one— 'to be conscious of those gifts, which he has received of 'the Lord, that he may perform his duty with a good 'conscience. But there are two boundaries, within which 'the sobriety and moderation, required by the apostle, 'are included. The one, that we arrogate nothing to our'selves which we do not possess; the other, that we do 'not glory in what we have received, but use them as 'gifts, conferred on us, with trembling, to the glory of 'God.' (*Beza.*) *The measure of faith.* It is commonly observed that *faith* is here put for those spiritual gifts, which were generally conferred on believers, and exercised in proportion to the measure of their faith. Yet it is evident, that in some instances even miraculous powers were possessed by those who had not saving faith. (*Notes*, *Matt.* vii. 21—23. xvii. 19—21. xxi. 20—22. *Marg. Ref.*) 'For πιστεως (*faith*) in one manuscript we find χαριτος' (*grace.*) (*Beza.*)

V. 6—8. As God, the Giver of every good gift, had imparted to each of them abilities, providential advantages, spiritual gifts, miraculous powers, or qualifications, for that office in the Church to which he had been called, and as none had any claim upon God for the least of these benefits, which he had an undoubted right to bestow in that measure and proportion he saw good, as an act of mere grace and favour, so every one ought to be satisfied in his place, and with his work, and ability to perform it. If any one therefore were endued with the gift of prophecy, and was enabled either to foretel future events, to deliver any message from God, or to explain his word for the edification of the Church, let him exercise this gift, according to his ability, which would be in proportion to the degree of faith by which he depended on the teaching of the Holy Spirit; or, (as some explain it,) let him show himself to be truly inspired, by speaking in entire consistency with the analogy of faith, or that system of divine truth, which God had made known to his Church by his prophets and apostles. If a man were called to the office of a deacon, in receiving and dispensing the charities of believers among the poor, the sick, the prisoners, or others; or in any other way to minister to the common benefit, by managing the concerns of the Church; let him faithfully, diligently, and steadfastly attend to that good work, and serve Christ and his brethren in it. If any man were called to teach young persons or new converts the first principles of Christianity, or to instruct others in the truth and will of God, let him give himself up to the duties of that station, well satisfied with his work, and let him neither envy his superiors, nor despise those beneath him. If another were called to the higher functions of the pastoral office, by authoritatively counselling, encouraging, exhorting, admonishing, instructing, or reproving his fellow Christians, let him be chiefly concerned to fulfil his ministry in a proper manner, and to give himself to it, as the great business and pleasure of his life. He who, having this world's goods, was enabled to serve the common cause, and to provide for his needy brethren, let him do it liberally without covetousness, and in simplicity without ostentation, or assuming authority on that account, but with a single design of glorifying God by doing good to men. He also, who was called to exercise authority, either in the Church over any description of its ministers, or in any magistracy or presidency in the community, let him deem himself advanced, not for his own honour, but for the good of others, and let him accordingly employ himself diligently, in the performance of his proper duty. And finally, in whatever way any one might be called to exercise compassion, or to alleviate misery, let him do it with cheerfulness, notwithstanding the expense, hardship, danger, or disgusting circumstances, to which it might expose him, counting it his happiness by any means to be useful. I am aware, that these verses are commonly explained exclusively of the different orders of church officers and rulers, and so every man endeavours to find his own system of ecclesiastical polity in them; but though the various duties of the ministry in all its

9 *Let* [d] love *be* without dissimulation. [e] Abhor that which is evil: [f] cleave to that which is good.

10 *Be* [g] kindly affectioned one to another* with [h] brotherly love; [i] in honour preferring one another;

11 Not [k] slothful in business; [l] fervent in spirit; [m] serving the Lord;

12 [n] Rejoicing in hope; [o] patient in tribulation; [p] continuing instant in prayer;

13 [q] Distributing to the necessity of saints; [r] given to hospitality;

14 [s] Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not.

15 [t] Rejoice with them that do rejoice, [u] and weep with them that weep.

16 *Be* [x] of the same mind one toward another. [y] Mind not high things, [z] but

d 2Sam. xx. 9, 10. Ps lv. 21. Prov. xxvi. 25 Ez. xxxiii 31. Matt. xxvi 49 John xii. 6. 2 Cor. vi. 6. viii 8 1Thes. i. 3. Jam. ii. 15, 16. 1 Pet i. 22. iv. 8. 1 John iii. 18—20.

e Ps. xxxiv. 14. xxxvi 4. xlv. 7. xcvii. 10. ci 3 cxix 104 163. Prov. viii. 13 Am. v. 15. Heb. i. 9.

f Acts xi 23 1 Thes. v 15. Heb. xii 14. 1 Pet. iii. 10, 11 ——g John xiii. 34, 35. xv. 17. xvi. 21. Acts iv 32. Gal. v. 6. 13. 22. Eph. iv. 1—3. Col. i. 4. 1 Thes iv. 9. 2 Thes i 3. Heb. xiii. 1. 1 Pet. i 22. iii. 8, 9 2 Pet. i. 7. 1 John ii. 9—11 iii. 10—18. 23. iv. 11. 20, 21. v. 1, 2 ——* Or, *in the love of the brethren.*——h Job i. 4. Ps. cxxxiii. 1. i Gen. xiii. 9 Matt xx. 26. Luke xiv. 10 Phil. ii. 3. 1 Pet. v. 5.——k Ex. v. 17 Prov. vi 6—9. x. 26. xiii. 4. xviii. 9. xxii. 29. xxiv. 30—34. xxvi 13—16. Ec. ix 10. Is. lvi. 10. Matt xxv. 26. Eph. iv. 28. 1 Thes. iv. 11, 12. 2 Thes. iii 6—12. 1 Tim. v. 13. Heb. vi. 10, 11 ——l Matt. xxiv. 12 Acts xviii. 25. Col. iv. 12, 13. Jam. v. 16. 1 Pet. i 22. iv. 8. Rev. ii. 4 iii. 15, 16.——m 1 Cor. vii. 22. Eph vi. 5—8. Col iii. 22—24. iv. 1. Tit. ii. 9, 10.——n v. 2. xv. 13 Ps. xvi. 9—11. lxxi 20—23. lxxiii 24—26. Prov. x. 28. xiv. 32. Lam. iii 24—26. Hab. iii. 17, 18. Matt. v. 12. Luke x. 20. 1 Cor. xiii. 13. Phil. iii. 1 iv. 4. Col i. 27. 1 Thes. v. 8 16. 2 Thes. ii. 16, 17. Tit ii. 13. iii. 7. Heb. vi. 17—19. 1 Pet i. 3—8. 1 John iii 1—3 ——o ii 7. v. 3, 4. viii 25. xv. 4 Ps. xxxvii. 7. xl. 1. Luke viii 15. xxi. 19. Col. i. 11. 1 Thes. i 3 2 Thes. i 4. iii 5. 2 Tim. iii. 10. Heb. vi. 12. 15. x. 36. xii. 1. Jam. i. 3, 4. v 7. 10, 11. 1 Pet. ii. 19, 20. 2 Pet. i. 6. Rev. xiii. 10.

p Gen. xxxii 24—26. Job xxvii. 8—10. Ps. lv. 16, 17. lxii. 8. cix. 4. Jer xxix. 12, 13 Dan ix. 18, 19. Luke xi 5—13. xviii. 1, &c. Acts i. 14. ii. 42. vi. 4. xii. 5. 2 Cor. xii. 8. Eph. vi. 18, 19. Phil iv. 6, 7. Col. iv. 2. 12. 1 Thes. v. 17. Heb. v. 7. Jam. v. 15, 16. 1 Pet. iv. 7. 1 John v. 14, 15.

q *See on*, 8. xv. 25—28. Acts iv. 35 ix. 36—41. x. 4. xx. 34, 35. 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2. 2 Cor. viii. 1—4. ix. 1. 12. Gal. vi 10 Philem. 7. Heb. vi 10. xiii. 16. 1 John iii. 17.——r Gen. xviii. 2—8. xix. 1—3. 1 Tim. iii. 2. v. 10. Tit. i. 8. Heb. xiii. 2. 1 Pet. iv 9.——s 21. Job xxxi. 29, 30. Matt. v. 44. Luke vi. 28. xxiii. 34. Acts vii. 60. 1 Cor. iv. 12, 13. 1 Thes. v 15. Jam. iii. 10. 1 Pet. ii. 21—23. iii. 9 ——t Is. lxvi. 10—14. Luke i. 58. xv. 5—10. Acts xi. 23. 1 Cor xii 26. 2 Cor. ii. 3. Phil. ii 17, 18. 28 ——u Neh. i. 4 Job ii. 11 Ps. xxxv. 13, 14. Jer. ix. 1. John xi. 19. 33—36. 2 Cor. xi. 29. Phil. ii. 26. Heb. xiii. 3.——x xv. 5, 6. 2 Chr. xxx. 12. Jer. xxxii. 39. Acts iv. 32. 1 Cor. i. 10 Phil. i. 27. ii. 2, 3. iv. 2. 1 Pet. iii. 8.——y Ps. cxxxi. 1, 2. Jer. xlv. 5 Matt. xviii. 1—4 xx. 21—28. Luke iv. 6—11. xxii 24—27 1 Pet. v. 3. 3 John 9. Rev. xiii. 7, 8.——z Job xxxi. 13—16. xxxvi. 5. Prov. xvii 5. xix. 7. 17. 22. Matt. xi. 5. xxvii. 11. Luke vi. 20. xiv. 13. Jam. ii. 5, 6.

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parts are principally intended, there seems to be no proof that the apostle meant them restrictively. He seems rather to have inculcated a general improvement of every man's talents, for the common benefit of the Church, whatever his gifts and place were. And as there were saints in Cesar's household soon after, so it is possible that Christians might be called to the lower functions of the magistracy. The epistle, however, was intended by the Holy Ghost for the edification of the Church in all ages, so it may be supposed that the duties of Christian magistrates, as well as those of Church-rulers, are hinted at in the general language used by the apostle. Some consider the word rendered *ministry*, (7.) to be a general term for the different orders of ministers in the Church, which are afterwards enumerated: but the disjunctive particle *or*, seems unfavourable to that interpretation; the original word may point out the office of the primitive deacons, but the exhortation to "give with *simplicity*," or *liberality*, appears more properly addressed to those who distributed their own property, than to the deacons who were intrusted with the treasures of the Church, and to whom, faithfulness, prudence, and impartiality, were especially necessary. *Gifts.* (6.) Many seem to think that spiritual or miraculous gifts are exclusively intended by this word; but the office of a minister, of whatever order, is itself a distinct thing from a man's qualifications for it; other endowments were even then necessary to the due performance of the ministerial duties, even more so than supernatural gifts; and the money, which some distributed, whether their own or the Church's, was a talent of entirely another nature, yet all were the free *gifts* of God, and as such to be received and improved.

V. 9—13. The apostle next exhorted the Christians at Rome to see to it, that their professed love of each other was sincere, and free from that dissimulation, that unmeaning and deceitful compliment, with which the world abounded, notwithstanding its selfishness. This hollow show of affection, the counterfeit of genuine love, they ought by all means to avoid, and to be cordial, faithful, liberal, compassionate, forgiving, and kind, in their whole temper and conduct. Depending on divine grace, they must also learn habitually to detest and dread all kinds of evil, and to love and delight in every thing good, kind, excellent, or useful, and to cleave constantly to it, whatever opposition or temptation they met with. By a kind of *natural affection* for their brethren in Christ, the effect of regeneration and progressive sanctification, they should delight in every exercise of mutual love; and, in deep humility, and a disposition to animadvert on their own faults, and to notice the gifts and graces of others, they should learn to prefer and honour one another, and to yield the respect and precedency to others which ambitious men claim to themselves, and readily to honour, and induce others to honour, the estimable conduct of their brethren, who, on one account or another, were disregarded or discouraged. Whatever business any of them were called to, they ought to avoid all slothfulness, and to do it in a skilful, diligent, and assiduous manner, from love to Christ and zeal for the honour of the Gospel, with fervency of spirit, as serving the Lord in their most ordinary employments. This would ennoble every business, and render it acceptable to God, and it would redound to the credit of the Gospel, if every Christian acquitted himself better in the business which he undertook, than other men did. They were called on to rejoice in the hope of that glorious inheritance, which the promise of God ensured to them; and thus to bear up under their various trials with submission, constancy, cheerfulness, and meekness. And as they could do none of these things of themselves, they ought to persist in constant earnest prayers, notwithstanding all the discouragements which they would feel, and the temptations they would meet with, to render them slack in that duty. Not only ought the wealthy, but all of them according to their ability, to distribute to the necessity of their poorer brethren, and hospitably to entertain in their houses such as were driven out by persecution, or came as strangers from other cities, or were in any way destitute, trusting in God to provide for the expense thus incurred. *Given to*, &c. Or, *Pursuing hospitality.* (*Heb.* xii. 14. 1 *Pet.* iii. 11. *Gr.*) 'Stay not till occasions 'of this kind force themselves upon you, and much less till 'importunity extort the favour; but, like Abraham, look 'out for proper objects of such a bounty, and follow after 'them, to bring them back to your houses.' (*Doddridge.*)

* condescend to men of low estate. [a] Be not wise in your own conceits.

17 [b] Recompense to no man evil for evil. [c] Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

18 If [d] it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

* Or, *be contented with mean things.* Matt. vi 25, 26. Phil. iv. 11—13. 1 Tim. vi. 6—9 Heb. xiii 5

a xi. 25. Prov iii. 7. xxvi 12 Is. v. 21. 1 Cor iii. 18. iv. 10. vi 5. viii. 2 Jam iii. 13—17

b 19. Prov. xx. 22. Matt v. 39 1 Thes v. 15. 1 Pet. iii. 9 ——c xiv. 16. 1 Cor. vi. 6, 7 xiii. 4, 5. 2 Cor. viii. 20, 21. Phil. iv. 8, 9 Col. iv. 5 1 Thes. iv 12 v. 22 1 Tim. v. 14 Tit ii. 4, 5 1 Pet. ii 12. iii 16.——d xiv 17. 19. 2 Sam xx. 19 Ps. xxxiv. 14. cxx. 5—7. Prov. xii. 20. Matt. v. 5 9. Mark ix 50. 1 Cor. vii 15. 2 Cor. xii 11. Gal. v. 22. Eph. iv. 3. Col. iii. 14, 15. 1 Thes v. 13. 2 Tim. ii. 22. Heb. xii. 14. Jam. iii. 16—18. 1 Pet. iii. 11.

19 Dearly beloved, [e] avenge not yourselves, but *rather* [f] give place unto wrath: for it is written, [g] Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

20 Therefore [h] if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap [i] coals of fire on his head.

21 Be [k] not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

e 14. 17. Lev. xix. 18 1 Sam. xxv. 26. 33. Prov xxiv. 17—19. 29. Ez. xxv. 12.

f Matt v. 39. Luke vi. 27—29. ix. 55, 56.

g xiii. 4. Deut. xxxii 35 43. Ps. xciv. 1—3. Nah. i 2, 3. Heb x. 30.

h Ex. xxiii. 4, 5. 1 Sam. xxiv. 16—19. xxvi. 21. Prov xxv 21, 22. Matt. v. 44.

i Ps. cxx. 4 cxl. 10. Cant. viii. 6, 7.——k Prov. xvi. 32. Luke vi. 27—30. 1 Pet. iii 9.

V. 14—16. With this kindness to their friends, they must admit of no resentment against their enemies, but should wish well to and pray for their persecutors and all men, and never allow themselves to utter bad wishes or imprecations against any one. Instead of grudging or envying the prosperity of their brethren or neighbours, they ought benevolently and unfeignedly to rejoice with them, as well as to sympathize with, and endeavour to comfort, those who mourned. Thus they all ought to be united in one mind and affection, and to judge themselves interested in the welfare of every individual of the body to which they were joined. Nor ought they to covet, value, or aspire to high things, such as wealth, honourable connexions, preferments, reputation; but be satisfied to associate with men of low estate, or to stoop to mean and low accommodations, being contentedly poor, or condescendingly and benevolently rich. And especially, they should avoid all conceit of their own wisdom, as if they were above ordinary rules, had no occasion to ask wisdom of God, or to regard the counsel of their brethren; or as if they ought to be at the head of every business, and nothing could be well done if they were not consulted about it. The marginal references form by far the best comment on the comprehensive and sententious practical hints, of which the latter part of this chapter consists.

V. 17—21. The preceding exhortations had principally respected the behaviour of Christians one toward another; but these mainly relate to their conduct among their unconverted neighbours. No provocation ought ever to induce them to render evil for evil to any man, however vile his character were. In every part of their conduct, and in all their dealings, they ought to study and endeavour, that uprightness, punctuality, sincerity, and fidelity, might evidently appear in them, in the sight of their most severe judges. By the most harmless and forbearing conduct, and by every sacrifice and concession, they ought, if possible, to avoid all quarrels and litigations, and to live at peace among their most unreasonable and injurious neighbours; avoiding all contention, as the greatest evil to their own souls, and to the cause of true religion, except it were a *meek*, but steadfast, contention for the truth. When they were insulted, defrauded, or assaulted, even if no redress could be obtained from the magistrate, they must not on any account presume to avenge themselves, but rather give way to the wrath of their enemies, and without opposition endure the effects of it; or as some interpret it, they should give place, and leave it to God, whose wrath they had incurred, to punish them, if he saw good, as private persons must give place, and leave the punishment of those who had robbed or assaulted them to the magistrate, remembering, that God had declared that vengeance belonged to him; so that when an unauthorized person presumed to avenge himself, he invaded God's prerogative, and, as it were, attempted to wrest his sword of justice out of his hand. (*Note*, *Deut.* xxxii. 35.) On the contrary, they ought to wait for the opportunity of their enemy being in distress, in order kindly to supply his wants and alleviate his sufferings, as a man would feed, and give drink to a weary, wounded, fainting traveller. In doing this, they would use the proper method for melting down his obdurate heart into reciprocal affection; like the founder, who not only puts fire under the hard piece of metal, but heaps fire over it also, that by fire on every side it may at length be melted. (*Notes*, *Prov.* xxv. 21, 22.) In this contest of love against hatred, they should persevere with a fixed determination not to yield, or to be overcome by any degree or number of injuries, or by any ingratitude or ill usage, so as to give way to resentment, or to cease from embracing the opportunity of returning kindness; but with a holy pertinacity to persist in the endeavours of overcoming evil with good, after the example of the Lord towards them. (*Notes*, &c. *Matt.* v. 38—41. *Luke* vi. 27—35.) ‘ He is overcome of evil, who sins in his conduct to another, because the other sinned in his conduct towards ‘ him.’ *Heap coals*, &c. (20.) ‘ I believe the sense is ‘ rather this, that if he persevere in his enmity after these ‘ kind offices, thou, by thy patience, shalt engage the ‘ wrath of God to fall upon him, and to maintain thy cause ‘ against him. So *Prov.* xx. 22, “ Say not thou, I “ will recompense evil; but wait on the Lord, and he “ shall save thee.” ‘ This is the import of the phrase in ‘ the Old Testament, where alone it occurs.’ (*Ps.* cxl. 9, 10. *Is.* xlvii. 14. *Ez.* x. 2. *Sept.* 2 *Esdras*, xvi. 52.) (*Whitby*.) Those commentators, who argue that this cannot be the meaning, for that would be ‘ applying ‘ to revenge, and building upon it,’ while it is expressly forbidden, seem not to have duly adverted to some other parts even of the New Testament. (*Luke* xviii. 7, 8. 2 *Thes.* i. 5—9. *Rev.* vi. 9, 10. xvi. 5—7. xviii. 20.) To *expect* that God will avenge himself on those who injure us out of hatred to him, and are not won over by any kindness shown to them, is very different from avenging ourselves: and it is evident, that, in some cases, to *desire* that God would deliver his servants by taking vengeance on their persecutors, or to rejoice when this is done, is not an unholy passion. At the same time it is asserting far too much to say, that in all cases, (or in any

CHAP. XIII.

The apostle strongly inculcates subjection to rulers, the payment of tribute, and rendering to all their dues, 1—7. *He exhorts to love of each other, as the fulfilment of the second table of the law,* 8—10; *and in the near prospect of complete salvation, to put away all the works of darkness, and to seek in all things to be conformed to the Lord Jesus,* 11—14.

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case without the special grace of God,) our kindness will melt down our obdurate enemies. On the other hand, Dr. Whitby too readily takes it for granted, that in the passage in Proverbs, which the apostle quotes, *coals of fire* mean the vengeance of God, and one text at least he has overlooked, in which that expression is used of the intense fervour and great strength of *love.* (*Cant.* viii. 6, 7.) Upon the whole, it appears to me, that both interpretations may stand. The line of our duty is clearly marked out; and if our enemies are not melted down by persevering kindness, they will be consumed by the fiery wrath of the God to whom vengeance belongeth. (*Notes,* 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 8—15. xxv. 39. xxvi. 8—12. *Prov.* xx. 22.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

Surely they strangely misunderstand the doctrines which the apostle teaches, who suppose them inconsistent with exhortations, and instruction in the particular duties of Christianity, or as inimical to the practice of them! The same inspired writer, who most fully established, and most earnestly argues for, the doctrines of grace, is also most exact and particular in exhorting Christians to their various duties. They, who seem afraid that his doctrines may tend to licentiousness, will be equally averse to the *impracticable* strictness of his precepts; and many, who pretend to be zealous friends to the former, are apt to quarrel with the latter *as legal,* when echoed by the faithful preachers of the Gospel. But the mercies of God, apprehended by faith and experienced in the heart, form the grand motive to all willing obedience. The love of Christ, abounding in our souls, will cause us earnestly to desire, that our bodies also, (the work of his creating power, and the purchase of his redeeming blood,) should be presented to him as a living sacrifice, that he may be magnified in and by them, whether by the actions and sufferings of a devoted holy life, or by laying them down for his sake, which is in every respect our reasonable service. May we then, with a willing mind, bring them to be washed, and consecrated to the Lord, as instruments of righteousness unto him! The transformation of the soul by the renewing of the Holy Ghost, produces so holy a judgment and taste, and such heavenly affections, that it will readily show us, in what respects we must avoid conformity to the world, and it will lead us to an equal distance from useless singularities, and timid, carnal, and dishonourable compliances. But if the world possess, or have a large share in the heart, some excuse will be invented for indulging the favourite inclination. Experience alone can show us, how good and pleasant the acceptable and perfect will of the Lord is; so that the more we refuse conformity to a vain and wicked world, that we may walk with God in his holy ways, the more indifferent we shall grow to the former, and the greater delight we shall take in the latter. Every avenue of the soul should be guarded against pride; and repeated warnings on this subject are needful to all men, especially to those who are in any respect conspicuous. If indeed, we soberly estimated our endowments, and compared them with our deserts, if we duly consider from whom, and for what, we have received them, and how far we have come short of a proper improvement of them, then they would all tend to our humiliation, as well as the increase of our gratitude, and thus we might know and improve our talents, and yet be covered with shame for not having better improved them. But we are apt to shine in our own eyes, and "to "think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think;" and this leads us to neglect the glory of God, and our duty as members of the Body of Christ, and to indulge emulation, ambition, contests for precedency, contempt of others, and discontent with our own proper place and work. Let us then watch and pray against this evil, and whatever our gifts, or situation may be, let us endeavour to occupy with our talent, humbly, diligently, cheerfully, and in simplicity, not seeking our own credit, or profit, but the good of many.

V. 9—16.

It is our duty, and should be our constant endeavour, from undissembled love, to exceed in *evident* benevolence, kindness, and courteousness, all those appearances, which polite selfishness assumes, and to be *really* as ready to oblige and be serviceable, as worldly people *profess to be.* Thus abhorring all evil, cleaving to all good, and delighting in every exercise of brotherly love, being in our element when contributing to the comfort of others, and habitually ready "in honour to prefer others to ourselves," we shall "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour," and it will appear amiable in the eyes of those with whom we live. While religion cuts the sinews of that selfish activity which keeps the world in motion, it supplies its place by still more efficacious principles; love to God and man, with zeal for the honour of the Gospel, will influence the intelligent Christian to be diligent in his worldly business, and in acquiring superior skill, that in it he may serve the Lord with fervency of spirit. The joyful hope also of heavenly felicity will better support him in his labours and trials, and endue his soul with more patient constancy, than the expectation of worldly riches or distinctions can do their deluded votaries; whilst by instant continuance in prayer he will find his hope confirmed, and his alacrity in duty revived from time to time. Thus cheerfully dispensing of his gains or earnings to the necessities of his brethren, using hospitality without grudging, blessing and wishing well even to his worst enemies, and feeling no malice against any man, sharing the joy of the prosperous, and sympathizing with the sorrowful, being of one mind and heart with all the children of his heavenly Father, not

LET [a] every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For [b] there is no power but of God: the powers that be, are * ordained of God.

a Deut. xvii 12. Eph. v. 21 Tit. iii. 1. 1 Pet. ii 13—17. 2 Pet ii. 10, 11. Jude 8 ——b 1 Sam ii. 8 1 Chr xxviii. 4, 5. Ps. lxii. 11 Prov. viii 15, 16 Jer xxvii. 5—8. Dan ii. 21 iv. 32. v. 18—23. Matt vi. 13. John xix. 11. Rev. i. 5 xvii. 14. xix. 16.

* Or, *ordered.*

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aspiring to high things in this world, but condescending (if sinful worms can be said to condescend) to men of low estate, and not thinking any honest employment beneath him, or any provision too mean for him, he may pass safely, comfortably, and usefully, through life, and be habitually prepared for a better world.

V. 17—21.

Regard to the honour of the Gospel, and love to mankind, will dispose the zealous Christian, as far as he can, to provide things honest and creditable in the sight of others, to live peaceably if possible with all men, to bear injuries without retaliation or eager resistance, committing his cause to God, to whom vengeance belongeth, to pity and relieve the miseries of his persecutors or enemies, and to endeavour by persevering kindness to convert them into friends; as the love of Christ and his own experience cannot fail to supply motives for persisting in this *only* contest, and render him ambitious of the most honourable of all victories, even that of "overcoming evil with good." And what now is this, but a few particulars of the holy law of love expounded and enforced by evangelical principles? Yet if our eternal state were to be determined, even in respect of the most conscientious part of our lives, according to the obedience which we have paid to them, or our failure in them, even Sinai's fire and thunder would not be so tremendous as such a judgment. But if, as redeemed sinners, justified in Christ Jesus, we are called to obey these beautiful precepts by his grace, and for the honour of his name, while his blood still cleanses away our daily stains, we then see them to be kind monitors, to show us in what manner we may prove the sincerity of our love, enjoy the foretastes of heaven, be blessings to all around us, and maturing for the employment and felicity of angels. And if all, who contend for the doctrines of grace, were thus "a peculiar people zealous of "good works," the Gospel would appear in its genuine simple beauty, and all would be put to "shame, that falsely "accused our good conversation in Christ."

NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1. Proceeding affectionately to exhort the Christians at Rome, "by the mercies of God," the apostle next called on them "to be subject to the "higher powers." The Jews entertained various scruples on the lawfulness of obeying heathen magistrates, and this gave occasion to many turbulent spirits to excite scandalous and ruinous insurrection; and the same spirit might creep in among Christians, to the great disgrace of it, as in latter times ecclesiastics, especially in the Church of Rome, claimed the most exorbitant exemptions in this particular. The apostle therefore used the most decisive language on this subject; "every soul," or person, whether a Jewish or a Gentile convert, private Christian or minister, or however distinguished by miraculous gifts, or by his station in the Church, was absolutely required to be subject to the authority and edicts of those who held authority in the state, that is, in all things lawful. The higher powers at Rome were not only heathen, but oppressive, and even persecuting powers, and Nero, who was then emperor, was a monster of cruelty, caprice, and wickedness, perhaps unparalleled in the annals of mankind; yet no exception was made on that account. Christians were to look above such concerns, and to consider God as the Source of all power, and civil government as his appointment for the benefit of mankind; the several forms of government, prevailing in different places, were to be regarded as the effect of his superintending providence, and the persons raised to authority as his deputies. It was therefore incumbent on all Christians to render a prompt and quiet obedience to those governors, under whom their lot was cast, patiently submitting to the hardships, and thankfully receiving the benefits, thence resulting, without objecting to the vices of the constitution, the administration, or the rulers, as an excuse for refusing subjection. It is evident that the apostle did not mean to determine the divine right of absolute monarchy, or exclusively of any form of government, but to inculcate subjection to the ruling powers of every place and time, in which believers lived. But as the benefits of civil government are many and great, and it is the appointment of God for maintaining order among the apostate race of men; so any man, who set himself to oppose the established government of that nation in which he lived, would be considered as resisting the providence, and rebelling against the authority, of God, who gave the rulers their authority, and will himself call them to account for the use which they make of it.—'All other governments derived their power from God, as 'well as that of the Jews, though they had not the whole 'frame of their government immediately from him, as 'the Jews had.' 'Whether we take *powers* here, in the 'abstract, for political authority, or in the concrete, for 'the persons actually exercising political power and 'jurisdiction, the sense will be the same.' 'How men 'come by a rightful title to this power, or who has this 'title, the apostle is wholly silent, and says nothing of. 'To have meddled with that would have been to decide of 'civil rights, contrary to the design and business of the 'Gospel, and the example of our Saviour, who refused 'meddling in such cases with this decisive question, "Who made me a Judge or a Divider over you?" (*Locke.*) The words, rendered "the powers that be," or "the "existing authorities," seem intended to exclude all such inquiries. Whatever be the form of the existing government, or the way by which it was established, while it continues to exist, it must be regarded and submitted to as the appointment of Providence. Perhaps nothing involves greater difficulties, in very many instances, than to ascertain to whom, either individually or collectively, the authority *justly* belongs, or, in fact, what constitutes a lawful title to authority. If then the most learned and intelligent men find many difficulties, and differ widely in their opinions respecting this subject, how shall the bulk of the people be able to decide it? And if Christians are first to determine concerning the right, by which their

2 Whosoever, therefore, [c] resisteth the power, [d] resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist, shall [e] receive to themselves damnation.

3 For [f] rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. [g] Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

4 For [h] he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, [i] be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, [k] a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil.

5 Wherefore [l] *ye* must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for [m] conscience' sake.

c Jer xxvii. 8—17. xxviii. 14—17. Tit iii. 1.
d Is lviii. 2 1 Pet ii. 13.
e 5. Matt xxiii. 14 Mark xii. 40. Luke xx 47. Jam iii 1.
f 4. Deut xxv 1. Prov. xiv. 35 xx. 2. Ec. x. 4—6. Jer. xxii. 15—18
g 1 Pet ii. 13 iii. 13, 14.
h 6. 1 Kings x. 9. 2 Chr. xix. 6. Ps. lxxxii 2—4. Prov. xxiv. 23. 24. xxxi. 8, 9. Ec. viii. 2—5. Is i. 17. Jer. v. 28 Ez. xxii 27. Mic. iii. 1—4. 9.
i Prov. xvi 14. xx. 2. 8 26.
k xii. 19. Num. xxxv. 19—27. Josh. xx. 5—9. Ez. xxv. 14.
l 1 Sam. xxiv. 5, 6. Ec viii. 2. Tit iii. 1, 2. 1 Pet. ii. 13—15.——m Acts xxiv. 16. Heb. xiii. 18. 1 Pet. ii. 19. iii. 16.

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rulers possess and exercise authority before they think themselves bound to obedience, they must very commonly indeed be engaged in opposition to "the existing authorities." But the apostle's design was to mark out the plain path of duty to Christians, however circumstanced. 'The resistance which consists—in refusal to yield actual obedience to the law of the superior, can only be allowed when the matter of the law is sinful, and so forbidden by the higher Power; not when it is judged inexpedient or unprofitable only; for of this subjects are not to judge, but the lawgiver only. They lawfully may, and therefore, to avoid scandal and punishment, and from respect to him who is God's vicegerent, ought to obey, even as servants ought to obey their froward masters, and children their parents, in all things lawful, and this from conscience towards God. No resistance of the higher powers by force can be allowed to any who have not the power of the sword. For he that thus uses it, takes the sword without authority from him to whom belongeth vengeance;—and so without authority from Him to whom the power of the sword originally belongs. Where a people have conferred—a government according to the law, they must be supposed to have reserved to themselves a power necessary to preserve their laws.' (*Whitby.*) Thus, in mixed governments, there are *legal* and *constitutional* methods, by which the encroachments of one part of the government upon the rights of the others may be resisted. But Christians, in private stations, have not much concern in this; and complicated cases may possibly arise, in which no previous rules or counsels can give adequate direction. Submission in all things lawful to the *existing authorities* is our duty at all times and in all cases; though in civil convulsions, and amid great revolutions and sudden changes in government, there may sometimes for a season be a difficulty, in determining which are to be considered as the existing authorities. To claim the protection of *the law* against the *illegal* violence, even of magistrates, is not "resisting the powers that be." (*Notes, Acts* xvi. 35—40.) The word, rendered *damnation*, properly signifies *judgment;* and is by many expositors explained exclusively of the punishment inflicted by the magistrate; but the apostle is speaking of our duty to God in obeying magistrates, which, if we neglect, he will call us to account for it, and finally condemn us, except we repent. Some have urged against the interpretation here given, that, if this be indeed the rule of our religion, it lays it open to the charge of abetting tyranny, and being inimical to civil liberty. But I apprehend that this is not the case; for all the crimes committed by usurpers, tyrants and oppressors, are at least as severely condemned in Scripture, as those committed by rebels and traitors. Now a religion cannot justly be regarded as abetting tyranny, or as inimical to civil liberty, which denounces the severest vengeance on those who act tyrannically, and unjustly deprive men of liberty. The apostle was not writing a treatise on politics, but teaching a company of private Christians their duty. Had he been called on by Nero, or any other oppressive ruler, as he was by Felix, he would doubtless have "reasoned with him of righteousness—and a judgment to come;" and had he been sent immediately by God to rulers, as the prophets were, he would doubtless have plainly told them their duty, and protested against particular instances of their tyranny and oppression, in the "spirit and power of Elijah," and of John Baptist, when he said to Herod, concerning Herodias, "It is not lawful for thee to have her." But it should be considered, on the other hand, whether the charge of being seditious and "hurtful to kings and provinces," has not in every age been brought against the zealous worshippers of God? (*Notes, Ezra* iv.) Whether this has not been, and is not at this day, the main pretext of persecutors, and of those who would exclude the preachers of the Gospel out of their several districts? And whether the necessity, which is laid on Christians "to obey God rather than man," is not, in many cases, likely enough to exasperate the spirit of haughty princes, without openly avowing that there are other cases in which we are not bound to obey them? Cases, which in fact call their right to authority in question, and directly impeach their wisdom and justice. Surely this is suited to increase that jealousy against the ministers, missionaries, and professors of the Gospel, in the minds of rulers in all parts of the world, which to this day forms one grand barrier to the propagation of Christianity. A barrier insurmountable, except by the power of God. Had the primitive Christians explained the apostle's doctrine with so many exceptions and limitations as numbers do at present, and acted accordingly, and had Christianity assumed that political aspect which it has generally borne in later ages, (as arising from the circumstances of the times;) nothing but a constant succession of miracles could have prevented its extirpation by the rage of its numerous persecutors. But, in this respect, the apostles and primitive ministers and Christians, and their successors for some ages, when situated "as lambs amidst wolves," were, indeed, "wise as serpents and harmless as doves."

V. 3—5. 'In this way God preserves the good and restrains the bad: by this sentence the magistrates themselves are admonished of their duties to their subjects.'

6 For, for this cause [n] pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, [o] attending continually upon this very thing.

7 Render [p] therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; [q] fear to whom fear; [r] honour to whom honour.

8 [s] Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

n Ezra iv. 13. 20. vi. 8. Neh. v. 4. Matt. xvii. 24—27. xxii. 17—21. Mark xii. 14—17. Luke xx 21—26 xxiii. 2.
o xii.8 Ex. xviii. 13—27 Deut. i 9—17. 1Sam. vii. 16, 17. 2 Sam. viii. 15. 1 Chr. xviii. 14. Job xxix. 7—17.
p Luke xx. 25.
q Lev. xix. 3 1 Sam. xii 18. Prov. xxiv 21 Eph. v 33. vi. 5 1 Pet ii 18.
r Ex. xx 12 Lev. xix. 32 Eph. vi. 2, 3. 1 Tim. v. 3. 17. vi. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 17 iii 7.
s 7. Deut. xxiv. 14, 15. Prov. iii. 27, 28. Matt. vii. 12. xxii. 39, 40.

(*Beza.*) In the general course of human affairs, rulers are not a terror to honest, quiet, and good subjects, but to depredators and malefactors; and on the whole, the benefits of government, even when in many instances it is oppressive, far more than counterbalance its evils. So that they, who would be free from terror in this respect, should live honest and inoffensive lives; and then they will commonly be countenanced, protected, and even commended by their rulers, and may look on them as the ministers of Providence for their good, in defending their persons, property, and habitations, from the violence of wicked men. On the other hand, the evil doer ought to be afraid; for the magistrate does not bear the sword of justice in vain, but as the minister of God's providential government of the world, as a revenger, by his authority, to punish those who violate the peace of the community; so that it is absolutely necessary for men to submit to the authority of the magistrate, not only from fear of his indignation, but also for conscience' sake towards God. If the ruler abuse his authority, God will call him to an account for it: there are legal and constitutional checks upon those who want to introduce tyranny; and on great occasions the people will sometimes, with one consent, arise against a cruel oppressor, and subvert his government; (as the Romans did against Nero, who was condemned by the senate to die, as an enemy to mankind, with the approbation of the whole world:) but Christians seldom need take any active or leading part in such transactions. If laws be unreasonably formed, or iniquitously executed, this should be endured as a cross laid on them, till they, who are legally authorized, apply a remedy to the evil; and if we be required by human authority to sin against God, we must steadfastly refuse obedience, and cheerfully and meekly endure the consequence, well satisfied with the blessing pronounced on those who suffer for righteousness' sake.

V. 6, 7. For similar reasons it is the duty of Christians to pay taxes also; as the advantages of government are great, so must its expenses be very large. Rulers are the ministers of Providence, who are called to attend constantly to this very thing. It is proper, and even for the good of the community, that they, their families and attendants, should appear in dignity and splendour: they are and ought to be taken from the highest ranks in the community, as the temptations of such situations must generally be irresistibly strong to those who have been educated in comparative indigence. Both governors and governed are fallen creatures, and therefore selfishness can by no method whatever be excluded. Some excess of expenditure, some improper accumulation of treasure, some waste of it in providing for relatives and dependents, *may be expected, though not excused.* Taxes must therefore be imposed, and ought to be scrupulously paid. Sometimes they will be oppressive or very heavy; but this grievance should be patiently endured till it be constitutionally redressed. So that the Christian must render to rulers the tribute, custom, excise or impost, demanded legally from him, with as much exactness as he would pay any other debt. He must use no collusion or fraud: he should not hesitate or murmur; and all smuggling or dealing in contraband goods, all withholding or evading duties imposed on any commodity, and every species of this kind of imposition, is a direct rebellion against the providence and most express commandment of God; and, however such conduct may be palliated or varnished over, it is not merely a defalcation of the revenue, but it is a robbery of all who pay taxes; for such collusions will not prevent the sum required from being raised upon the public; so that when one tax falls short, another is imposed; and when he, who should pay five pounds, pays but three, his more conscientious neighbour must pay seven instead of five, and is therefore directly robbed of forty shillings. At the same time, all the atrocious crimes of the whole body of smugglers, and others who combine to defraud the revenue, are abetted by every one who puts his hand to such a dishonest business. In such a case, to declaim about the vices and extravagancies of rulers, is to add one sin to another. These things never were worse than in the days of Nero: they are inseparable from human nature: the great Lawgiver was aware of them when he gave the commandment; and if no man pay a tax till the character and administration of all concerned in managing public business, and the disposal of the public money, and the tax itself, met his full approbation, nothing would ever be paid by the selfish and unreasonable part of the community, and the public exigencies could never be answered. This subject is the more enlarged on, because the arguments and examples of some avaricious professors of the Gospel draw in well meaning people to wound their consciences, and disgrace the cause, by evading or refusing taxes in a disingenuous and fraudulent manner, which is as contrary to simple truth as to common honesty. Moreover, the apostle enjoins Christians to render fear, or reverence and honour, to those to whom they belong, on account of their authority, rank, or any other civil distinction; neither supposing that religion requires a stiff and rude singularity, in refusing customary titles or expressions of honour and respect to superiors, or that it allows that petulance and scurrility with which many delight to vilify the characters and conduct of their rulers, and those in high stations. Their faults should in general be regarded with candour and silence; (for their situation is conspicuous, and their temptations are very great:) and though the honour due to their rank and authority may consist with disapprobation of their conduct, yet not with reviling and defamation of them. The same authority, which commands children to honour their parents, commands subjects to honour their rulers; and they should honour them in the same manner. (*Note, Ex.* xx. 12.)

9 For this, [t] Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, [u] Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, [x] Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

10 Love [y] worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore [z] love *is* the fulfilling of the law.

11 And that, [a] knowing the time, that now [b] *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: [c] for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed.

t Ex. xx. 12–17. Deut. v. 16–21. Matt. xix. 18, 19 Mark x. 19 Luke xviii. 20
u vii. 7, 8
x Lev. xix 18.34. Matt. xxii. 39. Luke x. 27. Gal. v 13. 14. Jam. ii 8—10
y 1Cor. xiii.4–7.
z 8. Matt xxii.40.
a Is xxi. 11, 12 Matt. xvi. 3. xxiv 42—44. 1 Thes v. 1–3.
b Jon i. 6. Matt. xxv. 5–7. xxvi. 40,41 Mark xiii. 35 – 37. 1 Cor. xv. 34. Eph. v. 14. 1Thes v.5.6
c Ec. ix. 10. Luke xxi. 28. 1 Cor. vii. 29–31. 1 Pet. iv 7. 2 Pet. ii. 13–15. Rev. xxii. 12 20.

12 The [d] night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore [e] cast off the [f] works of darkness, and let us [g] put on the armour of light.

13 Let [h] us walk * honestly, [i] as in the day; [k] not in rioting and drunkenness, [l] not in chambering and wantonness, [m] not in strife and envying.

14 But [n] put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, [o] and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.

d Cant. ii. 17. 1 John ii. 8.
e Is ii 20. xxx. 22. Ez. xviii. 31, 32. Eph. iv 22. Col. iii. 8, 9. Jam i 21. 1Pet. ii 1.
f Job xxiv. 14—17. John iii. 19—21. Eph v 11. 1 Thes. v. 5–7. 1John i. 5–7. ii. 8, 9.
g 14. 2 Cor. vi. 7. Eph. vi 11—18. Col. iii. 10–17. 1 Thes v 8.
h Luke i. 6. Gal. v 16. 25. Eph. iv. 1. 17. v. 2. 8. 15 Phil i. 27. iii. 16—20 iv 8, 9. Col i. 10. 1 Thes. ii. 12. iv. 12 1 Pet. ii. 12 1 John ii. 6. 2 John 4.
* Or, *decently*.——i Acts ii. 15 1 Thes. v. 7. 2 Pet. ii 13.——k Prov xxiii 20 Is. xxii. 12. 13. xxviii 7, 8. Am. vi. 4–6. Matt xxiv. 48–51. Luke xvi. 19. xvii. 27, 28. xxi. 34. 1 Cor vi. 10. Gal. v 21. Eph. v. 18 1 Pet ii. 11. iv. 3–5.——l 1 Cor. vi 9. Gal. v. 19. Eph. v. 3–5 Col. iii 5. 1 Thes iv. 3–5 2 Pet. ii. 14. 18—20 Jude 23.———m Gal. v. 15. 21 26 Phil ii. 3. Jam. iii 14—16 iv 5 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2.———n Gal iii. 27 Eph iv. 24. Col iii. 10—12.———o viii 12, 13. Gal. v. 16, 17. 24. Col iii 5–8. 1 Pet. ii. 11. 1 John ii. 15–17.

V. 8—10. It cannot be supposed that the apostle meant to prohibit the contracting of debts on *any account*, which is next to impossible to the greatest part of mankind; but only to direct Christians to pay all legal demands, without needless reluctance and delay, and with great punctuality; and that they should avoid all superfluous expense, that they might be preserved from debt, and from the danger and discredit of not rendering to all their dues. Yet when all such demands were answered, they would still owe love to all men, with all the duties that result from its enlarged exercise. The learned Erasmus long since remarked, that the clause might as properly be rendered, "Ye do owe no man any thing, but to love one another:" and though subsequent commentators, almost without exception, take the words *imperatively*, yet it may be worthy of consideration, whether the *indicative* construction does not more simply and evidently accord to the context. The apostle was exhorting Christians to render to all their *dues:* and, having branched out the general precept into a few particulars, he closes by adding, "Ye "owe no man any thing, &c." as if he had said; 'All 'that I would inculcate is reducible to this, obey the law 'of love to others, in all its branches, and then you will 'render to all their dues.' The sense in this construction is obvious and important: but the ordinary interpretation, seeming at least to forbid Christians to contract any debts, and to condemn such as cannot at present discharge those already contracted, may embarrass the minds of the most upright, and requires some management in expounding it, so as to prevent this embarrassment. No doubt, it is the duty of all Christians to avoid contracting debts, which they have not a reasonable prospect of discharging punctually; and to submit to any inconveniency in order to pay their debts in a creditable manner: but the obvious interpretation of the text, as *imperative,* seems inconsistent with the situation of almost all men in the present state of the world. The usual exposition of the next clause, "but to love one another;" 'Be not a debtor 'to any man of aught but love and affection, which ye 'ought so to pay, as that ye should have more to pay,' (*Bp. Hall;*) is not to me, at least, very satisfactory: for why should we be *allowed* so to come short in rendering love to whom love is due, as to be always there in arrears, and there only? If we daily rendered all that love to our neighbour, which is due to him, we should not remain in his debt. The next day would indeed require a fresh payment, but there would be no arrears due. Upon the whole, therefore, though I would speak with caution and hesitation, I cannot but prefer the *indicative* construction; "Ye do owe," &c. In short, the whole of what the apostle would inculcate was, the exercise of love in its various branches: so that he who loved another, actually fulfilled the law, in respect of its requirements towards his neighbour: and this love of our neighbour as ourselves, in obedience to the command of God, would also be the best evidence of our loving him with all our hearts, according to the first and great commandment of the law. (*Notes,* &c. *Ex.* xx. *Lev.* xix. 18. *Deut.* vi. 5.) The apostle, by thus appealing to the moral law, as the standard of duty, after having so fully shown that no man can be justified by it, completely establishes the distinction between the law *as a covenant,* and the law *as a rule;* and proves that our deliverance from it, in the former sense, is in order that we might obey it in the latter. *Worketh no evil,* &c. 'Not 'that the law is exactly fulfilled by doing no evil to our 'neighbour: but, because, in Christ's interpretation, the 'neglect of doing any good we are able, and have opportunity to do for him, is doing evil. "Charity is also "kind," 'and engageth us "by love to serve one another." (*Whitby.*) (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11—14. Some think that the apostle here refers to the approaching destruction of Jerusalem, and the more complete establishment of Christianity that followed: but he seems rather to speak of the state of believers in this world, and their expectation of approaching complete salvation. It behooved them to consider how long they had heard and professed the Gospel; and the shortness of the time that might yet remain to them, in which to glorify God among men. Thus they would perceive, that it was full time for them to shake off all remaining sloth and supineness, and to attend to every duty with increasing zeal and vigour, as the day of salvation approached continually, and was then actually much nearer than when they had first believed in Christ; and consequently their term of remaining usefulness on earth was proportionably abridged. The redemption by which salvation comes to

CHAP. XIV.

Directions to receive candidly the weak in faith, and not to despise or judge one another, in respect of things doubtful or indifferent, 1—6; *but to consider their relation and accountableness to Christ,* 7—12. *Exhortations to caution, charity, humility, and self-denial, in using their Christian liberty,* 13—23.

lost sinners, was finished with the humiliation of the Saviour, and when he expired on the cross. Salvation becomes ours, and is begun, when we come to him by faith: it will be finished as to the soul at the hour of death, and as to the body at the day of judgment. The life of faith might be called *day*, in comparison of the darkness of the idolatrous and unconverted state; yet it was but *night* or twilight, in comparison of the light of heaven. But this *night* was far spent, *that day* was at hand: it was therefore incumbent on them to prepare for it, and anticipate it, by casting off their former sins, in which they had lived during their heathen darkness, as a man would cast off filthy and ragged garments, or as he would put off his night-clothes before he went out of his chamber. And they ought not only to put on their day-clothes, but their armour also, by praying for and cultivating all those holy dispositions, which arm the soul to repel temptation, and are at the same time its ornament and beautiful attire; even as the burnished armour is deemed the conqueror's most honourable decoration. The apostle therefore exhorted the Romans to join with him, in walking after a becoming and consistent manner, as those who enjoyed the light of the word of God and the hope of heaven; keeping at a distance from all excess or intemperance; from all sloth and unchastity, and every wanton look, word, or action, and from all contention, envy and malevolence. And then, instead of multiplying exhortations, he called upon them "to put on the Lord Jesus" himself, and thus do the whole at once. Let the mind and example of Christ be reflected in all their tempers and conduct, that all, who saw their piety, purity, zeal, benevolence and self-denial, might recognize the image and character of Christ in them. That as they stood justified before God in the robe of his imputed righteousness, so they might appear before men adorned with his image for sanctification. Then they would not contrive means for gratifying any of their carnal lusts, nor would they be anxious to provide for the indulgence of their appetites; but they would find their satisfaction in such things as pertained to the life of their souls.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

◆

The grace of the Gospel directs our thoughts to the providence of God, as well as to his promises and commandments; and thus it induces submission and cheerful composure, where pride and the carnal mind see nothing but cause for murmurs and disquietude. Christians should always remember that there is no power but what is derived from God: "that the powers that be are ordained of God," though not according to what *we might think* the most eligible plan; and therefore "that every soul is bound to be subject to the higher powers:" that while so many, disdaining every yoke, "are not afraid to speak evil of dignities," and want to level all other distinctions, that themselves may rise to distinction by "resisting the power and despising the ordinance of God;" there may be also a protest in the land against such turbulent innovators, entered into by a great multitude, "who fear God, honour the king, and meddle not with those that are given to change." Indeed, it is far more agreeable to the pride of man to rise to reputation, by declaiming against kings and princes, than to be employed in humbling himself before God for his own sins, and in diligently mortifying his lusts. But surely there can be no sufficient reason why ministers of the Gospel and private Christians should leave their peaceful duties, and bring the truth into disgrace, by becoming volunteers in such services, as apostles, evangelists, and martyrs, never intermeddled with! In our happy land, however, the advantages derived from civil government are immense, our grievances minute and often imaginary, and rather the fault of human nature, than of our constitution or public administration. For speculators on this subject, (even such as profess to believe the doctrine of man's entire depravity,) almost universally blame this or the other form of government for those evils, which in fact are inseparable from our fallen nature; and they expect that benefit from the change of forms or persons, which can only be produced by the renovation of men's hearts to the holy image of God, and the mortification of that carnal self-love which is universal to mankind. Let then Christians recollect that the world lieth in wickedness, and that they are strangers and pilgrims in it; that their time here is short; that it is their wisdom and duty to make the best of things as they find them; that submission to the providence and command of God requires their peaceable subjection to governors; and that in refusing this subjection, they rebel against God, and must give an account to him of it. In general, our rulers are, what all rulers ought to be, "a terror to evil doers," and not to those who do well, as the honest and conscientious have nothing to fear from them, but enjoy great security and religious toleration, in what manner soever they choose to worship God; and that with few, if any exceptions, none are made afraid, but those who ought to fear; even they, whom the magistrate, as the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon evil doers, must punish, unless he would bear the sword in vain. "So that in every way it becomes us to be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake." At the same time magistrates may hence learn from whom and for what they have their power, and what account they must render of it; that they too may attend to their duty in the fear of God, with whom there is no respect of persons. It is also incumbent upon Christians to be exact and exemplary in paying tribute and custom; considering their rulers as God's ministers for their good, and receding from their personal interests for the public good. They should therefore

HIM that is [a] weak in the faith [b] receive ye, [c] *but* * not to doubtful disputations.

a 21. iv. 19 xv. 1 Job iv. 3 Is. xxxv 3, 4 xl 11 xlii. 3 Ez. xxiv. 4. 16 Zech. xi. 16. Matt. xii. 20. xiv 31. xviii. 6. 10. Luke xvii. 2. 1 Cor. iii. 1, 2. viii. 7—13. ix. 22.——b xv. 7. Matt x. 40—42. xviii. 5. John xiii. 20. Phil ii. 29. 2 John 10 3 John 8—10.

c 2—5.
* Or, *not to judge his doubtful thoughts.*

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avoid all appearance of those covetous and fraudulent practices, by which so many plunder their fellow-citizens, in withholding their share of the public revenue. And they ought also to refrain from contumelious and disrespectful language concerning their governors, and set an example of "rendering fear to whom fear, and honour "to whom honour is due." Let then those who eagerly declaim concerning liberty, without exactly distinguishing it from licentiousness, seriously ask themselves, whether their reasoning can be made consistent with such Scriptures as these? Whether Christ, his apostles, or his primitive disciples, ever spent their zeal about such topics? (*Note, Matt.* xxii. 15—22.) And whether such declamations and frequent invectives against those, whom the Scripture commands us to honour and obey, can be for the credit of the Gospel, and the benefit of true religion? As to the efforts which are any where made by those, on whom such trusts constitutionally devolve, to preserve, increase, or assist the *real* liberty of mankind, personal, civil, or religious, or to check the career of despotism or oppression, over men of any climate, complexion, or religion, let us zealously forward them with our prayers, and by every means, consistent with the peace and good order of the community.

V. 8—14.

While we rejoice at deliverance from the condemnation of the law, may its precepts be written in our hearts, and transcribed into our lives: that prudence, honesty, and punctuality may mark all our transactions, and regulate all our expenses, and the payment of our debts. May we learn to love all men as ourselves; and then we shall not only avoid gross injuries to their persons, connexions, property or characters, but we shall do no kind or degree of evil to any man, but shall study to be useful and beneficial in every relation and station of life. The longer we have heard and professed the Gospel, the more should we deem ourselves bound to shake off all sloth: and the nearer our salvation approacheth, the more diligent should we be to finish the work of life, and to go forth to meet our Lord. Emerging from the night of unconversion, and the twilight of our first glimmering views of heavenly things, and looking forward to the day of perfect knowledge and purity, let us reject and flee from the works of darkness, and "put on the whole armour of light:" let us study to walk in a manner consistent with, and honourable to, our profession; to avoid every kind of excess and inexpedient indulgence, and all spiritual as well as carnal wickedness; and, instead of making provision for the flesh to fulfil its lusts, let us study to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, to imbibe his spirit, to copy his conduct, to walk in every respect even as he walked.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 1. *Weak in faith.* 'That is, in 'the knowledge of the benefit of Christ, or the benefit to 'be derived from him.' (*Beza.*) *Doubtful disputations.* '*Controversies of disputation*, or *doubtfulness of disputation*, or *of reasonings*.' (*Leigh.*) '*The altercations of* '*disputations*, or *the ambiguities of disputations*; that is, 'lest he should depart more uncertain than he came, through 'various and perplexing controversies, or turn aside with 'a disturbed conscience. Erasmus renders it, "not to "the determinations of disputes." 'Yet indeed the weak 'should be received, in order to the determination of disputes; that is, that at length, by knowing the truth, he 'may become stronger: but the apostle orders this to be 'done very gradually, that there may be no contention, 'or vain and unseasonable disputation. He teaches that 'they should be instructed with mildness and lenity; and 'so that in those things,' (of which he is speaking,) 'we ought to accommodate ourselves to their ignorance, 'from regard to the law of charity.' (*Beza.*) (*Marg. Ref.*) Notwithstanding the authority vested by Christ in his apostles, and their infallibility in delivering his doctrine to mankind, yet differences of opinion prevailed even among real Christians; nor did St. Paul, by an express decision and command, put a final termination to them. A proposition, indeed, may be certain and important truth, yet the heart cannot profitably receive it till suitably disposed; and a man must himself perceive the nature, evidence, and excellency of the doctrine, and the grounds on which it rests, before he can make any profitable use of it; so that to profess assent, or conform, would, without conviction, in general be hypocrisy, and always unavailing. So essential are the rights and exercise of private judgment, in all possible cases, to the existence of true religion! And so useless an encumbrance would an infallible judge be, for deciding controversies, and producing unanimity among Christians! The apostle had sufficiently declared his mind respecting the Mosaic law; and where attention to it was likely to interfere with the simplicity of men's dependence on Christ, he zealously contended against it; yet many sincere believers could not be convinced that they were under no obligations to observe it. If the method of subsequent ages had been then in use, these persons would have been excluded from the Church, and anathematized as obstinate heretics, or driven, for relief to their consciences, to separate from those, who imposed on them what they counted sinful, and afterwards they would have been shunned as schismatics. But St. Paul, in all the plenitude of his apostolical authority, could endure his fellow-christians to differ from him in opinion as to matters of inferior consequence; and, instead of peremptory injunctions, he gave a general rule, of vast importance for our conduct in all such cases. He exhorted the pastors and members of the Church at Rome to receive among them, as a brother, the weak believer; and not to perplex him with disputations about such things as might appear doubtful to conscientious persons; but to leave him, under the general use of means and loving instructions, to grow stronger in faith and riper in judgment, by the inward teaching of the Holy Spirit. This general rule applies to many particulars, both respecting doctrine, worship, and practice. If a man do not profess repentance, and a

2 For one believeth [d] that he may eat all things: [e] another, who is weak, [f] eateth herbs.

3 Let not him that eateth, [g] despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not, [h] judge him that eateth; [i] for God hath received him.

4 [k] Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth; Yea, [l] he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

5 One man [m] esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day *alike.* [n] Let every man be fully * persuaded in his own mind.

6 He that † regardeth the day, [o] regardeth *it* unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard *it.* He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, [p] for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

[d] 14. 1 Cor. x. 25. Gal. ii. 12. 1 Tim. iv. 4. Tit. i 15 Heb. ix. 10. xiii. 9.

[e] 22, 23.

[f] Gen i 29 ix. 3 Prov. xv. 17. Dan i. 12. 16.

[g] 10. 15 21. Zech. iv. 10. Matt. xviii. 10. Luke xviii. 9 1 Cor. viii. 11—13.

[h] 13. Matt vii 1, 2 ix 14. xi. 18, 19 1 Cor. x 29, 30 Col. iii 16, 17

[i] Acts x. 34. 43 xv. 8, 9.

[k] ix. 20. Acts xi. 17. 1 Cor. iv. 4, 5. Jam. iv. 11, 12.——13 xi 23. xvi 25 Deut. xxxiii. 27—29. Ps. xvii. 5 xxxvii. 17. 24. 28. cxix. 116, 117. John x. 28—30. Rom. viii 31—39. Heb vii. 25. 1 Pet. i. 5. Jude 24.

[m] Gal. iv. 9, 10. Col. ii 16, 17.

[n] 14. 23 1 Cor. viii 7—11.

* Or, *assured.* 1 John iii 19—21.

† Or, *observeth.*

[o] Ex. xii. 14. 42. xvi. 25 Is lviii. 5. Zech. vii. 5, 6.

[p] Matt. xiv. 19. xv. 36. John vi. 23. 1 Cor. x. 30, 31. 1 Tim. iv. 3—5.

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believing dependence, as a lost sinner, on the merits and atonement of Christ, "God manifest in the flesh," and a reliance on the Holy Spirit for teaching and sanctification, it does not appear, that he can properly be regarded as a believer, or admitted into the communion of the saints. (2 *John* 9, 10.) But when these things are professed in words, and not denied in works, a man ought *at least* to be received as one that is "weak in the faith," and meekly helped forward, though he may yet be under the power of many prejudices and mistakes. 'The force of the apostle's admirable reasoning in favour of candour and mutual condescension cannot be enervated by saying, that there was no separation between Jewish and Gentile Christians. Had the things judged indifferent by the latter, and apprehended sinful by the former, been imposed, a separation of communion would have ensued, and the schism on the apostle's principles would have been chargeable on the imposers. When it shall please God to awaken in the governors of established protestant churches such a spirit of moderation and goodness, joined with a true zeal for religion, as to leave such things in that natural state of indifference, in which almost all sensible men confess it is best they should be left, many separations will cease of course.' (*Doddridge.*) Thus the guilt of *schism* is reciprocally charged by all parties on their opponents; and indeed *truly*, when not done *exclusively;* for the same state of mind and heart generally prevails in those who impose unscriptural terms of communion, and in those who separate themselves from their brethren without sufficient reason; and then endeavour to make the cause of their separation appear as great as they can, to justify themselves. So that not only the governors of protestant established churches, but the leading men among dissenters and seceders also, need to be brought, by the illumination and grace of the Holy Spirit, to a fuller knowledge of the Scriptures, and more entire conformity to the temper there inculcated. In proportion as men approach nearer, in judgment and disposition, to the word of God, they will be brought nearer to each other, as the lines from the circumference of a circle approximate to each other and to the centre proportionably. Then each person concerned, (instead of decidedly justifying every particular, among those with whom he is connected, and disputing against every thing in use among such as he differs from,) will seriously compare all particulars on every side with the sacred oracles; and in consequence will discover, that neither party is entirely right, and neither entirely wrong. And this conviction, avowed and reduced to practice by the leading men, would gradually be communicated to the rest of the body, and would make way for such amendments, retrenchments, and concessions, on all sides, and such fairness, gentleness, and candour, in debating on the controverted subjects, as would in process of time effectually terminate these unhappy divisions. But "until the Spirit "be poured upon us from on high," it cannot be expected that these events will generally take place. It is, however, highly important, that individuals should well consider, from what source contentions in the Church, as well as "wars and fightings in the world," actually arise; and what is indispensably necessary, in order to terminate them.

V. 2—4. The apostle next proceeded to exemplify his general rule by a particular instance. One Christian, either a Gentile convert, or a Jew who had got over the prejudices of his nation, believed it lawful to eat any kind of meat, without regarding the distinctions of the law in that respect: another, either a Jewish convert, or one who had imbibed some Jewish prejudices, would eat only vegetables, (especially when in company with Gentile converts,) lest he should unawares eat some unclean thing. This indeed showed that he was weak and unestablished in the faith; yet it evinced him to be conscientious. Here then mutual candour was to be exercised: the Christian, who knew and used his liberty, must not despise his weak brother, as ignorant or superstitious, and so disdain to associate with him, or use contemptuous language respecting him: and, on the other hand, the scrupulous believer must by no means condemn his brother, as self-indulgent or lax in his conduct, or shun him, and speak against him, on that account. For God had accepted him, and taken him into his family, without regarding these distinctions: and it did not behoove any one to judge and condemn another's servant, for such things as his own master did not object to. He was only accountable to his own Lord, who would justify or condemn him, uphold him or leave him to fall, as he saw his real character to be: and if indeed he was a believer, the power and promise of God were engaged to uphold him, and were abundantly sufficient for that purpose. (*Notes,* &c. viii. 28—39. *Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5, 6. The case was similar as to the observance of days. Some Christians considered the Jewish sabbaths, new moons, and other solemnities, to be still in force, and

7 For [q] none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, [r] we die unto the Lord: [s] whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

9 For to this end [t] Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be [u] Lord both of the dead and living.

10 But why dost thou judge thy

q 9. 1 Cor vi. 19, 20. 2 Cor v. 15. Gal ii. 19, 20. Phil i 20—24. Tit. ii 14 1Pet iv. 2.
r John xxi. 19. Acts xiii. 36. xx. 24 xxi. 13. Phil. ii. 17 30. 1 Thes v. 10.
s 1 Cor. iii 22, 23 xv 23 1 Thes. iv. 14—18. Rev xiv. 13.
t Is. liii 10—12 Luke xxiv. 26 2 Cor. v. 14 Heb xii. 2 1 Pet. i. 21. Rev. i. 18.——u Matt. xxviii. 18 John v. 22, 23. 27—29. Acts x. 36. 42. Eph i. 20—23 Phil. ii. 10, 11. 2 Tim. iv. 1. 1 Pet. iv 5.

brother? or why dost thou [x] set at nought thy brother? [y] for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.

11 For it is written, [z] *As* I live, saith the Lord, [a] every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall [b] confess to God.

12 So then [c] every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

x 3,4 Luke xxiii. 11. Acts iv 11.
y ii 16. Ec xii 14. Matt. xxv 31,32. John v. 22 Acts x. 42 xvii. 31 1 Cor. iv 5. 2Cor. v 10. Jude 14,15. Rev xx. 11—15.
z Num xiv. 21. 28. Is. xlix. 18. Jer. xxii. 24. Ez v 11 Zeph. ii 9.
a Ps lxxii. 11. Is. xlv. 22—25. Phil. ii. 10. Rev. v. 14.
b x. 9 xv. 9. Matt x 32, 1 John iv. 15. 2 John 7.——c Ec. xi 9 Matt. xii. 36. xviii. 23, &c. Luke xvi. 2. Gal. vi 5. 1 Pet. iv. 5.

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so required by the law of God; and accordingly they regarded them in a religious manner: others were satisfied that the ritual law was abrogated, and that such appointments were no longer obligatory, so that *in this respect* they regarded every day alike; (for we cannot suppose that they did not observe the Lord's day, or any days of fasting and prayer.) In such matters it was chiefly necessary, that every man should be fully satisfied in his own mind as to his own duty, and that he acted from proper motives in it. If then a Christian regarded a day according to the law of Moses, or conscientiously set it apart for devotion, he might be supposed to do it from reverence to the authority of God: and if another Christian, deeming these distinctions to be superseded, omitted all regard to those days, which the other accounted holy; it should be supposed, that he did it with a view to the honour of Christ, of his legislative authority, and his fulfilment of all the ancient typical observances. In like manner, the believer, who ate any kind of food, should be considered as regarding the will and glory of the Lord in it; while he returned thanks both for his food and for his Christian liberty: on the other hand, he that refrained from this or the other meat, being contented with and thankful for what he did eat, should be considered as doing it from a self-denying and conscientious regard to the will of the Lord, even though his scruples were judged to be groundless. *Fully persuaded in his own mind.* "Let every man freely enjoy his own sentiment," 'and go on in his own way, without impediment or censure.' (*Doddridge.*) This interpretation is very ancient; but it does not seem to be the most natural construction of the clause. 'Let a man have that full persuasion of the lawfulness of what he doeth, or abstains from, as will preserve him from sinning against conscience in it. Let him not search into the judgments and actions of other men, about these matters, to condemn them for them.' (*Whitby*). 'I do not agree with those, who think that the apostle meant nothing more, than that each person should be careful not to do any thing with a doubting or hesitating conscience. For it is not enough, that our conscience consents to what we do; but it is necessary, in the first place, that our conscience be certified from the word of God.' (*Beza.*) (*Note,* 19—23.)

V. 7—9. It was an acknowledged principle, that no real Christian allows his own humour, indulgence, interest, or credit, to be the end for which he lives, or acts, as to the general tenour of his conduct; nor does he even avoid, desire, or meet death, from selfish motives; but whether his life be prolonged, he aims to spend it to the glory of Christ; or whether death be expected, he refers it to him, to be ordered in all respects for the glory of his own name; so that whether the Christian lives or dies, he belongs to the Lord, to be disposed of as he pleases; and is his beloved, to be taken care of by him in all possible events. For to this very end Christ both died on the cross, and rose again, and liveth anew in heaven, that in human nature he might be the sovereign Lord of all his people, both during their lives and after their death, as they willingly devote themselves to him, and are prompt to labour, suffer, or die, for his sake; as he orders all things respecting the time and circumstances of their death, for his own glory and their good; and as, when they die, they are taken to be with him for ever, and he will raise their bodies to share the same felicity. Christ is also the Lord of all the dead, and of the living who do not believe in him; he spares their lives, cuts them off by death, and executes vengeance upon them, as he sees good; yet the former sense seems to have been principally intended. It is worthy of observation, that the apostle most cogently showed professed Christians what they ought to be and do, by stating the character and aims of true believers, and by teaching them what charity would suppose, concerning their brethren who differed from them, if their conduct were in other respects consistent with their profession. "The Lord," evidently means Jesus Christ in these verses, which contain a very conclusive argument in proof of his Deity, that the next verses undeniably confirm; for to what *mere creature* can we be thus entirely devoted, without manifest idolatry?

V. 10—12. This suggested another reason why Christians should not judge or despise one another, as they must all stand in judgment before Christ, when it would be known from what motive every man had acted. The prophecy referred to has been before explained of Christ, as "JEHOVAH, our Righteousness," (*Notes, Is.* xlv. 20—25.) but the apostle's transition from "the judgment-seat of Christ," to "giving an account of ourselves to God," shows how familiar it was to him to understand the predictions uttered by JEHOVAH as the words of his divine Lord and Saviour. *Shall confess to God.* 'That is, shall adore and acknowledge me as God.' (*Beza.*) 'If these words, which the apostle certainly spake of JEHOVAH, be well applied by the apostle to Christ, Christ must also be the Person intended by them; for how could the apostle prove, that "every knee must bow" to Christ, from the words of God, "to me every knee

13 Let us not therefore [d] judge one another any more: [e] but judge this rather, that no man [f] put a stumbling-block, [g] or an occasion to fall, in *his* brother's way.

14 I know, [h] and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, [i] that *there is* nothing * unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, [k] to him *it is* unclean.

15 But if [l] thy brother be grieved with *thy* meat, [m] now walkest thou not † charitably. [n] Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

16 Let not then [o] your good be evil spoken of:

17 For [p] the kingdom of God [q] is not meat and drink; [r] but righteousness, [s] and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

18 For he that [t] in these things serveth Christ [u] *is* acceptable to God, [x] and approved of men.

19 Let us therefore [y] follow after the things which make for peace, [z] and things wherewith one may edify another.

20 [a] For meat destroy not [b] the work of God. [c] All things indeed *are* pure; [d] but *it is* evil for that man who eateth with offence.

21 *It is* [e] good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *any thing* [f] where-

d 4. 10. Jam. ii. 4. iv. 11.
e Luke xii. 57 1 Cor. xi. 13 2 Cor v. 14.
f ix. 32, 33 xi. 9. xvi 17. Lev. xix. 14. Is. lvii. 14. Ez. xiv. 3. Matt. xvi. 23. xviii. 7. Luke xvii. 2 1 Cor. viii. 9—13. 2 Cor. vi. 3. Phil. i. 10. Rev. ii. 14.
g 2 Sam. xii. 14. 1 Tim. v. 14. 1 John ii. 10.
h Acts x. 28.
i *See on*, 2.
* Gr. *common.* Acts x. 14, 15. xi. 8, 9.
k 23. 1 Cor viii. 7.
l Ez. xiii. 22 1 Cor. viii. 12.
m xiii. 10. xv. 2. 1 Cor. viii. 1. xiii. 1. 4, 5. Gal. v. 13. Phil. ii. 2—4.
† Gr. *according to charity.*
n 1 Cor. viii. 11. 2 Pet. ii. 1. 1 John ii. 2.——o xii. 17. 1 Cor. x. 29, 30. 2 Cor. viii. 20, 21. 1 Thes. v. 22
p Dan. ii. 44. Matt iii. 2. vi. 33. Luke xiv. 15. xvii. 20, 21. John iii. 3 5. 1 Cor. iv. 20. vi. 9. 1 Thes. ii. 12.——q 1 Cor. viii. 8. Col. ii. 16, 17. Heb. xiii. 9.

r Is. xlv. 24. Jer. xxiii 5, 6 Dan ix. 24 Matt vi. 33. 1 Cor. i. 30. 2 Cor. v. 21. Phil. iii. 9. 2 Pet i. 1.
s v 1. 5. viii 6. 15, 16. xv. 13. Is. lv. 12 lxi. 3. Acts ix. 31. xiii. 52. Gal. v. 22. Phil. ii. 1. iii. 3. iv. 4 7. Col. i. 11. 1 Thes. i. 6 1 Pet. i. 8.
t 4 vi. 22 xii 11. xvi. 18 Mark xiii. 34. John xii. 26. 1 Cor. vii 22. Gal. vi. 15, 16. Col. iii. 24. Tit. ii. 11—14.
u xii. 1, 2. Gen iv. 7. Ec. ix 7. Acts x 35. Phil. iv 18. 1 Tim. ii. 3. v. 4. 1 Pet. ii 5. 20.
x 2 Cor. iv. 2. v. 11. vi. 4. viii. 21. 1 Thes. i. 3, 4 Jam. ii 16—26. 1 Pet. iii. 16 ——y xii 18. Ps. xxxiv 14. cxxxiii. 1. Matt. v. 9. Mark ix. 50. 2 Cor. xiii 11. Eph. iv. 3—7. Phil. ii. 1—4. Col. iii. 12—15. Heb. xii. 14. Jam iii. 13—18. 1 Pet. iii. 11.——z xv. 2. 1 Cor. x. 23. xiv 12—17. 26. Eph. iv. 29. 1 Thes. v. 11, 12. 1 Tim. i. 4 ——a *See on*, 15. Matt. xviii. 6. 1 Cor. vi. 12, 13 viii. 8. 13. x. 31.——b Eph ii 10. Phil. i. 6.——c 14. Matt. xv. 11. Acts x. 15. 1 Tim iv. 3—5: Tit. i. 15.——d 15. 21. 1 Cor. viii 9—12. x 32, 33.——e 17 xv. 1, 2. 1 Cor. viii 13.——f 13. Mal. ii. 8. Matt. xvi. 23, xviii. 7—10. Luke xvii. 1, 2 Phil. i. 10. Heb. xii. 13. Rev. ii. 14:

"shall bow," 'if Christ were, in his whole nature and 'essence, as different from that God who spake those 'words of himself, as is a creature from his great Creator?' (*Whitby.*) (*Note, Phil.* ii. 9—14.

V. 13—18. The apostle concludes this part of his subject, by exhorting Christians, especially the Jewish converts, not to judge, censure, or condemn one another any more; and he then enters on another exhortation, in which the Gentile converts were principally concerned. This he introduces by using the same word, in somewhat of a different sense. Instead of *exercising their judgment* about others, let them learn to *act judiciously* in their own conduct, that they might not ensnare their brethren, or occasion them to sin, as if a man should heedlessly lay a stone or a trap in another's way, which might occasion his falling or being hurt. This they would be apt to do, by an inexpedient use of lawful things. The apostle knew, by the doctrine and revelation of Christ, that no kind of food was any longer polluting in itself, yet if a man supposed the ceremonial distinctions to be still in force, the meat which he ate contrary to his judgment and conscience would be unclean to him; and he therefore ought to abstain, till more fully satisfied. Now if a stronger and better informed believer induced his weaker brother, by his example and influence, to eat such things as his conscience forbade, and so to bring guilt and distress upon himself, it was obvious that he did not walk charitably. For his conduct directly tended to the ruin of one for whom Christ died; seeing it tempted him to sin, which naturally leads to condemnation. This does not imply that the weak brother would actually perish; but the contrast is made between the love of Christ to the weak believer, who shed his blood to save him, and the want of love in his stronger brother, who would not abridge himself of his meal, from regard to his welfare, but would rather prove an occasion of sin to him, and so hazard the loss of the soul of one, whom he might hope to be a believer, than restrain himself in the exercise of his Christian liberty! We may, however, observe, that the apostles did not write in that exact systematical style which some affect, otherwise they would scrupulously have avoided such expressions. In using their liberty, therefore, which was *good* in itself, Christians ought to be careful not to do it in so unguarded a manner, or with such bad effects, as might give occasion to its being evil spoken of: for the *privileges* of the kingdom of God no more consisted in meats and drinks, than its *requirements did:* so that a believer, who would use his liberty, at any rate and at all events, laid as undue a stress on the indulgence of the new dispensation, as a Jewish convert did on the ceremonial distinctions of the old one. To stand justified before God, to be at peace with him, to possess peace in the heart and conscience, and to experience that pure joy which the Holy Spirit communicates, are the great privileges of the kingdom of God: and to walk by faith before him as a reconciled Father, in righteousness, and in cheerful holy obedience, according to the grand requirements of the moral law, and by the sanctification of the Spirit, is the substance of the duties of the kingdom: and he, who in such things serveth and obeyeth Christ, is acceptable to God, and is approved before men to be a true believer, and should therefore be received as such by his brethren, without respect to his differences of opinion or practice. To infer from hence, as some have incautiously done, that a peaceable exemplary Christian, who is not too rigid in his sentiments, or tinctured with bigotry, will generally be esteemed and loved by mankind, would imply a censure on Paul, on the other apostles, on the prophets, on the most eminent believers in every age, nay, on Christ himself, as if *they* had not been so candid and liberal as *we* ought to be: for we know what favour the world showed them. But in fact the men of the Church, and not those of the world, are exclusively meant. 'It evidences a cruel 'mind, to make greater account of food than of a 'brother's salvation; which they do, who can endure to 'eat, when it causes a brother to offend, and so gives 'him occasion of turning aside from the Gospel. We 'ought to copy the example of Christ, who, so far from 'destroying the weak for food, poured out his life for 'them.' (*Beza.*)

by thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

22 Hast [g] thou faith? have *it* to thyself before God. [h] Happy *is* he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

23 And [i] he that * doubteth is [k] damned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith: [l] for whatsoever *is* not of faith is sin.

g 2 5. 14. 23 Gal. vi. 1. Jam. iii. 13.
h vii. 15. 24. Acts xxiv. 16 2 Cor. i. 12. 1 John iii. 21.
i 1 Cor. viii. 7.
* Or, *discerneth*, or, *putteth a difference between meats.*
k xiii. 2. 1 Cor. xi. 29—31. *Gr.*
l Tit. i. 15. Heb. xi. 6.

V. 19—23. The apostle proceeded to inculcate an assiduous and persevering attention to the interests of peace among Christians, and to all those things by which mutual edification might be promoted. Let then none of those, who understood their liberty, allow their own indulgence in any kind of food to counteract the work of God, in the conversion of the Jews, the spread of the Gospel, or the sanctification of believers; or suffer it to destroy any of his rational creatures. Indeed the apostle would have it known, as his decided judgment, (though he had been educated a Pharisee,) that all kinds of meats were alike pure in themselves: yet it would be evil for a man to eat them, when it had a direct tendency to seduce a weak brother into sin. Nay, so much ought love to preponderate over all such considerations, that it would be good and right for a man to abstain wholly from flesh and wine, and every other indulgence, by which his brother would be tempted to sin, made uneasy in his conscience, or weakened in his hope, and the vigour of his obedience. So that they who had stronger faith, and assuredly believed that they might lawfully eat any kind of food, should not make ostentation of it, or improperly seize on every occasion of acting according to it; but rather possess it as in the sight of God, who would know their uprightness when others judged them on that account: and let them use their liberty with humility, caution, prudence, and self-denial; and without seeming to prefer themselves, or to despise their weaker brethren. It would be a great happiness to a man, to be free from all doubt or self-condemnation, in those things which he allowed himself to do: but if any one questioned whether any indulgence were lawful or not, and yet example, persuasion, or inclination, prevailed with him to venture upon it, he would certainly commit a sin, for which his conscience would condemn him, and for which even God would condemn him, if he did not repent of it. For as he did it not *in faith*, as he was not fully persuaded in his own mind that he was allowed by the Scripture to do it, he would be guilty of preferring his own inclination to the dictates of his conscience, and the supposed will of God.—In general, every action must be sinful, which is not done in a believing apprehension that we are acting according to the command, or by the allowance, of God, and may therefore consider ourselves to be in the way of his promised blessing. It is obvious how groundless the scruples of some serious persons from this text concerning the Lord's supper must be: for the apostle's argument is wholly about a subject entirely of another nature.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—4.

It is of great importance for us to distinguish between those who are weak in faith, and such as are strangers or enemies to it; for we ought to receive and affectionately to cherish the former, but to beware of and withdraw from the latter. It is, however, very difficult for us to bear properly with the mistakes, infirmities, and the prejudices of our brethren; or to make proper allowances for the weakness of natural capacity, the bias of bad education, or the effects of partial and erroneous instruction, under their first religious impressions. We are all prone to make our own views the standard of truth, to deem things certain which to others appear very doubtful, to expect by eager disputation to bring men to see with our eyes, to perplex new converts with topics which they cannot as yet understand, and to expect them at once to acquiesce in all those truths, which we have been learning for years. So that it is almost impracticable to prevail with those to receive and hold communion with each other, who have been received by the Lord, and enjoy communion with him! Thus some have been expelled by their brethren, or have separated from them; and contests or schisms have disgraced the Church, grieved her best friends, and rejoiced her enemies; thus Christians have despised, or condemned, each other about doubtful or unimportant matters, as if the very essence of faith and piety had been concerned! The distinctions between meats and days were at least as important as many things which are now controverted among us; and it was far more certain on which side the truth was found. Yet men might be real Christians, who could not receive even the apostle's determination of the controversy. Surely then we should enlarge our candour beyond those narrow limits which many would assign to it. And if we could demonstrate every tittle of our doctrine, and every part of our worship, to be scriptural, yet we ought not to despise or condemn a man, because he is not able to see the conclusiveness of our arguments; and if we must assume it as undeniable, that he is just as far mistaken as he differs from us, we should at least treat him with that tenderness, which we show to one who wants an eye, a leg, or an arm. All, who love the Gospel, ought to shun such persons as excite divisions among those who appear to hate sin and love Christ; and such shibboleths, as tend to multiply, to perpetuate, or to exasperate them: let us cease to despise or judge one another, especially about things which are not essential to salvation; let us beware that we do not attempt to reject, or to cast down, those whom God hath received and will uphold; or to judge and condemn his conscientious servants.

V. 5—12.

It behooves us to remember our own unworthiness and fallibility, and the numerous instances in which we have been entirely mistaken, when confident that we were in the right; and, endeavouring to be fully persuaded in our own minds about our conduct, let us leave others to the judgment of God. Thus if some deem it expedient to observe a day, in commemoration of any of those great events which relate to our salvation, let them spend it in a holy manner to the glory of God; and if others judge it best not to observe such days, let them act with humble

CHAP. XV.

In condescension to the weak, the strong should give up their own will for the good of others, after the example of Christ, 1—3. *All the scriptures were written for our instruction,* 4. *The apostle prays for love and harmony among believers in the worship of God,* 5—7; *shows that the scriptures foretel the union of Jews and Gentiles in the service of God; subjoining his prayers,* 8—13; *that he thus exhorts the Christians at Rome, as the apostle of the Gentiles,* 14—16; *and his extensive labours and usefulness,* 17—21: *he avows his purpose of visiting Rome, in his way to Spain; desires their prayers in respect of his previous journey to Jerusalem, with the contributions of the Gentile converts,* 22—32; *and prays for them,* 33.

WE then that are [a] strong, [b] ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to [c] please ourselves.

2 Let every one of us [d] please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification.

3 For [e] even Christ pleased not himself: but, as it is written, [f] The reproaches of them that reproached thee, fell on me.

a iv. 20 1 Cor. iv. 10. 2 Cor. xii. 10. Eph. vi 10. 2 Tim ii. 1. 1 John ii. 14.
b xiv 1. 1 Cor. ix. 22 xii. 22—24 Gal. vi. 1, 2. 1 Thes. v 14.
c *See on*, 3.
d xiv. 19. 1 Cor. ix. 19—22. x 24. 33. xi. 1. xiii. 5. Phil. ii. 4, 5. Tit. ii. 9, 10.
e Ps xl. 6—8. Matt xxvi. 39. 42. John iv 34. xv. 30. vi 38. viii. 29 xii. 27, 28. xiv 30, 31. xv 10. Phil. ii. 8.
f Ps lxix 9 20. lxxxix. 50, 51. Matt. x. 25. John xv. 24.

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simplicity, in dissenting from the opinion and practice of their brethren. Then all may be done in a quiet, peaceable, thankful, and Christian manner, as it becomes those who profess neither "to live nor to die to themselves, but to "him who died for them, and rose again," and "ever liveth "to be the Lord both of the dead and of the living." Instead therefore of censuring, reviling, deriding, or despising one another, let us all prepare to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, as he hath sworn that every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess to him. We should therefore carefully judge ourselves, both as to our state and conduct, that our confession of Christ may be proved genuine, by our devoted obedience to him.

V. 13—23.

While we shun superstitious scruples, and assert our Christian liberty, let us beware of spiritual pride and self-preference: and whilst we *pity* such as are yet enslaved to needless observances, let us be careful not to abuse our liberty by an inexpedient use of things lawful, or by venturing upon such as are doubtful. Let us consider what effects our conduct and example may have on others: and, though it may not be always proper to humour the scrupulosity of some persons, yet, when there is a probability of grieving, offending, or turning aside a weak believer, or of stumbling a hopeful inquirer, we should waive our liberty, if nothing call for the exercise of it, except our own indulgence. For surely it cannot be an imitation of the love of Christ, who died for the weak as well as the strong, if we put any personal satisfaction in competition with the spiritual good of our brethren.—Verily it must be confessed that we are often faulty in such matters; and thus our good comes to be evil spoken of, because we use lawful things in an uncharitable and selfish manner. But let us remember, that the comforts and obedience of the Gospel are alike superior to meats and drinks; and that both unite in "righteousness, peace, and joy in the "Holy Ghost:" and that when we most highly value these spiritual privileges, and abound in these spiritual duties, we enjoy the greatest assurance that we are accepted by God, and best approve ourselves before men to be real believers. Let us then follow after all those things, which tend to peace and mutual edification; let us study a holy indifference about the most lawful earthly enjoyments; and learn to renounce whatever comes in competition with the welfare of our brethren, the peace of the Church, and the glory of God. Let us pray for more humility and self-denial in the exercise of our knowledge, more to regard our acceptance with God, and less to desire the applause of men. In every doubtful or indifferent matter, "Happy is he, who condemneth not himself in the thing "which he alloweth." Numbers venture into places and upon actions, against which their own consciences revolt, because they are induced by inclination, and emboldened by the example of those, who on some account have obtained the reputation of pious men. But whether the things themselves be lawful or not, as they cannot do them in faith, as they hesitate concerning the lawfulness of them, and as they cannot heartily pray for the presence and blessing of God in them, they are condemned for indulging themselves in a doubtful case. But few are so happy as to be quite free from self-condemnation in every thing that they allow: a sound judgment, a simple heart, a tender conscience, and an habitual self-denial, are necessary for the enjoyment of this comfort: and most of us see frequent cause to condemn ourselves, and, by daily repentance, faith, and prayer, to deprecate the merited condemnation of our God.

NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 1—3. The apostle here proceeds with the argument of the preceding chapter. He admits that they, who knew their liberty in respect of the distinctions of meats and days, were generally stronger in faith, as well as sounder in judgment, than their more scrupulous brethren. But for that reason, they who were able to do it ought to *bear with* the infirmities of the weak, who were not able to rise superior to them; and not to despise them; but even to *bear* their infirmities, by patiently submitting to self-denial on their account, and meekly enduring their uncharitable censures, while they persevered in endeavours to promote their welfare, and to maintain a peaceful communion with them. So that, instead of pleasing and gratifying themselves in the indulgent use of their liberty, or humouring pride, self-will, or resentment, they ought readily to recede from their own inclinations, in order to please their neighbour as far as could conduce to his good, or to mutual edification, by obviating his prejudices and gaining upon his

4 For [g] whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning; [h] that we, through patience, and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope.

5 Now [i] the God of patience [k] and consolation, grant you to [l] be like-minded one toward another, * according to Christ Jesus:

6 That ye may [m] with one mind *and* one mouth glorify God, even [n] the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

7 Wherefore [o] receive ye one another, [p] as Christ also received us, [q] to the glory of God.

8 Now [r] I say, that [s] Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision [t] for the truth of God, to confirm the promises *made* unto the fathers:

9 And [u] that the Gentiles might glorify God for *his* mercy; as it is written, [x] For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.

10 And again he saith, [y] Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.

11 And again, [z] Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.

12 And again Esaias saith, [a] There shall be a root of Jesse, [b] and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; [c] in him shall the Gentiles trust.

13 Now, [d] the God of hope [e] fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may [f] abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

g iv. 23, 24. 1 Cor. ix 9, 10. x 11. 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. 2 Pet. i. 20, 21.
h v. 3—5 viii. 24, 25. xii 12. Ps. cxix. 81 — 83. Heb. vi 10—19. x. 35, 36. Jam. v 7—11. 1 Pet. i. 13.
i 13 Ex. xxxiv. 6. Ps. lxxxvi 15 1 Pet iii. 20. 2 Pet iii. 9 15.
k 2 Cor. i. 3, 4. vii 6.
l xii 16. 2 Chr. xxx. 12 Jer. xxxii. 39. Ez xi 19. Acts iv. 32. 1 Cor. i. 10. 2 Cor xiii. 11. Phil. i. 27. ii 2. iv. 2. 1 Pet iii 8.
* Or, *after the example of* 3. Eph v 2. Phil. ii. 4. 5
m 9—11 Zeph. iii. 9 Zech. xiii 9 Acts iv. 24.——n John x. 29, 30 xx 17. 2 Cor. i. 3 xi. 31. Eph. i 3. 1 Pet. i 3——o xiv 1—3 Matt x 40. Mark ix. 37. Luke ix 48——p Matt. xi 28—30. Luke xv. 2. John vi 37. xiii. 34——q 9. Eph. i 6—8 12. 18 2 Thes. i. 10—12
r iii 26. 1 Cor. i. 12. x. 19, 20. xv. 50.——s ix 4, 5. Matt. xv. 24. xx 28. John i. 11 Acts iii. 25, 26 xiii 46. Gal iv. 4, 5.——t iii 3. Ps. xcviii. 2, 3. Mic. vii. 20. Luke i. 54—56 70—73. 2 Cor. i. 20

u 16. ix. 23, 24 xi. 22. 30. Is. xxiv. 15, 16. John x. 16. Eph. ii. 12—22. iii. 1—8. 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10.
x 2 Sam. xxii. 50: Ps. xviii 49:
y Deut xxxii 43: Ps. lxvi 1—4. lxvii. 3, 4 lxviii. 32. xcvii. 1. xcviii. 3, 4. cxxxviii. 4, 5. Is. xxiv 14—16. xlii 10—12.
z Ps. cxvii. 1.
a Is xi 1. 10. Rev. v. 5 xxii 16.
b Gen xlix. 10: Ps ii 4—12. xxii 27, 28. lxxii. 8—10. 17 Is. xlii. 1—4 xlix. 6. Dan. ii. 44. vii. 14 Mic iv. 1—3. v 4.
c Jer. xvi. 19 xvii. 5—7 Matt. xii. 21. 1 Cor. xv. 19. Eph. i. 12, 13. 2 Tim. i. 12. *Marg.* 1 Pet i. 21.
d 5. Jer. xiv. 8. Joel iii 16. 1 Tim. i. 1
e xiv 17. Is. lv. 12. John xiv 1. 27. Gal. v 22. Eph. i. 2. v. 18, 19. 2 Thes. ii. 16, 17. 1 Pet. i. 8.——f v. 4, 5. xii. 12. 2 Cor. ix. 8. Heb. vi. 11.

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affections. Thus Christ, from love to sinners, renounced his own ease, comfort, and reputation, exposed himself to the reproach and revilings of the enemies of God, and lived in this polluted, miserable world, exposed to contempt, calumnies, and persecutions, till he finished his sufferings by the ignominious death of the cross, amidst the insults of his embittered murderers; according as it had been predicted of him by David, who spoke as a type of him. (*Notes*, &c. *Ps*. lxix. 9. 20.)

V. 4—7. The apostle took occasion from this quotation, to remind the Christians at Rome, that the whole of the ancient scriptures had been written for *their* instruction, as much as for that of those to whom they were first delivered; whether they contained types or predictions of Christ, gracious promises, precepts, admonitions, or examples, in order that by patiently cleaving to the Lord in faith and holy obedience, amidst all their trials and temptations, and by taking comfort from the daily perusal of the Scriptures, they might possess a joyful hope of heaven, notwithstanding past sins and present manifold defects. He therefore prayed for them, to that God, who is infinitely patient and long-suffering towards us, who commands us in like manner to bear with one another, and who is the Author and Giver of patience to his people, and the Source of all their consolations, that he would render his exhortations effectual, and grant them to be of one judgment and one heart, disposed to entire harmony and affection, and full of disinterested love and compassion for each other, after the example of Christ, and according to his commands. That so nothing might hinder them from joining, as "with one mind and one mouth," in the worship of God, in glorifying him for his mercies, and adoring his perfections, as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is approached by sinners through his beloved Son, and is become their reconciled Father in him. And he again exhorted them to lay aside prejudices and disputes, and to receive one another as brethren, without regarding the distinctions of Jew and Gentile, or differences of opinion on these matters, even as Christ had received them without making exceptions to any of them, that God might be glorified in their salvation, as he also would be in their mutual love and harmony.

V. 8—13. In order to unite Jews and Gentiles in one church, and conciliate them to each other, Jesus Christ had assumed his human nature among the Jews, he had submitted to circumcision, and exercised his personal ministry with unwearied labour and self-denial, among circumcised persons, and he commanded his apostles to preach the Gospel to the Jews in the first place. Thus he fulfilled the predictions and promises delivered to the fathers of that nation: the Gentile converts could therefore have no pretence for despising them. On the other hand, after Christ's ascension, the Gospel had by his command been extensively preached among the Gentiles, and with vast success, that they also might glorify God for his mercy, as it had been predicted by the ancient prophets, (*Notes*, *Deut*. xxxii. 43. *Ps*. xviii. 49. cxvii. *Is*. xi. 1—10.) So that the Jewish converts could have no reason to exclude or shun the Gentiles, whether they regarded the will of their ascended Lord, or the prophecies of the Scripture. In the last quotation it had been shown that the Gentiles were to trust, or *hope*, in that Messiah, who was to reign over them: hence the apostle took occasion to pray that God, the Author and object of hope, would fill them with abundance of spiritual joy and peace, by enabling them simply to believe in him, as revealed in his beloved Son, and as relying on his gracious promises; that so they might attain to an assured, abiding, realizing, and anticipating hope of eternal life, through the sanctifying and comforting energy of the Holy Spirit. *Rejoice*, &c. (10.) 'The 'Hebrew interpreters render the original, (*Deut*. xxxii. 43,) "Celebrate, O ye nations, his people." 'Certainly 'the nations could not cordially extol the people as happy 'and blessed, unless, affected with their felicity, they ac'knowledged and worshipped the same God. The apostle, 'as it were, seals all his preceding exhortations with 'prayers, that the Lord would bestow on them the things 'which he commanded.' (*Beza*.) *Reign over*, &c. (12.) 'That which is out of the Hebrew rightly rendered "for "an ensign," 'is by the Greek translators, "to bear rule;"

14 ¶ And [g] I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are [h] full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, [i] able also to admonish one another.

15 Nevertheless, brethren, [k] I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, [l] as putting you in mind, [m] because of the grace that is given to me of God,

16 That [n] I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, [o] ministering the Gospel of God, that [p] the * offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, [q] being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

17 I have therefore [r] whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ [s] in those things which pertain to God.

18 For [t] I will not dare to speak of any of those things [u] which Christ hath not wrought by me, [x] to make the Gentiles obedient, [y] by word and deed,

19 Through [z] mighty signs and wonders, [a] by the power of the Spirit of God; [b] so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have [c] fully preached the Gospel of Christ.

20 Yea, [d] so have I strived to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should [e] build upon another man's foundation:

21 But as it is written, [f] To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard, shall understand.

g Phil. i. 7. 2 Tim. i. 5. Philem. 21. Heb. vi. 9. 2 Pet i. 12. 1 John ii. 21.
h Phil. i. 11. Col i. 8—10. 2 Pet. i. 5—8.
i Col iii. 16. 1 Thes. v. 11. 14. Tit ii 3, 4. Heb. v. 12. x. 24, 25. Jude 20—23.
k Heb. xiii. 22. 1 Pet. v 12. 1 John ii 12—14 v. 13.
l Jude 3—5 1 Tim iv. 6 2 Tim. i 6. ii 14. Tit. iii. 1. 2 Pet. i. 12—15. iii 1, 2.
m i. 5. xii. 3 6. 1 Cor. iii. 10. xv. 10. Gal. i. 15, 16. ii. 9. Eph. iii. 7, 8. 1 Tim. i. 11—14. 1 Pet. iv 10, 11. 2 Pet. iii. 15.
n 18. xi 13. Acts ix 15. xiii. 2. xxii 21. xxvi 17, 18. 1 Cor. iii 5 iv 1. 2 Cor. v. 20. xi. 23 Gal. ii. 7, 8. Eph. iii 1. 1 Tim ii. 7 2 Tim. i. 11.——o 29 i. 1. Acts xx. 24. Gal. iii. 5. 1 Thes ii 2 9 1 Tim i 11. 1 Pet 1. 12.——p xii. 1, 2. Is. lxvi. 19, 20. 2 Cor. viii. 5 Phil ii 17. iv. 18 Heb. xiii. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 5.——* Or, *sacrificing.*——q v 5. viii 26, 27. 1 Cor. vi. 19. Eph. ii 18. 22 1 Thes. v. 23.——r iv. 2 2 Cor. ii. 14—16. iii. 4—6. vii. 4. xi. 16—30 xii 11.
s Heb v. 1.
t Prov. xxv. 14. 2 Cor. x. 13—18. xi. 31. xii. 6. Jude 9.
u Mark xvi. 20. Acts xiv. 27 xv. 4. 12. xxi. 19. 1 Cor. iii. 6—9 2 Cor iii. 1—3. vi. 1.
x i 5. vi. 17. xvi. 26 Matt. xxviii. 18—20. Acts xxvi 20 2 Cor. x 4, 5. Heb. v. 9. xi. 8.
y Col. iii. 17. 2 Thes ii 17. Jam. i 22. 1 John iii. 18
z Acts xiv 10. xv. 12. xvi. 18. xix. 11, 12. 2 Cor. xii. 12 Gal. iii. 5 Heb. ii. 4.
a Matt. xii. 28. Acts i. 8. 1 Cor. xii. 4—11. 1 Pet. i. 12
b 24 Acts ix. 28, 29. xiii. 4, 5. 14. 51. xiv. 6. 20, 21. 25. xvi 6—12. xvii. 10 15. xviii. 1. 19. xix. 1. xx. 2, 3. 6.
c Acts xx. 20 Col. i. 25. 2 Tim. iv. 17——d 2 Cor. x. 14—16.——e 1 Cor iii. 9—15. Eph. ii. 20—22.——f Is. lii. 15. lxv. 1.

'because it is the office of the king to defend, and by arms 'to protect, his people.' (*Hammond.*)

V. 14—17. The apostle, being about to conclude his epistle, shows the Romans why he, who had never seen them, had addressed them in so earnest and copious a manner. This did not arise from any doubt that he entertained concerning them; for he was fully persuaded that they were replete with that goodness, that kind and affectionate spirit, which he had inculcated, as well as with knowledge in every part of the Gospel, so as to be able to admonish one another without other assistance. Nevertheless, he had written with the more confidence to them about some particulars, to put them in remembrance of their duties and their dangers, because God had peculiarly favoured him in appointing him to be the apostle and the minister of Christ to the Gentiles. His special ministry required him to preach the Gospel among the Gentiles, and to superintend their affairs, (as the priest used to do the sacrifice, or the burning of incense,) in order that their persons and services might be presented to God in an acceptable manner, by the hands of the great high Priest within the veil, being sanctified by the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, and he therefore thought himself called on to attempt this service towards them also. For in this important trust he had some ground of glorying, not in himself, but in the unmerited and rich favour of Jesus Christ towards him, not in carnal things, but in those that pertained to God and his worship.

V. 18—21. The apostle's success had corresponded to the importance of the trust delegated to him. He would not speak of what Christ had not indeed wrought by him, in bringing the heathen nations to obey the truth, in word and deed. It seems some teachers were forward to do this; but he would not venture to do himself, what he condemned as folly and sin, in other men. (*Notes,* 2 *Cor.* x. 12—16. *Jude* 9.) What had been done was indeed enirely the work of Christ, but he had chosen to make use of him as his instrument. His preaching had been attended with extraordinary miracles, wrought by the power of the Holy Spirit, whose divine agency had also disposed the hearts of the hearers to embrace the Gospel. So that from Jerusalem, in a very extensive circle of some thousands of miles, even to Illyricum on the borders of Italy, he had fully preached the Gospel of Christ, and instructed vast multitudes with great accuracy in that holy doctrine. Indeed, it had been his ambition, (so the original word signifies) to carry the glad tidings of salvation to those who had not before heard of Christ, and thus to face the dangers and hardships of making the first assault on the kingdom of Satan in every place. Nor was he disposed in general to build on the foundation laid by other ministers, who were competent to carry on the work which they had happily begun, but rather to fulfil the Scripture, which foretold that many nations and rulers would see and understand such things, as they had before been strangers to. (*Note, Is.* lii. 15.) 'Probably, in 'mentioning this, he may glance on those false apostles, 'who crept into churches which he had planted, and 'endeavoured to establish their own reputation and in'fluence there, by alienating the hearts of his own con'verts from him, while, like some in our own days, 'they built on his grand and noble foundation an edifice 'of wood, and hay, and stubble.' ***By word and deed.*** (18.) By the manner in which he hath enabled me to 'speak, and the things which he hath strengthened me to 'perform.' (***Doddridge.***) As there is no preposition in the Greek, the clause may be rendered, "in word and "deed," and applied, as above, to the obedience of the Gentiles: and this seems better to accord with the general language of Scripture. (*Marg. Ref.*) ***Unto Illyricum*** (19.) 'I do not think that these words necessarily import, that 'St. Paul had penetrated into Illyricum; but rather that 'he had come to the confines of Illyricum; and that these 'confines were the external boundary of his travels. 'Illyricum adjoins unto Macedonia; measuring from Je'rusalem towards Rome, it lies close behind it. If there'fore St. Paul traversed the whole country of Macedonia, 'the route would necessarily bring him to the confines of 'Illyricum. Now the account of St. Paul's second visit 'to the peninsula of Greece is contained in these words.

22 For which cause also [g] I have been * much hindered from coming to you.

23 But now having no more place in these parts, [h] and having a great desire these many years to come unto you;

24 Whensoever [i] I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you; for I trust to see you in my journey, [k] and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, [l] if first I be somewhat filled † with your *company*.

25 But now [m] I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.

26 For [n] it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution, for [o] the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

27 It hath pleased them verily; [p] and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.

28 When therefore I have performed this, [q] and have sealed to them this fruit, [r] I will come by you into Spain.

29 And I am sure that when I come unto you, I shall come [s] in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ.

30 Now I beseech you, brethren, [t] for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, [u] and for the love of the Spirit, [x] that ye strive together with me in *your* prayers to God for me;

31 That [y] I may be delivered from them that ‡ do not believe in Judea; [z] and that my service which *I have* for Jerusalem, may be [a] accepted of the saints;

32 That [b] I may come unto you with

g i. 13. 1 Thes. ii. 18.
* Or, *many ways*, or, *oftentimes*.
h 32. i. 10—12. 1 Thes. iii. 10. 2 Tim. i. 4.
i 28. Acts xix. 21.
k Acts xv. 3. xxi. 5. 2 Cor. i. 16.
l i. 12. 1 Cor. xvi. 5—7.
† Gr. *with you*. 32.
m 27—31. Acts xviii. 21. xix. 21. xx. 16. 22. xxiv. 17. 1 Cor. xvi. 1—3. Gal. ii. 10.
n Acts xi. 27—30. 2 Cor. viii. ix. Gal. vi. 6—10.
o Prov. xiv. 21. 31. xvii. 5. Zech. xi. 7. 11. Matt. xxv. 40. xxvi. 11. Luke vi. 20. xiv. 13. 1 Cor. xvi. 5. 2 Cor. ix. 12. Philem. 5. Jam. ii. 5, 6.
p xi. 17. 1 Cor. ix. 11. Gal. vi. 6. Philem. 19.
q Phil. iv. 17. Col. i. 6.
r 24. Prov. xix. 21. Lam. iii. 37. Jam. iv. 13—15.
s i. 11. Ps. xvi. 11. Ez. xxxiv. 26. Eph. i. 3. iii. 8. 19. iv. 13.
t 2 Cor. iv. 5. 11. xii. 10. 1 Tim. vi. 13, 14. 2 Tim. iv. 1.
u Ps. cxliii. 10. Phil. ii. 1.
x Gen. xxxii. 24—29. 2 Cor. i. 11. Eph. vi. 19. 20. Col. ii. 1, 25. iv. 12, 13. 1 Thes. v. 25. 2 Thes. iii. 1.
y Acts xxi. 27—31. xxii. 24. xxiii. 12—24. xxiv. 1—9. xxv. 2, 3. 24. 1 Thes. ii. 15, 16.
‡ Or, *are disobedient*.
z 25, 26. 2 Cor. viii. 4. ix. 1.
a Acts xxi. 17—26.
b 23, 24. i. 10—13. Acts xxvii. 1. 41—43. xxviii. 15, 16. 30, 31. Phil. i. 12—14.

"He departed for to go into Macedonia, and *when he had gone over those parts*, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece." 'This account allows, or rather leads us to suppose, that St. Paul, in going over Macedonia, had passed so far to the west as to come into those parts of the country which were contiguous to Illyricum, if he did not enter into Illyricum itself. The history and the epistle therefore so far agree, and the agreement is much strengthened by a coincidence of *time*. At the time when this epistle was written, St. Paul might say, in conformity to the history, that he had come unto Illyricum; much before this time he could not have said so; for upon his former journey into Macedonia his route is laid down, from the time of his landing at Philippi to his sailing from Corinth, which confines him to the eastern side of the peninsula, and therefore keeps him all the while at a considerable distance from Illyricum.' (*Paley.*)

V. 22—29. As the Romans were already favoured with the Gospel, it did not accord with the apostle's plan to leave his more urgent employment to go among them; and this had long hindered him from visiting them. But, as he had now brought the churches which he had planted to establishment in the faith, and as he had no immediate call to any new scene of action in the parts where he had before laboured, so he purposed to gratify the desire which he had for many years experienced, of going to Rome. But he also intended a journey into Spain, a large country still much further to the west, where probably the Gospel had not at that time been preached; in his way he purposed to stay for a time at Rome, and when he had in part satisfied his affectionate desire of communing with the believers there, he expected they would help him forward toward Spain. But, in the mean time, he must take a long journey in the opposite direction, in order to perform an important service to the poor Christians at Jerusalem, for whom the Gentile converts had raised a very liberal contribution. This they had done willingly; but indeed they were in some respects debtors to them. For the Jewish preachers had first carried the Gospel among them, and the primitive believers there had impoverished themselves in promoting that doctrine, the blessing of which they now shared with the Gentiles, whose duty it therefore was to communicate to them of that temporal abundance, which was so generally spent in a carnal manner. When therefore he had performed this service, and had affixed his seal, as it were, to this good fruit produced by the Gentiles, in order to conciliate the minds of their Jewish brethren, he intended to pass by Rome to Spain. And whenever he should be permitted to come to them, he was confident that he should be employed to communicate to them an abundant supply of those spiritual gifts, consolations, and blessings, which are conveyed to sinners by the Gospel of Christ; so that they would certainly be edified, established, comforted, and increased in numbers, by his coming, his preaching, and the miraculous powers that he should be employed to impart to them. Thus the apostle never lost sight of his object, or let slip any opportunity of inculcating mutual love between the Jewish and Gentile converts. (*Gal.* i. 18. ii. 1.) It is not known whether the apostle ever accomplished his intended journey into Spain. But as Clement, writing from Rome, in the first century, said that he preached 'to the utmost bounds of the west,' it is most probable that he did. He, however, went to Rome in a very different manner than he had purposed. *I go to Jerusalem.* (24—26.) (*Marg. Ref.*) 'Here, at length, but fetched from three different writings, we have obtained the several circumstances, which the epistle to the Romans brings together, viz. a contribution in Achaia for the Christians at Jerusalem, a contribution in Macedonia for the same purpose, and an approaching journey of St. Paul to Jerusalem. We have these circumstances, each by some hint in the passage in which it is mentioned, or by the date of the writing in which the passage occurs, fixed to a particular time; and we have that time turning out, upon examination, to be in all *the same*, namely, towards the close of St. Paul's second visit to the peninsula of Greece.' (*Paley.*) This fixes the writing of this epistle to a particular part of the narrative of the apostle's labours; but there is some difficulty in determining in what year those events took place. Some date them A. D. 58, others A. D. 60, or 61.

joy [c] by the will of God, [d] and may with you be refreshed.

33 Now [e] the God of peace [f] *be* with you all. Amen.

[c] Acts xviii. 21. 1 Cor. iv. 19. Jam. iv. 15.

[d] Prov. xxv 13 1 Cor. xvi. 18. 2 Cor. vii. 13 1 Thes. iii. 6–10. 2 Tim. i. 16 Philem. 7 20.

[e] xvi. 20. 1 Cor. xiv. 33. 2 Cor. v 19. 20 xiii. 11. Phil iv. 9. 1 Thes v. 23 2 Thes. iii 16. Heb. xiii. 20 ——

[f] xvi. 24 Ruth ii 4. Matt. i. 23 xxviii. 20 2 Cor. xiii. 14. 2 Tim. iv 22.

V. 30—33. The apostle regarded his journey to Jerusalem as of so much importance, that he ought not to decline it; yet he was aware that it would be attended with great danger and difficulty, through the enmity of the Jews, and the strong prejudices even of the Christians against him, which neither his zeal in their behalf, nor the liberality of the Gentile converts, could counterbalance. He therefore besought the Romans, for the sake of Christ, their common Lord, and for that love's sake, which the Spirit of Christ had wrought in their hearts to each other, (according to his own most loving nature and conduct towards them,) that they would earnestly unite in prayers for him, that he might be protected from the malice of the unbelieving or disobedient Jews, who would otherwise disappoint all the plans which he had formed; and that the prejudices of the Jewish believers might be so removed, that they might accept and take in good part the service which he went to perform. That so, if the Lord pleased, he might not come to them grieved and disappointed, but with joy and comfort; and also have his spirit refreshed and enlivened by joining with them in thanksgivings to God, and by what he witnessed of the grace bestowed upon them. In the mean time he prayed, that the God of peace, as reconciled to believers in Christ, and as disposing them to live together in peace and harmony, might be with them all, for their comfort, and to prevent all disputes and divisions among themselves.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

The powerful of this world often domineer over the weak, but it ought not to be so in the Church of Christ; on the contrary, every one, in proportion as he is strong in faith and grace, should be tender, patient, and compassionate to the feeble-minded, to those who are compassed with infirmities, perplexed in their views, harassed with scruples, doubts, and temptations, and unable to enjoy the peace and comfort of the Gospel, though they appear to walk in the obedience of it. Even if their infirmities be attended with bigotry, censoriousness, or peevishness, we ought still to bear with and pity them, and to submit to self-denial for their good; and instead of pleasing ourselves, whatever may become of them, we ought to give up our own humour and inclination, as far as we can please them for their good to edification; though we must not be men-pleasers, or help to deceive them by our flatteries and compliances. If any man deem himself strong, and he be at the same time disposed to revile, despise, condemn, and reject, the weak and scrupulous, because they cannot accede to his whole system, it is evident that pride and selfishness are stronger in his heart than faith and grace; and that he hath more of "the "knowledge that puffeth up, than of the love that edifieth." He is the most advanced Christian, who is most conformed to Christ, and most willing to give up his own ease or indulgence, and to endure reproach and suffering, after His example, and in prosecution of that great design for which he shed his blood; and if in doing this, we are reviled by furious zealots and uncharitable bigots, we may, with humble accommodation, use the Redeemer's words, "the "reproaches, of them that reproached thee are fallen upon "me." For whatever is written, either in the Old or the New Testament, is intended for our instruction, and may be applied to our case, for our direction and encouragement; that, by patient faith, persevering obedience, and comfort derived from the word of God, 'we may embrace, 'and ever hold fast, the blessed hope of everlasting life, 'as given to us in Jesus Christ.' Thus relying on the mercy and truth of the God of all patience and consolation, we should pray continually, that we, and our brethren in Christ, may be like minded towards one another, after his example; that the divisions of the Church being healed, all who are called by his name "may glorify God, even "the Father of our Lord Jesus, with one mind and with "one mouth." And till this perfect union shall be effected, we should learn to agree, notwithstanding our differences about non-essentials, and to receive one another as brethren, while we hold the great doctrines of salvation for sinners by the blood and Spirit of Christ; and this will tend greatly to the credit of the Gospel, and the glory of God.

V. 8—21.

The whole plan of redemption is suited to reconcile us to one another, as well as to our gracious God; and we may say of every contention among Christians, "An "enemy hath done this." The fulfilment of ancient promises and prophecies, in the coming of Christ among the Jews, and in the great success of the Gospel among the Gentiles, and through distant nations and languages, that they might glorify God for his mercy, and hope in that "Branch from the Root of Jesse," who was raised up to reign over them, should teach us to cease from our murmurings and disputings, and to join in grateful praises and thanksgivings to him, who glories in his merciful victories among the heathen, and hath called them to rejoice with his people. If we would have the God of hope to fill our hearts "with all peace, and joy in believing," (and a sinner can have abiding holy joy and peace in no other way,) if we would "abound in hope, by the power of the Holy "Ghost;" we must rely on, and pray for, the teaching and influences of that divine Agent; and we must be careful neither to grieve him by our evil tempers or sinful passions, nor to quench his sacred fire by negligence, or procrastination; for thus we often bring darkness and disconsolation upon ourselves. We should hope the best of others, and commend what is good in their conduct: but they, who are really most full of goodness and knowledge, and able to admonish one another, will be most thankful to be reminded of their duty, and cautioned against danger, by those who are authorized to watch over them; who have obtained grace to be faithful in their ministry; and who evidently desire that the persons and services of their brethren may be acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost. It is indeed an honour to be employed by the Lord Jesus; and for him to work by us, in those things which pertain to God, and in

CHAP. XVI.

The apostle commends Phebe to the Christians at Rome; and sends salutations to many by name, 1—16. *He warns them against those who caused divisions and offences,* 17—20. *He names several brethren, who joined in their salutations of them,* 21—23. *He concludes with prayers for them, and ascriptions of glory to God,* 24—27.

I [a] COMMEND unto you Phebe [b] our sister, who is [c] a servant of the church which is at [d] Cenchrea:

2 That [e] ye receive her in the Lord, [f] as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: [g] for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

3 Greet [h] Priscilla and Aquila, [i] my helpers in Christ Jesus:

4 Who [k] have for my life [l] laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but [m] also all the churches of the Gentiles.

a 2 Cor. iii. 1.
b Matt. xii. 50. Mark x. 30. 1 Tim. v. 2. Jam. ii 15. 1 Pet. i. 22, 23
c Luke viii. 3. 1 Tim. v. 9, 10.
d Acts xviii. 18.
e xv. 7. Matt x. 40—42. xxv. 40. Phil. ii. 29. Col. iv. 10. Philem. 12. 17. 2 John 10. 3 John 6—10.
f Eph. v. 3. Phil. i. 27. 1 Tim. 10. Tit. ii. 3.
g 3, 4. 6. 9. 23. Acts ix. 36. 39. 41. Phil. iv. 14.—19. 2 Tim. i. 18.
h Acts xviii. 2. 18 26. 1 Cor. xvi 19. 2 Tim. iv 19.
i 9. 1 Cor. xvi 16.
k v. 7. John xv. 13. Phil. ii. 30. 1 John iii. 16.
l Josh. x 24. 1 Sam. xxii. 41. Mic. ii. 3.——m Acts xv. 41. xvi. 5. 1 Cor. vii. 17. xvi. 1. 1 Thes. ii. 14. Rev. i. 4.

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rendering sinners obedient in word and deed. But the whole glory must ultimately be referred to him: ostentation should carefully be avoided in speaking on such subjects; and it is seldom expedient to mention ourselves in these matters, except as we want to obviate men's prejudices against our ministry, when they impede our usefulness. But indeed, how trivial are the labours, and how limited is the usefulness, of most of us, when compared with those of the apostle, whose ministry was attended with the power of the Holy Ghost in so remarkable a degree, and whose unwearied labours would admit of no bounds, but those of the human species, or of his own life! It is honourable, when ministers, who have the opportunity, boldly face opposition and hardship in carrying the Gospel to those places, where Christ hath not yet been named; and when they would rather make irruptions into the uninvaded provinces of Satan's dark domain, than stay to garrison such as have already been torn from him. This is a noble ambition; but as most of us must in some measure build upon the foundation that others have laid before us, we should at least take heed how we build thereon, that our superstructure may not disgrace or expose the good foundation, as is too often the case.

V. 22—33.

◆

Our best desires may meet with many hinderances; our well concerted plans may be disappointed; our very prayers may seem to remain unanswered: but, proceeding in the path of duty with self-denying zeal and love, endeavouring to conciliate the minds of Christians to one another, and to excite them to emulation only in good works, and seeking our comfort in communion with God and his saints, all will surely terminate to our advantage: and even the services which we would have performed, and could not, shall be graciously accepted and rewarded. The rich believer should deem himself a debtor to the poor; and they who have been made partakers of spiritual blessings should count it their duty to minister in carnal things to those, through whom they were brought to the knowledge of salvation. There is a blessing, a fulness of blessing, in the Gospel of Christ, which we should expect to know and to communicate, but with which numbers are totally unacquainted, and which most of us experience in a degree far beneath what the primitive believers did. We should therefore strive together in our prayers for each other, that, for Christ's sake, and by the love of the Spirit, a great blessing may come upon the souls of Christians, and the labours of ministers: that envy, prejudice, and a party-spirit, may not prevent the faithful zealous servants of Christ from being accepted by the saints, in their disinterested endeavours to do them good, (as frequently is the case:) but that they may meet the people, wherever they go, with joy, and may by them be refreshed; and that the God of peace may be the ever-present Comforter of all, who "love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." Amen.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1, 2. It is probable that this epistle was sent by Phebe, according to what is added at the end of it in our Bibles; but as these additions are of no authority, and sometimes palpably erroneous, they are not here inserted. Cenchrea was the sea-port of Corinth, (where a separate Church was founded,) which shows that the apostle wrote from Corinth. Phebe acted as a servant, or a deaconess, to the Church at Cenchrea, and was probably employed in relieving the needy women among them. This she must have undertaken freely, out of love to the work alone, as she appears to have been a person in good circumstances. (*Notes*, 1 *Tim*. v. 9—16.) The Christians at Rome were exhorted to receive her to their fellowship, and also to assist and support her in the business which had brought her thither, as she had been helpful to many Christians, and to Paul also, who was not backward to acknowledge his obligations to her.

V. 3, 4. Aquila and Priscilla had now returned to Rome, though but a short time before they had been at Ephesus. (*Notes*, *Acts* xviii. 1, 2. 24—28. 1 *Cor*. xvi. 19.) They had ventured their lives in protecting the apostle at Ephesus, as if they had been willing to lay down their own necks, and to be beheaded in his stead: and as his life was so useful to all the churches of the Gentiles, they, as well as he, were under the greatest obligations to them. He therefore gave his affectionate salutations and good wishes to them, and to the Church in their house; or to the several Christians, of whom their family was composed, and who met continually together to worship God. 'Priscilla and Aquila had originally 'been inhabitants of Rome.' (*Acts* xviii. 2.) 'They 'were connected therefore with the place to which the 'salutations were sent. St. Paul became acquainted with 'them at Corinth during his first visit into Greece. They 'accompanied him upon his return into Asia; were settled 'for some time at Ephesus; (*Acts* xviii. 19—26;) and 'appear to have been with St. Paul when he wrote from 'that place his first epistle to the Corinthians, (1 *Cor*.

5 Likewise *greet* [n] the church that is in their house. Salute [o] my well-beloved Epenetus, [p] who is the first-fruits of [q] Achaia unto Christ.

6 Greet Mary, [r] who bestowed much labour on us.

7 Salute Andronicus and Junia, [s] my kinsmen, and [t] my fellow-prisoners, [u] who are of note among the apostles, who also [x] were in Christ before me.

8 Greet Amplias, [y] my beloved in the Lord.

9 Salute Urbane, [z] our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved.

10 Salute Apelles [a] approved in Christ. Salute them which are [b] of Aristobulus' * *household.*

11 Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the † *household* of Narcissus, which are in the Lord.

12 Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who [c] labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord.

13 Salute [d] Rufus [e] chosen in the Lord; and [f] his mother and mine.

14 Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, [g] and the brethren which are with them.

15 Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, [h] and all the saints which are with them.

n Matt. xviii. 20. 1 Cor. xvi 19. Col. iv. 15 Philem 2
o 8. 12. 3 John 1.
p xi. 16. 1 Cor. xvi 15 Jam i 18. Rev. xiv. 4
q xv 26 Acts xviii. 12. 27 2 Cor i. 1 ix 2.
r 12 Matt xxvii. 35. 1 Tim v. 10.
s 11. 21
t 2 Cor xi. 23 Col. iv. 10. Philem 23. Rev. i. 9.
u Gal. ii 2. 6.
x viii. 1. Is xlv 17 25 John vi. 56. xiv. 20 xv. 2 1 Cor. i 30. 2 Cor. v. 17. 21. Gal. i. 22. v 6. vi. 15. Eph. ii. 10. 1 John iv. 13. v. 20.
y 5. Phil. iv. 1. 1 John iii. 14.
z 2, 3 21.——a xiv. 18 Deut viii 2. 1 Cor. xi. 16 2 Cor. ii. 9. viii. 22. Phil ii. 22. 1 Tim. iii. 10 1 Pet. i. 7.
b 2 Tim iv. 19
* Or, friends.
† Or, friends.
c Matt. ix 38. 1 Cor xv 10. 58. xvi 16. Col. i. 29. iv 12. 1 Thes. i 3 v. 12. 13. 1 Tim. iv. 10 v. 17, 18. Heb. vi. 10, 11.
d Mark xv. 21.
e Matt. xx. 16. John xv. 16. Eph i. 4. 2 Thes. ii. 13 2 John 1.
f Matt. xii. 49, 50. Mark iii. 35. John xix. 27. 1 Tim. v. 2
g viii. 29. Col. i. 2. Heb. iii. 1. 1 Pet i 22, 23.
h 2. i. 7 Is. lx. 21. Eph. i. 1. 1 Pet. i. 2.

‘ xvi. 19.) Not long after he went from Ephesus into Macedonia, and after "he had gone over those parts," proceeded from thence on his second visit into Greece; during which visit, or rather at the conclusion of it, this Epistle was written. We have therefore the time of St. Paul's residence at Ephesus, after he had written to the Corinthians, the time taken up by his progress through Macedonia, and his three months' abode in Greece: we have the sum of these three periods allowed for Aquila and Priscilla going back to Rome, so as to be there when the epistle was written. Now what this leads us to observe is, the danger of scattering names and circumstances in writings like the present; how implicated they often are with dates and places; and that nothing but truth can preserve consistency. Had the notes of time in this epistle fixed the writing of it to any date, prior to St. Paul's first residence at Corinth, the salutation of Aquila and Priscilla would have contradicted the history; because it would have been prior to his acquaintance with these persons. If the notes of time had fixed it during *that* residence at Corinth; during his journey to Jerusalem when he first returned out of Greece; or during his progress through the Lesser Asia, upon which he proceeded to Antioch; an equal contradiction would have been incurred: because it appears, (*Acts* xviii 2—26;) ‘ that, during all this time, they were either with St. Paul, or abiding at Ephesus. Lastly, had the notes of time in this epistle, which we have seen to be perfectly incidental, compared with the notes of time in the first epistle to the Corinthians, fixed this epistle to be either contemporary with that, or prior to it, a similar contradiction would have ensued; first, because, when the epistle to the Corinthians was written, Aquila and Priscilla were along with St. Paul, (1 *Cor.* xvi. 19;) and because, secondly, the history does not allow us to suppose, that between the time of their becoming acquainted with him and the writing of that epistle, they could have gone back to Rome, so as to have been saluted in an epistle to that city; and then have come to St. Paul at Ephesus, so as to be joined with him in saluting the Church at Corinth. As it is, all things are consistent.' (*Paley.*) The author has transcribed this passage, chiefly to give the less learned reader an idea and a specimen, of the manner in which able critics can, almost in all cases, detect literary forgeries, and establish the authenticity of ancient writings. This is peculiarly needful in an age of bold infidelity, in which the most confident assertions are made, and suppositions advanced, without the shadow of proof: as if a literary forgery were attended with little difficulty, or danger of detection! when in fact it is nearly the most difficult thing that can possibly be attempted, and scarcely ever escapes detection. ‘ St. Paul's contention at Corinth was with unbelieving Jews, who at first "opposed and blasphemed," ‘ and afterwards "with one accord raised an insurrection against him." ‘ Aquila and Priscilla adhered, we may conclude, to St. Paul, throughout this whole contest. (*Acts* xviii.) It is highly probable they should be involved in the dangers and persecutions which St. Paul underwent from the Jews. As they, though Jews, were assisting to him in preaching to the Gentiles at Corinth. They had taken a decided part in the great controversy of that day, the admission of the Gentiles to a parity of religious situation with the Jews. For this conduct alone, they may seem to have been entitled to thanks from the churches of the Gentiles.' (*Paley.*)

V. 5. The apostle also desired to be remembered with the same expressions of affection to Epenetus; (for the words *greet* and *salute* are the same in the original.) He was peculiarly beloved by the apostle, having been his first convert in Achaia, and the earnest of his subsequent usefulness. Perhaps he was the first of the household of Stephanas, who embraced the Gospel. (1 *Cor. xvi.* 15.)

V. 6—15. It is not known what Mary this was, or in what respect she had bestowed much labour on the apostle and his friends: but she had in some proper manner been very active in providing for their support and comfort. Andronicus and Junia, being Jews and of the same tribe and family with St. Paul, had on some occasion been imprisoned with him for the sake of the Gospel. They had probably been converted on the day of Pentecost, or soon after; and were well known and esteemed by the other apostles, while Paul had been a persecutor; as they were *in Christ*, that is, believers, before the apostle was. Of the persons, who are next mentioned, nothing certain is known. Apelles had approved himself to be a true

16 Salute one another [i] with an holy kiss. [k] The churches of Christ salute you.

17 ¶ Now I beseech you, brethren, [l] mark them which [m] cause divisions and [n] offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; [o] and avoid them.

18 For they that are such [p] serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, [q] but their own belly; and [r] by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of [s] the simple.

19 For [t] your obedience is come abroad unto all *men.* [u] I am glad therefore on your behalf: but [x] yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and * simple concerning evil.

20 And [y] the God of peace [z] shall † bruise Satan under your feet shortly. [a] The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

21 ¶ [b] Timotheus my work-fellow, and [c] Lucius, and [d] Jason, and [e] Sosipater, [f] my kinsmen, salute you.

22 I Tertius, [g] who wrote *this* epistle, [h] salute you in the Lord.

23 [i] Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. [k] Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother.

24 [l] The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

i Acts xx. 37 1 Cor xvi 20. 2 Cor xiii 12 1 Thes v. 26. 1 Pet v. 14.
k 4
l Phil. iii 17. 2 Thes iii 14, 15.
m Acts xv. 1—24 1 Cor. i. 10—13. iii. 3. xi. 18 Gal. i 7—9. ii 4 Phil. iii. 2, 3. Col. ii 8 2 Pet. ii 1, 2. 1 John ii 19 2 John 7—10. Jude 19.
n Matt. xviii. 7. Luke xvii 1.
o Matt. xviii 17. 1 Cor. v 9—11. 2 Thes. iii. 6 14. 1 Tim. vi. 3—5. Tit iii 10. 2 John 10, 11.
p Matt. vi. 24. John xii 26. Gal. i 10. Phil. ii 21. Col. iii. 24. Jam i. 1. Jude 1 Rev. i. 1.——q 1 Sam ii. 11—17 29. Is lvi. 10—12. Ez xiii. 19. Hos iv 8—11. Mic. iii 5. Mal. i. 10 Matt. xxiv. 48—51 Phil. iii. 19. 1 Tim vi 5. 2 Pet. ii. 10—15. Jude 12 ——r 2 Chr. xviii 5. 12—27. Is. xxx. 10, 11 Jer. viii 10, 11. xxiii 17. xxviii 1—9 15—17. Ez. xiii. 16. Mic iii. 5. Matt vii. 15. xxiv. 11. 24 2 Cor ii. 17. iv 2. xi. 13—15. Col ii. 4. 2 Thes ii. 10. 1 Tim. vi. 5. 2 Tim. ii 16—18. iii. 2—6. Tit i. 10—12. 2 Pet ii 18—20. 1 John iv 1—3. Jude 16 ——s 19. Ps. xix. 7. cxix. 130. Prov. viii. 5 xiv. 15. xxii. 3. 2 Cor xi. 3.——t i. 8 1 Thes i. 8, 9.——u Eph i 15—17 Col. i. 3—9. 1 Thes i. 2, 3 iii. 6—10 ——x 1 Kings iii. 9—12 Ps ci. 2. Is. xi. 2, 3. Matt. x. 16. 1 Cor. xiv. 20. Eph. i. 17, 18. v. 17. Phil. i. 9. Col. i. 9 iii. 16. 2 Tim iii 15—17. Jam. iii. 13—18.

* Or, *harmless.* Luke x. 3. Phil ii. 15.
y *See on,* xv. 33.
z Gen. iii. 15 Is. xxv. 8—12. Rom. viii. 37. Heb ii 14, 15. 1 John iii. 8. Rev. xx. 1—3.
† Or, *tread.* Job xl 12. Is lxiii. 3 Zech. x. 5. Mal. iv. 3 Luke x. 19.
a 24. 1 Cor. xvi. 23. 2 Cor xiii. 14. Gal. vi. 18. Phil. iv. 23. 1 Thes v. 28. 2 Thes. iii. 18. 2 Tim iv. 22. Philem. 25. Rev. xxii. 21.
b Acts xvi. 1—3. xvii. 14. xviii. 5. xix 22 xx. 4. 2 Cor i. 1. 19. Phil i 1. ii 19—23. 1 Thes. i. 1. iii 2 6. 2 Thes. i. 1. 1 Tim. i 2. vi 11. 20 2 Tim. i. 2 Heb. xiii. 23.
c Acts xiii. 1
d Acts xvii 5.——e Acts xx 4. *Sopater.*——f 7. 11 ——g Gal. vi. 11.——h 8. Col. iii. 17 ——i 1 Cor. i. 14. 3 John 1—6 ——k Acts xix. 22. 2 Tim iv. 20.——l *See on* 20

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believer by his exemplary zealous conduct. Probably Aristobulus was not a Christian; but he had several in his household, of whom the apostle had some knowledge. Narcissus is supposed to have been a very powerful and wicked man, of whom many things are recorded in the Roman histories; yet he too had believers in his family! Rufus seems to have been the son of Simon the Cyrenian; and his mother had showed such attention to Paul, that he deemed her deserving of the honour and respect due to a parent. It is remarkable, that the apostle, amidst all his engagements, should be so well acquainted with the names and characters of many Christians, residing in a city which he had never visited. This shows his indefatigable diligence and attention to every thing relative to the Churches of the Gentiles. It may also be observed, that he never mentioned the name of Peter, which he doubtless would have done, had he then resided at Rome; which powerfully militates against all the traditions of antiquity respecting him, on which so enormous a fabric of usurpation and superstition hath been erected.

V. 16. *A holy kiss.* This expression of spiritual affection, to which the apostle exhorted them, to show that his epistle had produced its intended effect in promoting mutual love among them, has been supposed to have been used by men and women separately; yet as it seems afterwards to have been laid aside, because of abuse or slanders, that opinion perhaps is groundless, and rather the effect of modern ideas of propriety, resulting from licentious refinement, than suited to the pure simplicity of those primitive times. The apostle further informed them, that the several Churches of Christ, which he had visited, desired to express their affectionate regard to them.

V. 17—20. *Simple.* (18.) The word here rendered *simple* is different from that which is translated *simple* in the next verse; and conveys the idea of *well meaning,* though *not well informed,* persons. The apostle wrote from the fulness of his heart; and therefore, when he seemed to be concluding, his overflowing love induced him to begin again, as some further topic was suggested to his mind. Thus he here interrupted his subject, to warn the Christians at Rome to note, and, as it were, set a mark on, the persons, whose conduct, doctrine, or insinuations, tended to make divisions in the Church, or to stumble or mislead inquirers: and to avoid them, as they would such as were infected with some contagious disease. For, whatever they pretended, they did not serve Christ or seek his glory in what they did: but they rather sought the indulgence of their appetites; and advanced, or zealously contended for, their opinions, in order to support themselves and live in plenty without labour. Thus, by their affectionate and flattering language and plausible harangues, they imposed upon the judgment, and insinuated themselves into the affections, of those persons, who were favourably disposed to hear the Gospel, but were unsuspecting and undiscerning. The apostle was the more earnest to caution the Romans against such artful deceivers; because their unreserved obedience to the will of Christ was every were spoken of with great approbation. He was therefore greatly rejoiced with this good report of them, and wished it to prevail still more; yet he would have them to be obedient from an established judgment, as well as from a proper disposition of heart: he desired that they might be wise and prudent in every good work; and simple and inexperienced only concerning evil, and unacquainted with its painful effects; and so harmless, and *inoffensive,* according to the exact meaning of the original word. He knew that Satan, who was permitted to bruise the heel of the Seed of the woman, (*Note, Gen.* iii. 15,) would annoy them to the uttermost; but their reconciled God, the Author of inward and outward peace, would shortly bruise that enemy and all his agents under their feet, and give every believer an entire and final victory over him. He therefore prayed that the pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace of Christ might always be with them.

V. 21—23. (*Acts* xiii. 1. xvi. 1—3. xvii. 7. xx. 4.) The apostle, not being an expert writer in the Greek language, generally employed an Amanuensis. Tertius, who wrote this epistle, has been supposed to be the same person as Silas or Silvanus; because *Silas* in Hebrew signifies *the Third,* as *Tertius* does in Latin; but this is uncertain. Gaius perhaps was the same person, to whom John addressed his third epistle. Being a man of affluence, he hos-

25 ¶ Now [m] to him that is of power to stablish you [n] according to my Gospel, [o] and the preaching of Jesus Christ, [p] according to the revelation of the mystery, [q] which was kept secret since the world began,

26 But [r] now is made manifest, [s] and by the scriptures of the prophets, [t] according to the commandment of [u] the everlasting God, made known unto all nations, [x] for the obedience of faith:

27 To [y] God [z] only wise, *be* glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

m xiv. 4. Acts xx. 32 Eph iii. 20, 21. 1 Thes. iii. 13 2 Thes. ii. 16. 17 iii. 3. Heb. vii. 25 1 Pet v. 10. Jude 24 25

n ii 16. 2 Cor. iv. 3 Gal ii 2. 2 Thes ii 14. 2 Tim ii. 8.

o Acts ix. 20 1 Cor. i 23. ii 2. 2 Cor. iv 5

p 1 Cor ii 7. Col. i. 26.——q Ps. lxxviii. 2. Dan. ii. 22. Am. iii. 7. Matt xiii 17. 35. Luke x 23, 24 Eph iii. 3. 5 9. 11. 1 Pet. i. 10- 12. 20——r Eph i. 9. Col. i. 26. 2 Tim. i 10 Tit i 2, 3.————s i. 2 iii. 21 xv. 4. Acts viii. 32—35. x 43. xxvi 22, 23 Gal. iii 8. Eph ii 20 Rev xix. 10.

t Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Mark xvi 15. Luke xxiv 44——47. Acts xiii. 46, 47. xxvi. 17, 18.

u i 20 Gen. xxi. 33. Deut xxxiii. 27 Is. ix 6. xl. 28 Mic v. 2. 1 Tim. i. 17. Heb. ix. 14. xiii 8. 1 John v. 20. Rev. i 8 11 17

x *See on*, i 5. xv 18 Acts vi. 7———y xi. 36. Gal. i. 4, 5. Eph. iii. 20, 21 Phil iv. 20 1 Tim. i. 17. vi 16. 2 Tim iv 18 Heb. xiii. 15 21. 1 Pet. ii. 5. v. 10, 11. 2 Pet iii. 18. Rev. i. 5, 6 iv. 9—11. v 9—14 vii. 10. 12. xix. 1—6.———z xi. 33, 34. Ps. cxlvii 5. Eph. i. 7, 8. iii. 10. Col. ii. 2, 3. Jude 25.

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pitably entertained Paul and his company; and he was so liberal in services of this kind, that he might be called the host of the whole Church. Erastus, as the steward or treasurer of Corinth, must have been a person of considerable rank, who had embraced the Gospel.

V. 25—27. The apostle at length concluded, with ascribing glory to God in such a manner, as to direct the faith and dependence of those whom he addressed to be placed on him. He was aware, that nothing but the almighty power of God could preserve them from the fatal assaults of their subtle and potent enemies. But God was able to establish them in the faith, hope, and obedience of the Gospel, which he had preached to them, in consistency with the doctrine of Christ, respecting the salvation of sinners and the calling of the Gentiles.—This great mystery had been concealed from mankind in general since the beginning, and had only been in part revealed to the Jews; but at length it had been openly manifested, according to the writings of the ancient prophets, and by the accomplishment of them; and by the preaching of the Gospel according to the commandment of the eternal God to his apostles and evangelists: that it might be made known to the nations, in order to deliver them from their idolatries and iniquities, and lead them to the obedience of faith. To this God of infinite wisdom and knowledge, from whom all wisdom originates, all glory and worship ought to be rendered for ever, through his Son Jesus Christ. By the only wise God, we must understand the Deity, without respect to the distinction of persons; or the Father, without excluding the Son or the Holy Spirit; who in many Scriptures are shown to be coequal with the Father in all divine perfections. But as the Godhead is revealed to us in and by the incarnate Word, our divine Mediator, so we must in him see the glory of God, and our adoration and worship must in the same way be presented.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

◆

True religion teaches men humbly and frankly to acknowledge their obligations even to those, who in many respects have been their inferiors; and it becometh saints to receive and be helpful to each other for the Lord's sake, as they have opportunity, and to requite the kindness that hath been shown to any of their brethren: and the whole Church is under obligations to those, who venture their lives, or lay themselves out, to preserve or assist the useful servants of Christ. If an apostle so kindly remembered each of those, who had bestowed labour upon him, much more will the Lord remember all the services, which have been performed from love to him and the Gospel. Seniority in faith gives a real precedency; and the bonds of grace are nearer than those of nature. Christ is as much present in the family worship of those who meet in his name, as in the more public assemblies of his saints. Believers are often found in those families, of which the principals are unconverted; and they should perform their several relative duties with cheerfulness and a deference to their superiors, though strangers to the grace of God.

V. 17—27.

◆

In order to maintain uninterrupted our communion with the Lord and with his saints; those persons must be marked, disgraced, and avoided, who aim to prejudice believers against each other, to draw them off from faithful pastors, or to seduce them into strange doctrines contrary to the simple truths of God's word. For notwithstanding their zeal and confidence, as if *they only* were the servants of Christ, they evidently do not belong to our Prince of peace, but are the slaves of their selfish interests, their sensual appetites, or their ambition. By their apparent affection and compassion, and by their well-worded declamations, they deceive many hopeful injudicious persons; and few are absolutely secured from their plausible delusions. While, therefore, we give Christians merited commendation for their obedience hitherto, we should use every proper means to render them wise to that which is good, and to keep them inexperienced in that which is evil: as well as to encourage them and ourselves with the assurance, that "the God of peace will bruise Satan under "our feet shortly." Every expression of the most endeared affection should be used among believers, but in the most pure and holy manner. They, who honour Christ by showing kindness to his people, will be honoured of him by having their names written in the book of life. True religion does not require men to quit public stations, when they can fill them to the glory of God and the benefit of his Church. Trusting in the power of God to establish us in the faith and hope of the Gospel; thankfully receiving the revelation of the mystery, which was so long kept secret from mankind; endeavouring to make known the Gospel "according to the Scriptures "of the prophets, and the commandment of the everlasting "God;" remembering that we are called to the obedience of faith, and that every degree of true wisdom is from the only wise God: we should endeavour by word and deed to render glory to him through Jesus Christ; that so the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ may be with us for ever. Amen.

THE

FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

CORINTHIANS.

The narrative of the apostle's successful preaching at Corinth, has been considered. (Notes, Acts xviii. 1—18.) *But speedily after he left the Church which he founded there, other teachers came among them, who made great pretensions to eloquence, wisdom, and knowledge of their Christian liberty; and thus undermined his influence, and the credit of his ministry. By these means the Corinthians were divided into parties, engaged in eager disputes, and seduced into various irregularities, abuses, and errors. 'It appears, that this letter to the Corinthians was written by St. Paul, in answer to one which he had received from them,* (vii. 1.) *and that the seventh, and some of the following chapters, are taken up in resolving certain doubts, and regulating certain points of order, concerning which the Corinthians had consulted him.—Though they had written to St. Paul, requesting his answer and directions, in these points; they had not said one syllable about the enormities and disorders, which had crept in among them, and in the blame of which they all shared; but his information concerning these irregularities had come round to him from other quarters,—by more private intelligence.* (Paley.) *The epistle was therefore written, not only as an answer to the inquiries of the Corinthians by letter; but in order to oppose and terminate the various corruptions in doctrine and practice, which prevailed; to subvert the influence of the false teachers, and to re-establish the apostle's own authority in that Church.' By general truths, he, with great address and prudence, made way for a more direct and particular opposition to the several gross irregularities and dangerous errors, into which they had been seduced. He stated the truth and will of God in various particulars, with great energy of argument and animation of style; he resolved the several questions, that had been proposed to him; he, with great tenderness and wisdom, intermixed exhortations and direction with his other subjects; and he concluded with affectionate and pathetic prayers for them. Though this epistle is not so systematic as the preceding one; yet it is replete with important instruction, and contains the fullest and most interesting declaration and demonstration, of the resurrection of believers, in consequence of the resurrection of their Lord, which is any where to be found. It is most evident, that the epistle was written by the apostle, when residing at, or near, Ephesus, and some time before he left that city.* (Note, xvi. 5—9.) *Many learned men calculate, that it was written about A. D. 55, or A. D. 57. 'In the ninth year of Claudius, says Orosius, in the tenth, say others, in the twelfth, says Dr. Pearson, the Jews were banished from Rome; and St. Paul coming to Corinth, finds Aquila and Priscilla.* (Acts xviii. 2.) *He stays there a year and a half;—at Ephesus, three years, and at the close of these three years, he writes this epistle,—according to Dr. Pearson, A. D. 57.'* (Whitby.) *But this learned writer has allowed no time for the apostle's voyage and journey to Jerusalem, and his progress through the churches of Syria, Galatia, and other parts of Asia Minor; and the same oversight has been fallen into by most of those, whom the author has had the opportunity of consulting, who date the epistle so early. 'A. D. 54. Paul at Corinth, meets with Aquila and Priscilla. A. D. 56. Paul departs from Corinth, and passes to Ephesus; thence he sets out towards Jerusalem,—he lands at Cesarea, goes down to Antioch, and comes into the regions of Galatia and Phrygia, confirming the disciples in all these places. A. D. 57. Paul returns to Ephesus—A. D. 60. About this time a schism ariseth in the church at Corinth, which causeth Paul, (now in or about Ephesus,) to write his First Epistle to the Corinthians.'* (Index to the Quarto Oxford Bible, 1794.) *The* *person, who compiled this index, seems to place the writing of the epistle, subsequent to the tumult at Ephesus, which it certainly was not.* (Notes, xvi. 5—9. 2 Cor. i. 8—11.) *It could not, however, be written long before the apostle left Ephesus; and probably, the index above quoted does not allow too much time for the apostle's progress from Jerusalem to Ephesus.* (Note, Acts xviii. 18—23.) *This computation, therefore, the author has fixed on, as more satisfactory than any other which he has seen. The epistle contains no express prophecies: but nothing can exceed the decided claim to divine inspiration, which the writer advances.* (Notes, ii.) *He either therefore claimed what he was not entitled to; or his epistles are not only genuine and authentic, but divinely inspired.* (Preface to the Epistles.)

CHAP. I.

The apostle salutes the church at Corinth, 1—3; *thanks God for the grace and gifts conferred on them,* 4—7; *and expresses his assurance of their final salvation,* 8, 9. *He exhorts them to unity, and reproves their dissentions,* 10—16. *The preaching of the cross, though foolishness to them that perish, is the power and wisdom of God to the salvation of believers,* 17—25. *To exclude boasting, God hath not called the wise, the mighty, or the noble; but the foolish, the weak, and those whom man despises,* 26—29. *Christ is our Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption, that we may glory in the Lord alone,* 30, 31.

PAUL, [a] called *to be* [b] an apostle of Jesus Christ, [c] through the will of God, and [d] Sosthenes *our* brother,

2 Unto [e] the church of God which is at Corinth, [f] to them that are [g] sanctified in Christ Jesus, [h] called *to be* saints, [i] with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ [k] our Lord, both theirs and ours:

a Rom. i. 1. Gal. ii. 7, 8.
b iii. 9 ix. 1, 2. xv. 9. Luke vi. 13 John xx. 21. Acts i. 2. 25, 26. xxii. 21. Rom. i. 5. 2 Cor. xi. 5. xii. 12. Gal. i. 1. Eph iv. 11. 1 Tim. i. 1 ii 7.
c ix. 16, 17. John xv. 16. 2 Cor. i 1 Gal i 15, 16. Eph. i. 1. Col. i. 1.
d Acts xviii 17.
e Acts xviii. 8—11. 2 Cor. i. 1. Gal i. 2. 1 Thes. i. 1. 2 Thes i. 1. 1 Tim iii 15.
f Jude 1.
g 30. vi. 9—11. John xvii. 17—19. Acts xv. 9. xxvi. 18. Eph. v 26. Heb. ii. 11 x. 10. xiii. 12.——h Rom i. 7. 1 Thes iv. 7. 2 Tim. i. 9 1 Pet. i 15, 16.——i Ps xlv. 11. Acts vii. 59, 60. ix 14. xxii 16. 2 Thes. ii 16. 17. 2 Tim. ii. 22.——k viii. 6. Acts x. 36. Rom. x. 12. xiv. 8, 9. 2 Cor. iv. 5 Phil. ii. 9—11. Rev. xix. 16.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. (*Notes, Rom.* i. 1, 2.) There seems to have been a party at Corinth, who depreciated Paul's ministry, and questioned his apostolical authority; it was therefore proper for him to begin his epistle with an express declaration, that God had by his grace and sovereign will called him to that office; and it was conciliatory and condescending to join Sosthenes with him in this salutation and address, as he meant to reprove many evils which had crept in among the Corinthians. It is probable that Sosthenes was one of them, who, having been appointed to the ministry, accompanied Paul in his travels. (*Notes, Acts* xviii. 12—17.) He addressed the Church of God, or the collective body of Christians, at Corinth, as "sanctified in Christ," which some explain of their having been separated, or set apart for God, in his eternal purpose, as chosen in Christ to be saints or holy persons; others of their being actually sanctified by the communication of his Spirit. With them he also joined all those in every place, who called on the name of the Lord Jesus; (probably with an immediate reference to the other Churches in Achaia;) who was equally the Lord of the apostle, of Sosthenes, and of every believer. This shows us how inseparable the invocation of Christ was to the profession of Christianity in those days. Some would indeed render it, "those, who are called by the name of "the Lord Jesus:" but it may be shown to be inconsistent with the proper construction of the Greek language thus to render it; and probably this interpretation would never have been adopted, if the previous opposition of men's minds to the divine adoration of Christ had not induced them to have recourse to it; though indeed some have contended for it, who by no means questioned the Deity of Christ. 'This in the New Testament is the 'character of a Christian; he is one that calleth on his 'name. That these words ought not to be rendered 'passively, is evident from the Septuagint, who still 'translate the phrase *Yikrah beshem*, (*he shall call on the 'name,*) by similar words. (*Gen.* iv. 26. xii. 8. xiii. 4. 'xxi. 3. *Ps.* lxxix. 6. xcix. 6. cxvi. 4. *Is.* lxvi. 1. *Lam.* 'iii. 55. *Zech.* xiii. 9.) But when the phrase runs thus, '*Shemka nikrah*, (that is, *thy name is called on us*, or *we 'are called by thy name,*) they use the passive preterite, 'or first aorist. (*Deut.* xxviii. 10. 1 *Kings* viii. 43. 2 '*Chr.* vii. 14. *Is.* iv. 1. lxiii. 19. *Jer.* xiv. 9. xv. 16. '*Dan.* ix. 18, 19. *Am.* ix. 12.) The disciples were first 'called Christians at Antioch. Now before this time we 'find not only Stephen calling on this name, and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit;" 'and St. Paul bid "to "wash away his sins, calling on the name of the Lord:" 'but Ananias speaks to the Lord Jesus of St. Paul, "He hath authority from the high priest to bind all that "call on thy name:" 'and of him it is said, "He de"stroyed them that called on this name at Jerusalem."—

3 [l] Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 I [m] thank my God always on your behalf, for [n] the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ;

5 That [o] in every thing ye are enriched by him, [p] in all utterance, [q] and *in* all knowledge;

6 Even as [r] the testimony of Christ [s] was confirmed in you.

l *See on*, Rom i. 7. 1 Pet i. 2.
m *See on*, Rom. i. 8. Acts xi. 23 xxi 20. xxvi 17
n 3. John x 30. xiv. 14. 16, 17. 26 xv 26. 1 Tim i. 14
o iv. 7—10. Rom xi. 12. 2 Cor ix. 11 Eph. ii. 7 iii. 8.
p xii. 10 xiv. 5, 6 26. Acts ii 4 2 Cor. viii. 7 Eph vi. 19 Col iv 3, 4.
q viii. 11. xiii. 2. 8. Rom. xv 4. 2 Cor iv. 6. Eph i 17. Phil i. 9. Col. i. 9, 10. ii. 3. iii. 10. Jam iii. 13 2 Pet. iii 18 ——r ii. 1, 2. Acts xviii. 5. xx 21. 24 xxii 18. xxiii. 11 xxviii. 23. 1 Tim. ii. 6 2 Tim i. 8 1 John v. 11—13. Rev i. 2. 9. vi. 9 xii. 11. 17. xix 10 ——s Mark xvi. 20. Acts xi. 17. 21 Rom xv. 19. 2 Cor. xii. 12. Gal. iii 5. Heb. ii. 3, 4.

7 So that [t] ye come behind in no gift; [u] waiting for the [*] coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:

8 Who shall also [x] confirm you unto the end, *that ye may be* [y] blameless in [z] the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 [a] God *is* faithful, [b] by whom ye were called unto [c] the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

t 2 Cor xii. 13.
u iv. 5. Gen xlix. 18 Matt xxv. 1. Luke xii. 36. Rom viii. 19. Phil. iii. 20. 1 Thes i. 10 2 Tim iv 8. Tit. ii 13 Heb ix 28. x. 36, 37 Jam v. 7, 8. 2 Pet iii. 12. Jude 21
* Gr. *revelation*. Luke xvii. 30. Col iii. 4. 2 Thes. i. 7. 1 Tim. vi 14, 15. 1 Pet. i. 13. iv 13 v. 4 1 John iii. 2.——x Ps xxxvi 17 28 Rom xiv. 4 xvi. 25. 2 Cor i 21 1 Thes. iii 13 2 Thes iii 3. 1 Pet. v 10 ——y Eph. v. 27. Phil i. 15 Col i. 22 1 Thes iii 13. v. 23 2 Pet iii. 14. Jude 24 25.——z Phil. i 6 10. ii 16 2 Pet iii 10 ——a x. 13. Num. xxiii. 19 Deut. vii. 9 xxxii 4 Ps lxxxix 33—35 c v. Is xi 5 xxv 1 xlix. 7. Lam. iii. 22, 23. Matt xxiv. 35. 1 Thes. v 23. 24 2 Thes. iii 3. Tit. i 2. Heb ii. 17. vi. 18. x. 23. xi. 11 Rev. xix 11.——b 24 Rom viii 28 30 ix 24. Gal. i 15 1 Thes ii 12 2 Thes. ii 14 2 Tim. i. 9 Heb. iii. 1. 1 Pet v. 10 ——c 30 x 16 John xv. 4, 5. xvii. 21. Rom. xi. 17. Gal ii 20. Eph ii. 20—22. iii 6. Heb. iii. 14. 1 John i 3. 7. iv. 13.

(The original is the same as in this place.) Dr. Hammond, who here translates this phrase passively, doth 'elsewhere translate it actively; the context forcing him 'so to do. So *Rom.* x. 13, "Whosoever shall call on "the name of the Lord;" 'that is, pray and adhere to 'Christ.' And *Acts* ix. 14. "He hath authority to "bind all that call upon thy name:" 'that is, saith he, 'that publicly own the worship of Christ.' (*Whitby.*) (*Note, Acts* ix. 10—14. *Marg. Ref.*) To explain the terms *sanctified*, and *saints*, as implying no more than the profession of Christianity, and including all *nominal Christians*, as many learned men do, would enervate the language of the apostles, and confound the distinction between the *form* and *power* of godliness, which it is his grand object to maintain. No doubt there were unconverted persons in the several Churches, even in those days: but the apostles addressed their epistles to the collective body, according to their profession; thus teaching them what that profession implied; but if any were not truly saints, they were no more intended, than if they had not been called Christians. The arguments by which these learned writers support their opinion would equally prove, that the worst persons in the Church at Corinth were indeed the temples of the Holy Ghost, the temple of the living God, and entitled to all spiritual and eternal blessings, equally with true believers. (iii. 16. vi. 11. 19. 2 *Cor.* vi. 16.) 'Even here from the beginning he lays the 'foundation of his future reasoning; for if the Corin'thians and all other believers were called by one God, 'and sanctified in one Christ; if they all had, and owned, 'the same Lord; whence did the dissentions arise and get 'strength among them, as if Christ was divided?' (*Beza.*)

V. 3. (*Note, Rom.* i. 7.) 'Is not this to desire for 'them grace and peace from God the Father, and conse'quently to pray for it? Why therefore is it not also to 'desire the same blessings from God the Son?' (*Whitby.*) and consequently to pray for them?

V. 4—9. Before the apostle entered on the immediate subject of his epistle, he endeavoured to conciliate the affections of the Corinthians, by calling to their recollection the benefits which they had derived from his ministry. He always thanked God on their account, for having bestowed his grace upon them, through Jesus Christ, by which they had been turned from idolatry to the faith of the Gospel and the worship of God. They had also been enriched by him with all spiritual gifts, and miraculously enabled to speak in divers languages, and filled with abundant knowledge of divine things. As the testimony of Christ had been confirmed among them by the miracles of the apostle, they too had been enabled to work miracles after they had embraced it; so that they came behind other Churches in no spiritual gift, before the new teachers came among them. Thus they were preparing themselves and each other, as those who waited for the coming of Christ their Lord and Judge, (*Notes, Matt.* xxv. 14—30;) who by the continued supplies of his grace would confirm them to the end of their course, in the faith and hope of the Gospel; that they might be preserved blameless in their conduct through life, and stand completely justified and sanctified in the day of judgment. This would certainly be the case, if they were what they professed and appeared to be; seeing God was faithful to his promises and covenant, which he ratified with them personally, when he effectually called them to be partakers of Christ and all his blessings, and to a life of communion with him. Though he afterwards intimated his doubts of some of the Corinthians, yet he here addressed them, as being, in the judgment of charity, what they professed to be. Out of the abundance of his heart he repeats the words, "Our Lord "Jesus Christ," so often, that there is a danger of those readers being disgusted with them, whose hearts are strangers to that holy affection, which occupied that of the apostle. *Blameless*, &c. (8.) 'He calls them blame'less, not whom none had ever blamed, but those whom 'none could justly blame; that is, those who are in Christ 'Jesus.' (*Rom.* viii. 1. 33.) (*Beza.*) Certainly neither spotless innocence, nor sinless perfection, nor such a tenour of conduct from their first profession of Christianity as was wholly *unblameable*, could be meant; for the apostle blames many things afterwards, that were very general among them; yet their renewal to holiness seems intended, at least equally with their justification; and this in all believers will be perfected in the day of Christ. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'God will make good his pro'mise, if you do not fail yourselves.' (*Hammond.*) It seems that the system, which this learned writer adopts, cannot be maintained, without "adding to the word of "God;" for he, and his coadjutors, frequently insert a clause of this kind, as if the inspired writers had forgotten it, and had expressed themselves incautiously! But though all professed Christians at Corinth would not be "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation," 10 ¶ Now [d] I beseech you, brethren, [e] by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, [f] that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no * divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.

11 For [g] it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them *which are of the house* of Chloe, [h] that there are contentions among you.

12 Now [i] this I say, that every one of you saith, [k] I am of Paul; and I of [l] Apollos; and I of [m] Cephas; and I of Christ.

d iv. 16. Rom xii. 1. 2 Cor. v 20. vi. 1 x 1. Gal. iv. 12. Eph. iv. 1. Philem 9, 10. 1 Pet ii. 11.
e Rom. xv. 30. 1 Thes iv. 1, 2 2 Thes. ii 1 1 Tim. v 21. 2 Tim. iv. 1
f Ps. cxxxiii. 1. Jer xxxii. 39. John xiii 34, 35 xvii 23. Acts iv. 32. Rom. xii. 16. xv. 5, 6 xvi. 17. 2 Cor. xiii. 11. Eph. iv. 1—7. 31 32. Phil. i. 27 ii. 1—4. 1 Thes. v. 13. Jam. iii 13—18. 1 Pet. ii. 8, 9.
* Gr schisms. xi. 18 xii. 25 Matt. ix 16. Mark ii 21. John vii 43. ix. 16. x 19 Gr
g xi. 18. Gen xxvii 42. xxxvii. 2 1 Sam. xxv. 14—17.——h iii. 3. vi. 1—7. Prov. xiii. 10. xviii 6. 2 Cor. xii. 20. Gal. v. 15 20. 26. Phil ii. 14 1 Tim. vi 4. 2 Tim. ii. 23—25 Jam. iv. 1, 2 ——i vii. 29 xv. 50. 2 Cor ix 6. Gal. iii. 17.——k iii. 4—6 21—23. iv. 6. l xvi. 12. Acts xviii. 24—28. xix. 1 ——m ix 5. xv 5. John i. 42. Gal. ii. 9.

13 Is [n] Christ divided? [o] was Paul crucified for you? [p] or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

14 I [q] thank God that I baptized none of you, but [r] Crispus and [s] Gaius;

15 Lest any should say, that [t] I had baptized in mine own name.

16 And I baptized also the household of [u] Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.

17 For Christ sent me [x] not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel: [y] not with wisdom of † words, [z] lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

18 For [a] the preaching of the cross is [b] to them that perish, [c] foolishness; but

n 2 Cor. xi. 4. Gal. i. 7. Eph. iv. 5
o vi 19, 20 Rom xiv. 9. 2 Cor. v 14, 15. Tit. ii 14
p 15. x. 2. Matt xxviii. 19. Acts ii 38. x. 48 xix. 5
q 4. xiv. 18. 2 Cor. ii. 14. Eph v. 20 Col iii 15 17 1 Thes. v 18 1 Tim i. 12 Philem. 4
r Acts xviii 8.
s Rom. xvi 23
t John iii. 28, 29. vii 18. 2 Cor. xi. 2.
u xvi. 15 17. Acts xvi 15. 33
x John iv. 2. Acts x. 48. xxvi 17, 18.
y ii. 1. 4. 13. 2 Cor iv. 2. x. 3, 4 10. 2 Pet. i 16.
† Or, *speech.*
z ii. 5.
a 23, 24. ii 2. Gal. vi. 12—14.——b Acts xiii. 41 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16. iv. 3 2 Thes. ii. 10. c 21 23. 25 ii. 14. iii. 19. Acts xvii. 18. 32

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for some were not true believers; yet all those, whom the apostle specially addressed, would; namely, "the saints," even those whom God had "called to the fellowship of "his Son Jesus Christ." (*Rom.* viii. 30.)

V. 10—16. After this conciliatory introduction, the apostle proceeded to the subject, on which he particularly wrote to the Corinthians; and to point out that leading evil, which gave rise to the other evils which he meant to reprove. He besought and exhorted them by the name, the honour and the authority, of Christ, to cease from murmurings and disputings; that they might all join in the same language of faith, avoid all schisms, contentions, or disunion of heart, and be perfectly united together in the same mind and judgment. Considering the different capacities, educations, habits, and prejudices of mankind, it seems impossible to avoid all difference of opinion: but it is equally true that fallen men will never on earth love God with all their hearts, and their neighbours as themselves; yet the rule and exhortation must not be changed on that account. As we have one *rule* and *standard* of truth, and one Spirit to be our Teacher: so, in proportion to our humility, simplicity, and diligence, we come to be of one mind and judgment, in the great concerns of religion: and were we perfect in these things, we should also be perfectly united in sentiment and affection. This will be the case in heaven; and it will at length be so in a great degree on earth. The nearer we come to it, the more we approximate to perfection: all our divisions arise from a sinful cause, which must not be excused; but while it subsists, we should endeavour to bear with each other in respect of it, and so to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the "bond of peace." Yet we should continually pray for the more abundant pouring out of the Spirit of truth and love, on ourselves and all our fellow Christians, that we may be "perfectly joined together in the same mind and judg-"ment." The apostle gave the Christians at Corinth this seasonable admonition; because he had been informed by those, on whom he could depend and whom he did not hesitate to mention, that their Church was troubled with contentions: they were in a divided state; and he might say, that every one of them was attached to some particular teacher in opposition to all others. As if one professed himself to belong to Paul's party, another to that of the eloquent Apollos, another to Peter the great apostle of the circumcision; and as if others professed themselves the disciples of Christ alone, to excuse their disregard for all his ministers! It has been thought with probability, that the apostle does not mention these names, as really the heads of the parties into which the Corinthians had divided: but to show the evil of the thing itself, and the absurdity of dividing the Church, out of a disposition inordinately to honour some particular teacher; or to despise faithful ministers under pretence of honouring Christ. However respectable the names might be which were thus used, the thing was indefensible: but it would give less umbrage for him to mention Apollos and Cephas, than expressly to name the false teachers, who were the authors of the discord. He therefore demanded of the Corinthians, whether Christ and his salvation, or his mystical body, could be thus divided, and one part set in opposition to another? Had Paul, or had any of their other teachers, acquired a right to them by atoning for their sins on the cross? Or had any of them been baptized in the name of Paul, as his disciples, who were in all things without reserve to be devoted to him and honour him? As things had turned out, he was thankful, that he had baptized so few of them; lest his opponents, should have averred that he baptized them in his own name. He could recollect but a few, whom he had baptized; (nor was it necessary that he should be immediately inspired with the remembrance of so immaterial a fact;) the rest had been baptized by others, according to the appointment of Christ, without any mention of the apostle's name in it, as they very well knew.—The word rendered *contentions*, is properly *schisms*; and the marginal references will show the reader who understands Greek, the several places in which it is used in the New Testament. The word here evidently signifies *divisions* or *discords*, among persons who held the same grand doctrines, and met together for worship in the same grand ordinances. Thus *schisms*, as the word is here used, differed from *heresies*, which related to *doctrines*: yet the meaning varies materially from the modern use of the term.

[d] unto us which are saved, it is the power of God.

19 For it is written, [e] I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

20 Where [f] *is* the wise? where *is* the scribe? where *is* the disputer of this world? [g] hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

21 For after that, [h] in the wisdom of God, [i] the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by [k] the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

22 For [l] the Jews require a sign, and [m] the Greeks seek after wisdom:

23 But [n] we preach Christ crucified, [o] unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks [p] foolishness;

24 But unto them which are [q] called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ [r] the power of God, and [s] the wisdom of God.

d 24 Ps. cx 2, 3. Rom i 16. 2 Cor x 4, 5 1 Thes. i. 5. Heb. iv 12

e iii 19. Job v. 12, 13. Is. xix. 3 11. xxix. 14 Jer. viii. 9.

f Is xxxiii. 18. liii 1

g 19. 2 Sam. xv 31. xvi. 23. xvii. 14 23. Job xii. 17. 20. 24. Is. xliv. 25. Rom i. 22.

h 24. Dan. ii. 20. Rom. xi. 33. Eph iii 10.

i Mat. xi 25. Luke x 21. Rom. i. 20—22. 28.

k *See on*, 18.

l Matt xii 38, 39. xvi. 1—4 Mark viii 11, 12 Luke xi. 16 29 John ii. 18. iv. 48

m Acts xvii 18—21.

n 18 ii. 2. Luke xxiv. 46, 47. Acts viii. 32—35. x. 39—43. 2 Cor. iv. 5. Gal iii. 1 vi. 14. Eph. iii 8.

o Is. viii. 14, 15. Matt. xi. 6. Luke ii. 34 John vi. 53—61. Rom. ix 32, 33. Gal v. 11 1 Pet. ii. 8.——p 18. ii. 14.——q 2. 9. Luke vii. 35. Rom viii. 28—30. ix. 24. r 18. Rom i. 4 16.——s 30. Prov. viii. 1. 22—30. Col. ii. 3.

V. 17--19. Some persons, supposing the administration of sacraments to be the most honourable part of the ministerial work, have conjectured several reasons why St. Paul did not baptize the Corinthian converts; but the reason which he assigns entirely subverts these imaginations. Christ did not send his apostle to baptize men in his name, (which outward form might be administered, with equal validity, by those of inferior station and endowments,) but to preach the Gospel, which was a far more important and difficult service. So that he left others to baptize those who embraced the truth. But some of the Corinthians might be ready to think that he was not so competent to preach the Gospel as this statement seemed to imply; and he readily allowed, that he had not used the wisdom of words, or those plausible reasonings, rhetorical flourishes, and arts of oratory, with which they were so fascinated by some teachers. For Christ had sent him to deliver an important message in plain language; and he was aware that such decorations, instead of giving efficacy to his doctrine, would degrade it, and even render "the "cross of Christ of none effect." These studied arts of pleasing would have enervated the solemn affecting subject, and obscured its glory. If, indeed, the preacher did not seek his own honour, in the display of these endowments, he would at least excite men's attention to him, and admiration of him, rather than of his message; and the Holy Spirit would not accompany the word by his new-creating power, when the credit would be given to the instrument rather than to the Agent. In fact, the preaching of salvation for lost sinners, by the ignominious and agonizing crucifixion of the incarnate Son of God, was foolishness to all those who continued in the way to destruction. The sensual, the covetous, and the ambitious, must perceive that it was incompatible with their favourite pursuits; the Pharisee and the moralist would exclaim against it, as needless, and tending to licentiousness. The Scribe, the Sadducee, and the heathen philosopher, would each have his reasons for deriding and reviling it, and the Antinomian would *foolishly* suppose, that Christ was crucified to procure for him the licence of gratifying his evil propensities. But they, who were brought into a state of salvation by "faith of the operation of God," knew this despised doctrine to be the suitable means, by which the power of God wrought, in pulling down the kingdom of Satan, and converting sinners to himself. And as to the opinion of the wise men of the world, God had declared that he would destroy their wisdom, and bring it to nothing. (*Notes, Job* v. 13. *Is.* xxix. 14.)

V. 20--24. (*Note, Is.* xxxiii. 18.) The wise philosophers, the learned scribes, and the disputers of the world, were in general employed in confuting each others systems: they scarcely agreed in any thing, except in rejecting and despising the Gospel: and it was evident that their wisdom and learning had been of little use to mankind. What indeed had they achieved? What traces of their success, in meliorating the state of the world, could be discovered? And could it be denied, that God had exposed the folly of this kind of wisdom in the most conspicuous manner? In his infinite wisdom, he had left a great part of the world to follow the dictates of their own boasted reason; and the event had demonstrated, that the wisdom of fallen man was incompetent to find out or retain the knowledge of God his Creator; so that idolatry, atheism, or skepticism, was the universal effect. When this experiment had been sufficiently tried, it pleased God to send forth his apostles and evangelists, to preach that doctrine which was derided as foolishness, and they delivered their message in the most artless and unadorned manner; when, behold, most wonderful effects followed! Vast multitudes believed the report, were saved from idolatry and iniquities, and became the worshippers and servants of the living God! The Jewish Scribes indeed, not satisfied with all the demonstrations from miracles and prophecies that Jesus was the Messiah, as not savouring his spiritual salvation, demanded a sign from heaven, and waited for a Messiah who should come with outward observation: and the Greeks wanted a doctrine adapted to their philosophy, and supported by similar reasonings and speculations. But the servants of God "preached Christ "crucified:" this was the grand peculiarity of their doctrine, the centre of their instructions, and the topic with which they enforced all their exhortations. This doctrine of a crucified Messiah; this testimony, that he, who had been put to death by the rulers of the Jews as an impostor, was their long expected Deliverer and King, to whom all subjection was due, and from whom all blessings were to be expected, was a stumbling-stone to the Jews, who took offence at it, and persisted in unbelief: whilst the philosophizing Greeks derided, as the excess of folly, the idea that *a Jew*, and one whom that nation had crucified with ignominy, should be honoured as the Governor and Judge of all mankind, trusted as the only Saviour from everlasting misery, and even adored as the infinite and almighty God. But all they, whether Jews or Gentiles, who were called according to God's eternal purpose, not only saw the power of God in the miracles by which the Gospel was

25 Because [t] the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how [u] that not many wise men after the flesh, [x] not many mighty, not many noble, *are called:*

27 But God [y] hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty;

28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea,* and [z] things which are not, [a] to bring to nought things that are:

29 That [b] no flesh should glory in his presence.

30 But of him are ye [c] in Christ Jesus, who [d] of God is made unto us [e] Wisdom, and [f] Righteousness, and [g] Sanctification, and [h] Redemption:

31 That, according as it is written, [i] He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

t 18. 27–29. Ex. xiii. 17. xiv. 2–4 Josh. vi. 2–5. Judg. vii. 2–8. xv. 15, 16. 1 Sam. xvii. 40–51. 1 Kings xx. 14, &c. Zech. iv. 6, 7. xii. 7, 8. Rom. xi. 33–36.
u 20 ii. 3–6. 13. iii. 18–20 Matt. xi. 25, 26. Luke x. 21. John vii 47–49. Jam. iii. 13–17.
x Luke i. 3. *Gr.* xviii. 24, 25. John iv. 46–53. xix. 38, 39. Acts xiii. 7. 12. xvii. 34. Phil. iv. 22. Jam. i. 9–11. ii. 5. 2 John 1.
y Ps. viii 2. Is. xxvi. 5, 6 xxix 14. 19. Zeph. iii. 12 Matt. iv. 18–22. ix. 9. xxi. 16. Luke xix. 39, 40. xxi. 15. Acts iv. 11–21. vi. 9, 10. vii. 35 54. xvii. 18. xxiv. 24, 25. 2 Cor. iv. 7. x. 4, 5. 10.——z Rom. iv. 17. 2 Cor. xii. 11.

a ii. 6. Deut. xxviii. 63. Job xxxiv. 19, 20. 24. Ps. xxxiii. 10. xxxvii 35, 36. Is. ii. 11. 17 xvii. 13, 14. xxxvii. 36 xli. 12. Dan. ii. 34, 35. 44, 48. Rev. xviii. 17.
b 31. iv. 7. v. 6. Ps xlix. 6. Is. x. 15. Jer. ix. 23 Rom. iii. 19. 27 iv. 2. xv. 17. Eph. ii 9.
c xii. 18 27. Is. xlv. 17. John xv. 1–6. xvii. 21–23. Rom. viii. 1 xii. 5. xvi. 7. 11. 2 Cor. v. 17. xii. 2. Eph. i. 3, 4. ii 10.——d Rom. xi 36. 2 Cor. v. 18–21.——e 24. xii. 8. Prov. i 20. ii. 6. viii. 5. Dan. ii. 20. Luke xxi. 15 John i. 18. viii. 12. xiv. 6. xvii 8 26 2 Cor iv. 6. Eph i 17, 18. iii. 9, 10 Col ii. 2, 3 iii. 16 2 Tim. iii. 15–17. Jam. i. 5.——f Ps. lxxi. 15, 16. Is. xlv. 24, 25. liv. 17. Jer xxiii 6. xxxiii. 16. Dan. ix. 24. Rom. i. 17. iii. 21–24. iv. 6. v. 19. 21 2 Cor. v. 21 Phil. iii. 9. 2 Pet. i. 1.——g 2. vi. 11. Matt. i. 21. John xvii. 17–19. Acts xxvi 18. Rom. viii. 9. Gal v. 22–24. Eph. ii 10 v. 26. 1 Pet. i. 2. 1 John v. 6.——h xv. 54–57. Hos. xiii. 14. Rom. iii. 24. viii 23. Gal. i. 4 iii. 13 Eph. i. 7. iv. 30. Col. i 14. Tit ii. 14. Heb. ix. 12. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. Rev. v. 9 xiv. 4.——i 1 Chr. xvi. 10. 35 Ps. cv. 3. Is. xli. 16. xlv. 25. Jer. iv. 2. ix. 24. 2 Cor. x. 17. Gal vi. 13, 14. Phil iii. 3. *Gr.*

confirmed, in the resurrection of Christ, and in the accomplishment of ancient prophecies; and his wisdom in the glorious plan of redemption, as harmoniously honouring all the divine perfections and magnifying the divine law: but they experienced Christ to be "the Power and "Wisdom of God," to deliver them from the bondage of sin, and to make them wise unto salvation; and they observed him and his Gospel to be the grand medium, by which the power and wisdom of God were displayed, in the subversion of Satan's kingdom of idolatry and sin, and in confounding all the subtle devices of him and his servants.

V. 25. Those doctrines and dispensations of God, which proud men decried as foolish and weak, were far superior in wisdom, and much more efficacious, than all that men ever could have devised and attempted for the same or similar purposes. Thus the doctrine of salvation by faith in a crucified Jew, which appeared to the carnal mind a foolish device, and the preaching of it by unlearned and obscure persons, which appeared a weak expedient, had, by the power of God accompanying it, done more in a few years towards making men wise and holy, than all the learning of Jewish scribes and Pagan philosophers, or the power of armed legislators, had ever been able to effect, or ever would have effected to the end of time.

V. 26–31. The persons who had been converted to Christianity, and then sent forth to preach the Gospel, were a living demonstration of what the apostle inculcated. This the Corinthians might see for themselves; for as the Gospel had not been preached to them "with "wisdom of words," or with a display of learning and philosophy, so but very few of the sages, politicians, mighty princes, or warriors, or of the noble and honourable of the earth, had embraced it. They had perhaps heard of a few instances of this kind, in whom the omnipotence of divine grace had been displayed. The persons, however, whom God had employed in preaching the Gospel, seem especially intended; and the words, "*are* "*called,*" which seem to favour the other interpretation, are not in the original. (*Marg. Ref.*) The apostles and evangelists, and other ministers, whom God had chosen to publish his salvation to mankind, were not in general called to that service from the schools of the learned, from the courts of princes, or from noble families and eminent stations. On the contrary, they were men whom the world counted *foolish*, because not remarkable for eminent talents, and because destitute of human learning; and, indeed, such persons were selected for this purpose, that by them God might confound the proud reasonings and scornful objections of heathen philosophers and Jewish Rabbies. In like manner he had chosen men of low birth and mean circumstances, unarmed fishermen, tent makers, and others destitute of authority, power, and influence, not renowned for courage and vigour of mind, but gentle and mild in their deportment, that, having endued them with heavenly wisdom and strength, and enabled them to confirm their testimony by stupendous miracles, he might, by their holy lives and heroic constancy, their patient sufferings and successful labours, shame and confound the mighty of the earth. God had even chosen some, who had previously been of immoral characters and disreputable professions, that, being made wise, holy, and useful in the ministry, by his grace and blessing, they might confound and astonish those who formerly counted them even beneath contempt. Nay, he had raised up eminent ministers from among the Gentiles, who, in the proud language and sentiments of the Jews, were considered as scarcely existing in respect of God and religion, that he might by them confound and shame the Scribes, Pharisees, and unbelieving Jews. In short, the Lord had ordered every thing, respecting the conversion of sinners, the preachers of the Gospel, the plan of redemption, and the way of acceptance, in such a manner, as to give no one of the human species any ground of boasting or "glorying in his presence," either in respect of abilities, learning, noble birth, privileges, achievements, moral character, or natural good dispositions, or any other distinction, either before or after conversion. Why then should the Corinthians so value these endowments in their teachers, when God had evidently poured contempt on them? Even that distinction, in which alone they might glory, was not in any respect of themselves. By the sovereign choice and regenerating grace of God, they, sinners of the Gentiles, were in Christ Jesus, who, by his

CHAP. II.

The apostle declares, that he had not come among the Corinthians “with excellency of speech and wisdom,” but had preached Christ crucified, with plainness and humble diffidence; that their faith might stand in the power of God alone, 1—5. *The Gospel contains the hidden wisdom*

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appointment and free mercy was made to all believers the whole of salvation. For they being in themselves ignorant, foolish, guilty, polluted, enslaved, and condemned, Christ was constituted to each of them, “Wisdom,” that by his word and Spirit, and from his fulness and treasures of wisdom and knowledge, they might receive that instruction and counsel, which would render them wise unto salvation, and fit for every service to which they were called; “and Righteousness,” that being justified by his obedience unto death imputed to them, and “made the righteousness of God in him,” they might possess a title to eternal life; “and Sanctification,” that by the power of the Spirit of Christ they might be gradually renewed to his image, and made perfect in holiness, and meetness for their heavenly inheritance; “and Redemption,” that by his power and grace being delivered from the bondage of sin and Satan, they might at length be completely rescued from all remains and traces of this hateful slavery, and be saved from the condemnation and all the consequences of sin, till, by the redemption of the body from the grave, “death itself should be swallowed up in everlasting victory.” Thus, according to the ancient prophecy, (*Note, Jer.* ix. 23, 24.) they who “gloried, might glory in the Lord,” and in his special favour, all-sufficient grace, and inestimable salvation, though in themselves they had nothing to glory in, but every thing to be ashamed of. Here again the apostle refers to Jesus, “the Lord our Righteousness and Strength,” what the prophet had spoken of JEHOVAH. (*Marg. Ref.*) ‘They who say, that Christ is made our Righteousness by his righteousness imputed to us, have the same reason to say also, that he is made our Wisdom, by his wisdom imputed to us,’ &c. (*Whitby.*) There might be some weight in this objection, if this were the only passage of Scripture, by which they, who hold imputed righteousness, support their doctrine, if there were any other passages in the sacred oracles, which even seem to countenance the notion of imputed wisdom, &c. and if the nature of the case were not essentially different. Another may pay my debt, and allow me to receive the wages which he has earned; thus his payment and his labour are set down to my account, or imputed to me for my adequate advantage; but who can have wisdom, health, or liberty, by imputation?' (*Notes, Rom.* iii. iv.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

The true Church of God comprises all those, in every place, who are “sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints,” who call on him as “God manifest in the flesh,” for all the blessings of salvation, and who acknowledge and obey him as their Lord, and the Lord of all saints, of all men, and of all creatures; and it includes no other persons. In behalf of all such, we should pray continually for an increase of grace and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ; we should thank God for the grace bestowed on them by Jesus Christ, with an especial remembrance of those with whom we are more immediately connected, and we should rejoice in those gifts, and that knowledge by which the testimony of Christ is confirmed among them. But ministers, with a mixture of authority and affection, should remind their flocks, that an account must be given of all their advantages at the coming of Christ, and call on them daily to wait and prepare for that event. He will confirm his true disciples unto the end; and they may confidently trust in him to preserve them blameless to that day, and to “present them faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.” But many appear to be Christians, and are endued with useful gifts, who have not been called to the fellowship of Christ; it is therefore highly proper to exhort all who profess the Gospel, to prove the reality of their faith, and the sincerity of their love, and to wait for the coming of their Lord, by watchfulness, diligence, and a careful improvement of their talents. How striking is the contrast, between the language of the apostle in these verses and that of many modern divines! The name of the Lord Jesus Christ was *to him* the sweetest melody, or “as ointment poured forth;” *they* seem to fear nothing so much, as a too frequent or too honourable mention of him! and, whatever repetitions they may fall into, they will be sure to offend no man, by too often enlarging upon his dignity and condescension, his love and atoning sufferings, his character and offices, his merits and salvation!

V. 10—16.

Satan hath always endeavoured to stir up strife among Christians, as one of his grand devices against the Gospel; we should therefore use all our influence to prevail with them, by the name and for the honour of our common Lord, to avoid contests of every kind, and as much as possible to speak the same thing, and to be perfectly joined together in the same mind and judgment; and we should persevere in praying for this most desirable harmony. For it must greatly pain every serious and judicious believer, to see or hear of the divisions, which take place, through the spiritual pride, ambition, selfishness, and malignant passions, of turbulent and designing men, and through the prejudices, instability, want of judgment, love of novelty, and eager spirit of some real believers. Thus the Church is divided into parties, congregations are distracted by intestine contentions, and men are drawn away from their faithful pastors, to rank themselves under the banners of some confident deceiver, who “privily brings in damnable heresies,” couched in plausible language, propagated under specious pretences, and varnished over by an ingenuity which might have been better employed. Thus professed Christians become the disciples of men, and, regardless of the apostle’s expostulations, they still glory *of God in bringing men to glory, which could not be discovered by any sagacity of man,* 6—9; *but God by his Spirit had revealed it,* 10—13. *The natural man cannot receive it, because it is spiritually discerned: but the spiritual man judgeth all things, and is judged of no man,* 14—16.

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in ranking themselves among the partisans of this or the other preacher, as if Christ were divided! Or as if that teacher whom they extol, while they despise others, had been crucified for them, or they had been baptized in his name, and vowed to be his faithful soldiers unto their lives' end! We should be very thankful, if we have been preserved from giving sanction, or even occasion, to such disgraceful contests; we should carefully avoid all appearance of seeking our own credit, instead of the glory of Christ; and pray continually for "the meekness "of wisdom," that we may know how to counteract the pestilent endeavours of the firebrands of the Church, without giving them any handle or plausible pretence against us.

V. 17—25.

They, whom Christ sends to preach his Gospel, are often incapable, and should never be studious, of "that "wisdom of words," which carnal men admire; nor should the hearers of the Gospel look for such worthless decorations of that divine doctrine, which is most beautiful in its native simplicity. Too often "the cross of "Christ is rendered of none effect," through the vain affectation of the preachers to recommend it by the affected graces of elocution, or the ostentatious parade of learning and philosophy. Thus its edge is blunted, its convincing plainness is obscured, its genuine beauty and glory are tarnished; the preacher has his worthless reward in human applause or useless popularity: but the Spirit of God disdains to set his seal to the word thus preached; it proves the mere shadow of a feast, at which the guests are starved; and an amusing display of ingenuity, instead of an assault on the strong holds of Satan by the power of divine truth. Indeed, all attempts to make the real Gospel palatable to worldly men must be unsuccessful: it always was and always will be foolishness to such as are in the road to destruction; and the only way to render it *inoffensive* is, to leave out, or slightly touch upon, *the offensive parts of it:* and this is too commonly done, when preachers study to embellish their doctrine, and recommend themselves, by the wisdom of words or the excellency of speech. But the true minister of Christ is no man-pleaser: he will with great plainness of speech deliver his whole message, however it may be derided or reviled; that by it, as a sure touch-stone, men may learn their real state and character. Thus, while to numbers it appears foolish, to those who are saved it proves the power of God. It is his determination to "destroy the wisdom "of the wise, and to bring to nothing the understanding "of the prudent:" he will not honour carnal weapons, or self-sufficient instruments: he will pour contempt on carnal wisdom; and will abase, either in deep humiliation or final destruction, all the learned scribes, the wise philosophers, and the eager disputers of the world. Such persons are indeed commonly found among the despisers or opposers of the doctrine of Christ crucified: but what have they done towards rendering the world wise and holy? Or what have they to propose so excellent, as to merit a preference to that Gospel which they reject? Undeniable facts evince the folly of this wisdom, and show that, amidst all the displays of the eternal power and God-head with which we are surrounded, human reason and learning know him not, but uniformly lead men to idolatry, impiety, or infidelity: and on the other hand, it hath pleased God, from age to age, by "the foolishness of preaching," (the despised doctrine of salvation by faith in a crucified Saviour, God in human nature, "purchasing the Church "with his own blood,") to save multitudes, even all that believe, from ignorance, delusion, and vice; and to make them meet for his heavenly kingdom. For the true minister of God insists especially upon this great doctrine, which is no less a stumbling-block to some and foolishness to others, at present, than it was in the apostle's days; but which is known and experienced to be the wisdom and power of God to all, who partake of the high and gracious calling of God in Christ Jesus.

V. 26—31.

There is scarcely a stronger demonstration of man's depravity, blindness, and folly, than this circumstance, that neither facts nor arguments can repress his arrogance in treating the wisdom of God manifested in the Gospel as foolishness, the power of God as weakness, though no human devices or efforts have ever produced effects in the least comparable to those, which have been and are wrought by it. Let them then call it folly, enthusiasm, weakness, madness, or what they please; may we show in our lives, that it is a wise, holy, and blessed doctrine, and we shall feel in our hearts, that it gives "a peace of God, "which passeth all understanding." And though we too see that but few of the wise, the mighty, the noble of this world, are called to the knowledge of the truth, or employed to promote the cause of righteousness, yet we perceive also, that God employs the foolish, weak, despised, and base of this world, to confound the devices and expose the folly of the wise, to disappoint the designs of the mighty, and to disgrace and bring into contempt the honourable of the earth; so that in every thing he takes care, that no flesh should glory in his presence. But let us not fear knowing how foolish, guilty, polluted, and enslaved, we are; for by deep convictions of this kind the Holy Spirit leads poor sinners to believe in Christ, who of God is "made to them Wis-"dom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption:" so that having all in him, they may be satisfied to have nothing as of themselves; and when most covered with shame, filled with deep remorse and self-abhorrence, they may yet "glory in the Lord and his salvation;" and hope to glorify him on earth, and to be preserved as monuments of his love, to praise him for ever in his heavenly felicity.

AND I, brethren, [a] when I came to you, came not [b] with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you [c] the testimony of God:

2 For I determined [d] not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

3 And I was with you [e] in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

4 And [f] my speech and my preaching *was* [g] not with [*] enticing words of man's wisdom, [h] but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

5 That your faith should not [†] stand in the wisdom of men, [i] but in the power of God.

6 Howbeit, we speak wisdom among [k] them that are perfect: yet [l] not the wisdom of this world, nor [m] of the princes of this world, that [n] come to nought:

7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, [o] *even* the hidden *wisdom*, which God ordained before the world [p] unto our glory;

8 Which [q] none of the princes of this world knew: [r] for had they known *it*,

a Acts xviii. 1—4.
b 4 13. i. 17. Ex. iv 10 Jer. i 6 7. Rom xvi. 18. 2 Cor x 10. xi. 6.
c i 6. Is viii 20. Acts xx 21. xxii. 18. 2 Thes i. 10. 1 Tim. ii. 6. 2 Tim. i. 8. 1 John iv. 14 v. 11—13 Rev. i. 2. 9 xix 10.
d i. 22—25 John xvii 3 Gal. iii. 1 vi 14. Phil. iii. 8-10.
e iv 10—13 Acts xviii 6—11. xx. 18, 19. 2 Cor. iv. 1. 7—12. 16. vi. 4. vii. 5. x 1. 10. xi 29 30. xii. 5—10. xiii. 4 Gal. iv. 13, 14.
f Acts xx. 17.
g 1. 13. i 17 Judg xiv 15. xvi. 5 2 Sam. xiv. 17—20. xv. 2—6. 2 Kings xxii. 13, 14. 2 Chr xviii. 19—21 Prov. vii 21. xx. 19. Jer. xx. 10. Ez. xiii. 6 10, 11. Rom xvi. 18 Col. ii. 4. 2 Pet i. 16. ii. 18.——* Or, *persuasible* Acts xxvi. 28 Gal. i. 10.——h iv. 20. John xvi 8—15. Rom. xv. 19. 1 Thes. i. 5. 1 Pet. i. 12.

† Gr. *be.*
i i. 17. iii. 6. Acts xvi. 14. 2 Cor. iv. 7. vi. 7
k xiv 20. *Gr* Job i. 1. Ps xxxvii. 37. Matt v. 48. xix 21. 2 Cor. xiii. 11. Eph. iv. 11—13. Phil. iii. 12—15. Col iv. 12 Heb. v. 14. Jam iii. 2. 1 Pet v. 10.
l 1. 13. i 18, 19. Luke xvi 8. 2 Cor. i. 12. iv 4. Eph. ii 2. Jam. iii. 15.
m 8 Job xii. 19. 21. Ps. ii. 1—6. Is. xix. 11—13. xl. 23. Acts iv. 25—28
n *See on*, i. 28
o Ps lxxviii 2. Is. xlviii. 6, 7. Matt. xi. 25. xiii. 35. Rom. xvi. 25, 26 Eph i 4. iii. 4—9 Col. i 26, 27. 2 Tim. i. 9 1 Pet. i. 11, 12 Rev xiii. 8 ——p 1 Pet. v. 1. 10. 2 Pet. i. 3.——q 6. i. 26—28. Matt. xi. 25. John vii 48.——r Luke xxiii. 34. John iii. 19—21 viii. 19. ix. 39—41. xii. 40—43. xv 22—25. xvi. 3. Acts iii. 17. xiii. 27. 2 Cor. iii. 14. 1 Tim. i. 13.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. When the apostle came, as a Jewish stranger, among the polite, speculating, and licentious Corinthians, he did not attempt to catch their attention by affected elegancy or sublimity of language, by the trappings of human oratory, or by the speculations of philosophy. For his object was to declare the testimony of God, concerning the only method of salvation from eternal misery, and of obtaining eternal life, and such a message would not admit of these worthless embellishments. Whatever knowledge therefore he possessed, either of Rabbinical or Grecian learning, he determined to keep it out of sight, and to preach, as if he had known no other subject than that of Jesus the Messiah, even him who was crucified, and who was generally desipsed and execrated; and those things that related to redemption for sinners through his blood. This was the centre and substance of his preaching; but it is evident that he did not confine himself wholly to this one topic, so as to exclude other parts of the revealed truth and will of God: for we are sure, from his own writings, that he preached man's relation to God, as his Creator, Benefactor, and Governor: the glorious perfections and the holy law of God; the future judgment and an eternal state of righteous retributions: the lost estate of man, regeneration, repentance, conversion, the necessity of personal holiness, attention to relative duties; and, in short, "the whole counsel "of God," as the great circumference to that circle, of which Christ crucified is the centre, in which all the lines meet. But, upon the most mature deliberation, he had determined to know nothing, even among the refined and philosophical Corinthians, which did not elucidate, recommend, evince, or adorn, this great doctrine of salvation by the cross of Christ. *Declaring.* (καταγγελλων)—The apostle came as a *messenger* simply to deliver a message. What extraordinary claims are advanced, what pretensions made in this chapter! How pointed is it upon the subject of inspiration! If the sacred writers were in any degree *true* men, they were men fully *inspired* in all which they taught concerning religion. The miracles which they wrought prove them *true* men, whatever their pretensions might be, and their own words show what these pretensions were.

V. 3—5. In adhering to this determination, the apostle had been deeply sensible of his own weakness and insufficiency, and aware of the predjudices and opposition which he had to encounter: and he was even oppressed with much fear and trembling, lest his infirmity should prevent his success, or disgrace his glorious doctrine. So that he had acted among the Corinthians with much diffidence, modesty, and meekness, and without any thought of making himself the head of a party, as some of their present teachers did. His address and style of preaching had been entirely devoid of "the persuasive words of human wisdom," which often seduced men into error, and enticed them into the views of designing orators, by moving the passions, impressing the imagination, and imposing on the judgment. On the contrary, he left the success of it to be produced entirely "by the demonstration of the Spirit," and the exertion of his divine power. This many expositors understand *exclusively* of the miracles, by which the Holy Spirit powerfully demonstrated the truth of the Gospel; or the prophecies, which were fulfilled in those things which the apostle preached concerning Jesus and his salvation: but these proofs, however conclusive, without the internal operation of the Holy Spirit, as the Author of divine life in regeneration, would not have produced true faith; and it is unreasonable to confine the expression to those operations which were peculiar to one age, and to exclude such as are alike necessary, and to be depended on, in every age. The annexed reason, however, puts it beyond all reasonable doubt that the latter were principally intended: for the apostle would use no other arts of persuasion, than that plain and faithful address to the hearts and consciences of men, which the Spirit of God always makes use of in convincing them of sin, and in powerfully demonstrating the truth and preciousness of the Gospel to their souls: because he would not have their "faith to stand on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God." Now that faith, which is produced by outward miracles, and wholly rests on them, is no more saving or to be depended on than that which is the effect of logical reasonings or eloquent persuasions: (*Acts* viii. 13:) but the faith, which is the effect of the inward and powerful teaching and demonstration of the Spirit, rests on the power of God, and is supported by it; and will certainly endure through all trials even to the end.

they would not have crucified [s] the Lord of glory.

9 But as it is written, [t] Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, [u] the things which God hath prepared for [x] them that love him.

10 But [y] God hath revealed *them* unto us [z] by his Spirit: for [a] the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, [b] the deep things of God.

11 For [c] what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? [d] Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, [e] not the spirit of the world, [f] but the Spirit which is of God; [g] that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God:

13 Which things also we speak, [h] not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, [i] but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing [k] spiritual things with spiritual.

14 But [l] the natural man [m] receiveth not [n] the things of the Spirit of God:

s Ps. xxiv. 7—10. Acts iii. 15. vii. 2. Jam. ii. 1.
t Is. lxiv. 4. John iii 16. 1 Pet. i. 12.
u Ps xxxi. 19 Matt. xx. 23. xxv. 34. Heb. xi. 16.
x Rom. viii. 28. Jam. i. 12. ii 5 1 John iv. 19
y xiv 30 Am iii. 7. Matt. xi. 25—27. xiii. 11 xvi. 17. Luke ii. 26 x. 21. Eph iii 3. 5 1 Pet i 12. Rev i. 1
z Is xlviii. 16. lix 21. John xiv. 26. xvi. 13. 1 John ii 20 27.
a 11. xii 8—11. Rom viii. 26,27.
b Job xii. 22. Ps. xcii. 5, 6. Dan. ii 22. Rom. xi. 33—36.——c Prov. xiv. 10. xx. 5. 27. Jer. xvii 9.
d 10. Rom. xi 33.
e 6 Rom. viii. 5, 6 2 Cor iv. 4. Eph. ii. 2. Jam. iv. 5. 1 John iv. 4, 5. v. 19. Rev. xii. 9.
f Rom viii 15,16.
g iii. 22. John xvi. 14, 15 Rom. viii 32 1 John ii. 20. 27. Rev. xxi. 6.
h 4. i. 17. 2 Pet. i 16.
i xii 1—3 xiv. 2. Luke xii. 12. Acts ii. 4. 1 Pet. i. 12.
k 14. ix 11. x. 3—5. Eph. v. 13. Col. iii 16
l xv. 44. 46. Jam. iii. 15 Jude 19. *Gr.*
m Matt xvi. 23. John iii 3—6 viii. 43. x. 26, 27. xii. 37, 38. Rom. viii. 5—8.——n 12. John xiv. 26. xv. 26. xvi. 8—15.

V. 6—9. Though the apostle disclaimed all pretensions to human wisdom or learning, yet he would not allow his preaching to be really foolishness. Indeed, he and other faithful ministers spake *wisdom* among those that were *perfect;* that is, who were so matured in judgment, experience, and spirituality, as to be able to receive it. To such persons they laid open the rich treasures of the wisdom of God, in his method of saving sinners, and in the dispensations of providence; and thus they excited their admiring adoration, and rendered them wise and intelligent in divine things, and, in respect of their true interest and whole duty, far beyond all other persons in the world. If therefore the Corinthians had not been initiated into the depths of this divine wisdom, it was because they were not proper recipients of them. But this wisdom was totally distinct from, and even in many things contrary to, the wisdom of this world, and of its princes and rulers, whose sagacity and policy would not prevent the speedy termination of all their grandeur, and their everlasting ruin, or that of their subjects and flatterers. For it was the wisdom of God as contained in a mystery, even in the mysterious design of glorifying his holy name, and all his perfections, in the redemption of sinners, by the incarnation and atoning sacrifice of his co-equal Son. This was ordained and intended by him before the world began, in order to bring his chosen people to everlasting glory; but it had been entirely hidden from men, except as made known by revelation, and as faith simply received that information. So that the Gentiles, with all their speculations, knew nothing of this wisdom; the unbelieving Jews and their most learned Scribes were wholly unacquainted with it; the old dispensation had only conveyed some general intimations of it, but, the Gospel had now discovered it more fully to all, who were brought to embrace it. Yet none of the princes or great men in the world's estimation had known any thing of it; nay, their policy was diametrically opposite to it; for had Pilate, Herod, Caiaphas, or the Jewish rulers, understood this divine mystery, they would at least, by fear, have been restrained from crucifying the Lord of glory, that divine Person, who, even when he hung upon the cross, was the Lord and King of glory, God in human nature, the Governor and Judge of all the world. Thus the prophecies had been accomplished, and what had of old been written by Isaiah might be applied to the glorious redemption now proclaimed to mankind, and the blessings conferred on and prepared for those who were taught by the grace of the Gospel to love and obey God; and which far exceeded all that had been seen, heard, or thought of, by men. (*Note, Is.* lxiv. 4.)

V. 10—13. The apostle, and the other preachers of salvation by Jesus Christ, had not discovered the mysteries of divine wisdom by their own superior sagacity; but God had revealed it to them by his Spirit; who not only searched all hearts, but was intimately acquainted with the deep things of God, and all the inmost counsels of his infinite mind. For as no man can penetrate the recesses of another's heart, and know the whole of his thoughts and intentions, in the same way that his own soul is conscious of them, so none can know, discover, or comprehend the things of God, but his own infinite Spirit, who is One with the Father and the Son in the unity of the Godhead, and whose office it is to reveal divine mysteries to his Church. (*Matt.* xi. 27.) This should be noted as a most decisive testimony both to the Deity and personality of the Holy Spirit. Now the apostles had not received the spirit of the world; they were not actuated by those worldly principles, nor guided by that carnal prudence, of which Satan, "the spirit that worketh in the "children of disobedience," is the concealed author: but they were inspired and actuated by the Spirit of God, that they might know and communicate to the Church the things which God freely bestows on all believers. These they declared, not in such words as carnal wisdom would have suggested, but in simple plain language dictated by the Holy Spirit; which sacred style was formed by comparing one part of divine revelation with another; the spiritual nature of redemption with the holiness of the divine character and law; the former discoveries of the truth and will of God with these later ones; the types and prophecies, with their accomplishment; and the remedy proposed with the state of mankind, and their need of it. Thus their spiritual meditations, discoveries, and affections, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, led them to use a solemn, energetic, and faithful method of speaking; which accorded to the majesty and importance of their subject, and the style of the sacred oracles, but totally different from the affected oratory or enticing words of man's wisdom. The apostle here undoubtedly speaks of himself as divinely inspired, both in what he preached, and in what he wrote.

for [o] they are foolishness unto him: [p] neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

15 But [q] he that is spiritual * judgeth all things, [r] yet he himself is † judged of no man.

16 For [s] who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he ‡ may instruct him? [t] but we have the mind of Christ.

o i. 18. 23. John viii. 51, 52. x 20. Acts xvii. 18. 32. xviii. 15 xxv. 19. xxvi 24,25.
p Prov. xiv. 6. John v. 44. vi. 44, 45. Acts xvi. 14. 2 Cor. iv. 4—6. 1 John ii. 20. 27. v. 20. Jude 19.——q iii. 1. xiv. 37. Gal. vi. 1 Col. i. 9 ——* Or, *discerneth*. 2 Sam. xiv. 17. 1 Kings iii. 9—11. Ps. xxv. 14. Prov. xxviii. 5. Ec. viii. 5. John vii. 17. Eph. iv. 13, 14. Phil. i. 10. *Gr.* 1 Thes v. 21. Heb. v. 14. 1 John iv. 1.
r iv 5. 2 Sam. xii. 16—23. Acts xv. 1—5 xvi. 3. Gal. ii. 3—5.
† Or, *discerned*.
s Job xv. 8. xxii. 2. xl. 2. Is. xl. 13, 14, Jer. xxiii. 18. Rom. xi. 34.
‡ Gr *shall*.
t John xv. 15. xvi. 13—16. xvii. 6—8. Gal i. 12. Eph. iii. 3, 4.

V. 14—16. It was not to be expected that the faithful and solemn preaching of the Gospel would please mankind in general, as “the *natural* man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.” The term here used hath occasioned much disputation; but as it is derived from a word, that sometimes at least signifies the rational soul, it may be supposed to have reference to the powers of his mind, as well as to his inferior inclinations. ‘It is opposed to the regenerate man, and to the glorified, that is, the perfectly regenerated man. A man that hath only natural abilities and perfections.’ (*Leigh*.) One that has not the Spirit of God. (*Marg. Ref.*) The apostle's argument absolutely requires, that by “the natural man” we understand the unregenerate man, however sagacious, learned, or abstracted from sensual indulgences; for he opposes him to the *spiritual man*, and the pride of carnal reasoning is at least as opposite to spirituality as the most grovelling sensuality can be. No man, as naturally born into the world, and not supernaturally born again of the Spirit, “can see the kingdom of God,” or receive in faith and love the spiritual mysteries of redemption by the cross of Christ. To all unregenerate men, these things will in one way or other appear *foolishness*, irrational, uninteresting, unnecessary, inconsistent or absurd; and doubtless proud reasoners have scoffed at them more than ever mere sensualists did. No ingenuity, address, or reasoning of the preacher can prevent this effect; no application of the man's own mind, except in humble dependence on the teaching of the Holy Spirit, can enable him to perceive the real nature and glory of them. For they are “spiritually discerned,” that is, by the illuminating and sanctifying work of the Spirit of God upon the mind; by which a spiritual capacity is produced, that discerns, admires, loves, and delights in the divine excellency of heavenly things. When this change has taken place, and a man's spiritual senses have been matured by growth and exercise, he may be called “a spiritual man;” and he perceives the spiritual glory and excellency of every truth and precept of the word of God; he distinguishes one object from another by a spiritual taste, or a kind of *extempore* judgment, and so he becomes a competent judge in such matters. Yet his views, principles, and motives, fall not under the judgment of any other men: none of them are competent to decide on the propriety of his conduct, as they are strangers to those views and discoveries which direct his determinations. For what *natural* man hath understood the mind of the Lord, that he should be able to instruct *him* who is under the tuition of the Holy Spirit? As therefore the apostle and other inspired persons were made acquainted with the mind of Christ, by whom the Father reveals himself to men; so none of their self-appointed judges could be competent to decide, either upon their doctrine, or their manner of communicating it. They were above such instructors or censurers, who could not possibly understand the principles on which they acted. In a measure, all spiritual men “have the mind of Christ,” and natural men are incompetent judges of their conduct; yet this is in every thing to be tried by the word of God, and nothing must be justified or excused, which does not accord with that rule, when properly explained. But the inspired apostles were employed to state *that mind of Christ*, by which men's principles and actions must be judged; and in this respect they could not be liable to be judged by any man. Some indeed explain the last verse as an inquiry, whether any man had so known the mind of the Lord, as to be competent to give him any counsel or instruction? (*Notes*, *Rom*. xi. 34—36.) But the context rather fixes the meaning to the preceding interpretation; and the apostle intended to expose the absurdity of a carnal man presuming to instruct a spiritual man in respect of spiritual things, or of an ordinary Christian or teacher presuming to censure or dictate to an inspired apostle, as he thus declared himself to be. It is probable that the apostle had in mind the words of the prophet Isaiah, but he does not expressly quote them. (*Notes*, *Is*. xl. 12—17.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

How surprising is it, that this most honoured servant of Christ should be constrained to justify his excellent and useful preaching, even to the very persons who had been converted by it! But this surprise should be connected with a pleasing admiration of the divine wisdom, in taking occasion from that circumstance to give the Church most valuable instructions concerning the best method of declaring the testimony of God to sinners. This wants no excellency of speech or of wisdom to enforce it, but appears most venerable, when the witness for God is regardless of human applause or censure; when his whole soul is occupied by zeal for the honour of his Lord, and compassion for the souls of perishing sinners; when he is willing, even among the learned and polite, to be counted ignorant in other respects; when he determines “to know nothing but Christ crucified,” and the gracious message which he is sent to deliver in his name. But if this arduous service made even St. Paul to fear and tremble through conscious weakness, what reason have *we* to be humble and diffident, when called to declare the same testimony to mankind! How should we fear disgracing this honourable ministry by our own folly or sin! At what a distance should we keep from all ambition and self-confidence! How carefully should we remember that all our sufficiency is of God alone! Such humility and meekness adorn and give dignity to that holy constancy and boldness, with which we must plead the cause of God; and a realizing sense of eternal things, of the worth of souls,

CHAP. III.

The apostle shows, that he could not instruct the Corinthians in the deeper mysteries of the Gospel, because they were carnal, 1—3; *as appeared from their dissentions,* 4. *All ministers are servants to one Lord,* 5; *who employs them in cultivating his field, and in building his church,* 6—9. *The apostle had laid the only true Foundation, and others must take care what they build on it: for their work would be tried as by fire,* 10—15. *Christians are the temple of God, and must not be defiled,* 16, 17. *Worldly wisdom is foolishness with God: and none ought to glory in men; for all things belong to true believers,* 18—23.

AND I, brethren, could not speak unto you [a] as unto spiritual, but [b] as unto carnal, *even* as unto [c] babes in Christ.

2 I have [d] fed you with milk, and not with meat: [e] for hitherto ye were not able *to bear it*, neither yet now are ye able.

3 For ye are yet carnal: [f] for whereas *there is* among you envying, and strife, and * divisions, are ye not carnal, [g] and walk † as men?

a ii. 6. 15 Gal. vi. 1.
b 3, 4. ii. 14. Matt. xvi. 23. Rom. vii. 14.
c xiv. 20. Rom. ii. 20 Eph. iv. 13, 14. 1 John ii. 12.
d Heb. v. 12—14. 1 Pet. ii. 2.
e John xvi. 12. Heb. v. 11, 12.
f i. 11. vi. 1—3. xi. 18. 2 Cor. xii. 20. Gal. v. 15 19—21. Jam. iii. 16. iv. 1, 2.
* Or, *factions.*
g Hos. vi. 7 Mark vii. 21, 22. Eph. ii. 2, 3 iv. 22—24 Tit. iii. 3. 1 Pet. iv. 2.
† Gr. *according to man.*

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the danger of ungodly men, the preciousness of Christ, and the importance of our message, will counteract our natural propensity to trifling, or to an affectation of "the "enticing words of man's wisdom." The more deeply we are convinced, that no arguments or eloquence of man can by their own efficacy produce saving faith, the greater care we shall take to speak in a plain, serious, and scriptural manner, and in imitation of those preachers of old, whose word was attended with "demonstration of the Spirit and of power;" depending singly on his effectual operation to bring our hearers to believe, to the salvation of their souls. The maxims of human wisdom, whether philosophical or political, will soon come to nought, and sink into contempt. But experienced believers are shown such glorious displays of wisdom, as eclipse all that they before admired, even as the rising sun obscures the glimmering lamp. The things which God ordained before the world, in order to bring his chosen people to glory, are such as "angels desire to look into:" they give the humbled and enlightened mind such views of God, and his perfections, works, and ways, as fix it in astonishment, excite it to adoration, inspire it with love and gratitude, raise it above this earthly clod and all its puny concerns, and enlarge it into the most exalted, holy, yet humble, ambition after true honour and greatness. But this wisdom must still be hidden from the proud, the carnal, and the unbelieving, notwithstanding the fulness and clearness with which it is revealed in the Gospel. The same principles, which influenced the princes of the world to crucify the Lord of glory, still possess the minds of men in general: and avarice, sensuality, or carnal ambition, still despise those good things, which "God hath prepared for them that "love him," though they pass man's understanding, and infinitely excel in glory and value whatever he hath seen, heard, or imagined.

V. 10—16.

No man truly understands, or properly values, divine revelation, except that divine Spirit, who "searcheth all "things, even the deep things of God," and who revealed them to the apostles, removes the veil from his heart, and enables him to perceive their real excellency. On this great Teacher we must simply depend, while we seek to know the things that are freely given by God" to his people, and to obtain the assurance that we belong to that favoured company. If indeed we are delivered from the spirit of the world, and are taken under the guidance of the Spirit of God, we shall more and more regard the words of the sacred Scriptures; and, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, our holy discernment will increase, and we shall acquire a faculty of speaking on religious subjects, in language suited to their divine nature and infinite importance. But whoever teaches, or what language soever is employed, the *natural* man will either oppose, despise, or abuse the things of the Spirit of God: he cannot cordially receive or rightly understand them: they will remain foolishness to him, because he wants a spiritual discernment. On the other hand, he who is born of God, however ignorant or illiterate, will become spiritual, and so capable of discerning the harmony and glory of divine truth: he will experience its sanctifying effects in his heart, and produce correspondent fruits in his life. His judgment and conduct will be formed upon the word of God; and they, who presume to judge, condemn, or deride him, for violating the maxims of carnal wisdom, will only show their own ignorance and arrogance. They cannot instruct him in spiritual things by their carnal reasonings, and they have not known the mind of the Lord Jesus, or they would not condemn him for acting according to it: and they can no more argue him out of his principles, experience, hope, or duty, than a man with good eyes could be convinced that there is no light from the sun, or that light is neither pleasant nor profitable, by the ingenious sophisms of a man that hath been blind from his birth.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1—3. Some of the Corinthians had been seduced into a mean opinion of the apostle's ministry, because he had not fully instructed them in those deep points of doctrine, on which their other teachers had particularly insisted, and about which they speculated: he therefore here assigns the reason of his conduct in this respect. Though they had been plenteously endued with supernatural gifts and knowledge, yet he had observed those things in their disposition and conduct, which rendered it improper for him to speak to them as to *spiritual*

4 For while one saith, [h] I am of Paul; and another, I *am* of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

5 Who then is Paul, and who *is* Apollos, [i] but ministers by whom ye believed, [k] even as the Lord gave to every man?

6 [l] I have planted, [m] Apollos watered; but [n] God gave the increase.

7 So then, [o] neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

8 Now [p] he that planteth, and he that watereth, are one: [q] and every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour.

9 For [r] we are labourers together with God: [s] ye are God's * husbandry; [t] *ye are* God's building.

h i. 12 iv 6.
i 7. iv. 1, 2. Luke i. 2. Rom. x. 14, 15 2 Cor. iii. 6. v. 5 7. vi. 1 4 xi 23
k 10 ix. 17. xii. 4—11. 28. Matt. xxv. 15. John iii. 27. Rom. xii. 3—6. 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11.
l 9, 10. iv. 14, 15. ix. 1. 7—11. xv. 1—11. Acts xviii. 4—11. 2 Cor. x. 14, 15.
m Prov. xi. 25. Acts xviii 26, 27. xix. 1.——n i. 30. xv. 10. Ps. lxii. 9 11. xcii 13—15. cxxvii 1. Is lv. 10, 11. lxi. 11. Acts xi. 13. xiv. 27. xvi. 14. xxi 19 Rom. xv. 18 2 Cor. iii 2—5. 1 Thes. i. 5.——o xiii. 2. Ps. cxv. 1. Is. xl. 17. xli 29. Dan iv. 35. 2 Cor xii. 11. Gal. vi. 3.

p 9. iv. 6. John iv. 36—38.
q iv. 5. ix. 17, 18. xv. 58. Ps. lxii. 12 Dan. xii 3. Matt. v. 11, 12. x. 41, 42. xvi. 27. Rom. ii. 6. Gal vi. 7, 8 Heb. vi. 10 1 Pet. v. 4. 2 John 8. Rev. ii. 23. xxii. 12.
r *See on*, 6. Matt. ix. 37, 38. Mark xvi. 20. 2 Cor. viii. 1. 3 John 8.
s Ps. lxv. 9—13. lxxii. 16. lxxx. 8—11. Is. v. 1—7. xxvii 2, 3. xxviii. 24—29. xxxii 20. lxi 3 5. 11. Jer. ii. 21. Mat. xiii. 3—9. 18—30. 36—42. xx. 1—14. xxi. 33—44. Mark iv. 26—29. John iv. 35—38. xv. 1—8.
* Or, *tillage*.——t 16. vi. 19. Ps. cxviii. 22. Am. ix. 11, 12 Zech. vi. 12, 13. Matt xvi. 18. Acts iv. 11. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Eph. ii 10. 20—22. Col. ii. 7. 1 Tim. iii. 15. Heb. iii. 3, 4. 1 Pet. ii. 5.

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men, who were competent to receive the deeper discoveries of divine wisdom: and thus he was constrained to address them "as carnal, even as babes in Christ." For though he looked on them in general as sincere converts, and thus in a measure spiritual, yet, even till he left them, they were so far from maturity of judgment and experience, and so prone to carnal passions, that he deemed it incumbent on him "to feed them with milk," as the nurse does the infant, "and not with strong meat," which they could not digest. The simplest truths of the Gospel, respecting the sinfulness of man and the rich mercy of God, regeneration, repentance, and works meet for repentance, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the necessity and nature of holiness, the influences and fruits of the Spirit, the day of judgment, and eternal happiness and misery, delivered in the simplest plainest language, suited them far better than those deeper mysteries, which led to mere speculation, and which afforded the teacher a fairer opportunity of showing his knowledge, ingenuity, and capacity. On these the apostle did not much insist, because he knew the Corinthians could not bear them, but that such instructions would feed their carnal passions, instead of their faith and love. Indeed, though a considerable time had since elapsed, they were not yet able to receive, and make a good use of, these sublimer truths, because they were still under the influence of carnal principles. This needed no other proof than their well-known conduct: for while they envied one another, the gifts which God had bestowed on them, and with emulation sought their own credit in the exercise of them, while there subsisted eager contentions and lamentable divisions among them, could they deny that they were *carnal*, and acted more like the men of the world, in their competitions and contests for honours and distinctions, or for the interest of a party, or the credit of a favourite orator, or philosopher, than like spiritual men? The principles and affections of *the natural man* were more prominent in their conduct, than the humble, meek, loving, and peaceable dispositions, which spring from regeneration. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is evident, that by *carnal*, and *as men*, the apostle does not here intend the prevalence of sensual appetites, but that of malignant passions; not the propensities of the animal, but those of the fallen spirit: and this may confirm us in the interpretation given of this and similar words in other places. As *spiritual* is opposed to *carnal*, it must relate exclusively to the sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit, and not at all to miraculous endowments. The Corinthians were enriched with the latter; but some of them seemed altogether destitute of the former, and the generality of them were but babes in Christ.

V. 4—9. The apostle still cautiously forbore to mention the false teachers, who had done the mischief. Even if Paul and his beloved brother Apollos had been set up for the heads of the contending parties, the contests of the Corinthians would have proved them to be carnal. For who were Paul and Apollos? Not lords over God's heritage, but ministering servants to them for Christ's sake, by whose labours they had been brought to believe the Gospel, according to the gift of God, both to the ministers, and those converted by them. 'For what reason do you 'regard either the one or the other? Is it on no con'sideration but that of talents, which they have in com'mon with many who are strangers to the Gospel? Or 'ought it not to be in a different view? even because they 'are the ministers of Christ, &c.' (*Doddridge.*) Indeed Paul had been sent to enclose and plant the Lord's vineyard at Corinth; and when he had done this, Apollos had followed him to water it: but God alone had given the increase, and made the plants to grow and become fruitful. 'The *power of growing*, in this sacred agriculture, is 'neither by nature in the plants themselves, nor inserted 'by the diligence of the cultivator; but it springs entirely 'from the grace and efficacy of the Holy Spirit.' (*Beza.*) So that neither of the instruments were any thing in comparison with the great Agent. 'Not that their labour is 'vain; for faith comes by hearing: but first, God does 'not use their ministry, because he needs either it, or 'them, or is unable to do without them: again, they 'could not perform what they do, unless God of his 'mere mercy had constituted them his labourers. But, 'especially, because all their work is *external*, God alone 'claiming to himself exclusively all that is *inwardly* done 'in man's salvation: that his Restorer unto life eternal 'may be one and the same, who was his Creator to this 'present life.' (*Beza.*) Yet both the ministers were as *one;* both acted as servants in the same work, and with the same intention of glorifying God, by seeking the salvation of souls: and they would each receive a gracious reward from their common Master, who was the only competent Judge of their faithfulness and diligence. For they were *fellow-labourers of God:* while the Church at Corinth was his husbandry, in which he employed and wrought by them; it was "God's building," which he was erecting by their means, according to his own plan, for his own glory, and to be his holy temple: and they did the work which he set them to, and no more.

10 According [u] to the grace of God which is given unto me, [x] as a wise master-builder, [y] I have laid the Foundation, [z] and another buildeth thereon. [a] But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

11 For [b] other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

12 Now if any man build upon this Foundation, [c] gold, silver, [d] precious stones, [e] wood, hay, stubble;

13 Every [f] man's work shall be made manifest: for [g] the day shall declare it, because * it shall be revealed by fire; [h] and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

14 If [i] any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

15 If any man's [k] work shall be burned, [l] he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; [m] yet so as by fire.

16 ¶ [n] Know ye not that [o] ye are the temple of God, and *that* [p] the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

17 If [q] any man † defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy: [r] for the temple of God is holy; which *temple* ye are.

u 5. xv. 10. Rom. i. 5 xii 3. xv. 15 Eph. iii. 2—8. Col. i. 29 1 Tim. i 11—14. 1 Pet. iv 11.
x 1 Kings iii 9—11 2 Chr. ii. 12. Dan xii. 3. Matt. vii. 24. xxiv. 45 2 Tim. ii 15.
y *See on*, 6. 11. ix. 2 Zech iv. 9 Rom. xv 20. Eph. ii 20 Rev xxi 14 19.
z xv. 11, 12 Acts xviii. 27. 28. 2 Cor x 15 xi. 13—15
a Ec. xii 9 Luke xi 35 xxi. 8 Col iv. 17. 1 Tim iv 16 Jam iii 1. *Gr.* 1 Pet. iv. 11. 2 Pet ii 1—3.
b Is. xxviii 16. Matt. xvi. 18. Acts iv. 11, 12 2 Cor xi 2—4 Gal. i 7—9 1 Pet. ii. 6 8.——c Ps. xix. 10. cxix. 72. Prov. viii 10 xvi 16 Is. lx 17 1 Tim. iv 6 2 Tim ii 20 1 Pet. i 7. Rev. iii. 18
d Is. liv 11—13 Rev xxi 18—21.——e Prov. xxx 6. Jer xxiii. 28. Matt. xv. 6—9 Acts xx. 30 Rom xvi. 17 2 Cor ii 17. iv 2 Col. ii 8. 13—23. 1 Tim. iv 1—3. 7 vi 3. 2 Tim ii. 16—18 iii. 7, 8. 13. iv 3, 4 Tit i. 9—11. iii. 9—11. Heb. xiii. 9. Rev. ii 14, 15.——f 14. 15 iv. 5. 2 Tim. iii 9 ——g i. 8. Mal. iii. 17, 18. Rom. ii. 5, 6. 16. 2 Thes i. 7—10. 2 Tim. i. 18. 2 Pet. iii. 10—13 Rev xx 12.

* Gr *is revealed*
h Is viii 20. xxviii. 17 Jer. xxiii 29 Ez xiii 10—16. i 8. iv 5 Dan. xii. 3 Matt. xxiv 45—47. xxv 21—23. 1 Thes ii. 19. 2 Tim iv 7, 8. 1 Pet. v. 1. 4. Rev. ii. 8—11.
k 12. 13 Rev iii. 18.
l Acts xxvii 21, 22. 44 2 John 8.
m Am. iv. 11. Zech iii 2. 1 Pet. iv. 18 Jude 23.
n v. 6. vi. 2, 3. 9. 16. ix. 13. 24. Rom. vi. 3. Jam. iv. 4.
o 2 Cor vi 16, 17. Eph. ii. 21, 22. Heb. iii. 6. 1 Pet ii. 5
p Ez. xxxvi. 37. John xiv. 17. Rom. viii. 11. 2 Tim. i. 14. 1 John iv 12 15, 16 ——q vi 18—20. Lev. xv 31. xx. 3. Num xix. 20 Ps. lxxiv 3 lxxix. 1. Ez. v. 11. vii. 22. xxiii. 38, 39 Zeph iii. 4.——† Or, *destroy*.——r Gen xxviii. 17. Ex. iii. 5. 1 Chr xxix. 3. Ps xciii 5. xcix. 9 Is. lxiv. 11. Ez. xliii. 12.

V. 10—15. Thus far the apostle proceeded on the supposition, that the labourers were skilful and faithful; but he meant to lead the attention of the Corinthians to some who were not so: therefore he declared, that, according to the grace bestowed on him, (to which all the glory was due,) he had laid the Foundation of "God's "building" among them, like a wise architect; and he knew that it was capable of supporting the whole weight of the intended superstructure. But since he had left Corinth, another had builded on his Foundation; nay, several had been employed in that work: but let every one of them take heed with what materials, and in what manner, they carried on the building. He knew that no man could lay any other foundation of a spiritual temple, for the glory of God, or for the sinner's hope of salvation, than what he had laid in his preaching, and which God had laid in his purpose and by the Gospel; namely, the Person, mediatory office, righteousness, atonement, intercession, and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. If any man pretended to lay any other foundation than this, he could not be considered as the minister of God, "a worker "together with him." It was not therefore to be supposed, that this was the case with any of their teachers. Yet even on this Foundation very different materials might be builded: some might carry on the work with gold, silver, and valuable stones; others with wood, hay, or stubble: some, who preached the doctrine of salvation by faith in Christ, would instruct believers from the word of God in all the precious truths of the Gospel; show them their obligations and duties; and teach them to evidence their faith by spiritual worship and holy obedience. Others might substitute false doctrines, human inventions, abrogated ceremonies, and philosophical speculations, or deduce licentious inferences from the doctrines of grace. (*Marg. Ref.*) Thus the building would be deformed and weakened by such additions and base materials, as would never stand the trial which was appointed. For the time was coming, when the nature and value of every man's work would be made manifest, the day of judgment would openly declare it. The materials of this spiritual building, and every man's work in it, must be tried as by fire, during the discoveries of that solemn season. This will prove them of what sort they are: the gold, silver, and precious stones, will stand the fire, and even be purified by it; and he that hath built with such materials will receive an abundant reward; but the wood, hay, and stubble, will be burned, and he that hath spent his time and labour in building with such worthless materials, will suffer great loss, even in respect of the degree of his future glory: yet, provided he is indeed fixed on the good Foundation, he shall finally be saved; but it will be, as a man is preserved from the flames of his house, when he escapes naked through them, and so narrowly saves his life with the loss of all his property. So extremely dangerous is it to teach false doctrines, even in connexion with fundamental truths! The absurdity of the papists, in producing this passage in favour of their doctrine of purgatory, is very obvious: but it is to be feared, that the zealous abettors of that doctrine, and many others of a similar nature, will be found to build wholly without a foundation. (*Notes, Matt.* vii. 24—27.)

V. 16, 17. This metaphor of a building led the apostle to inquire, whether they did not know, that they were the spiritual temple of God, who dwelt in them by the Holy Spirit given unto them. Now, if any man defiled or profaned the temple of God, he would be exposed to his indignation, and might expect the most terrible destruction; because of the holiness of the temple, as consecrated to God. (*Marg. Ref.*) It would therefore be extremely dangerous for any one, by false doctrines or a licentious example, to defile the Church, or any of its members: and if their teachers were chargeable with such crimes, they would have reason to fear the severest judgments of God; and would be presumptuous in expecting to be saved even as by fire. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'They are 'said by the apostle to defile the temple of God, who 'corrupted the purity of the Gospel by carnal eloquence, 'and who rent the Church by factions.' (*Beza.*) 'The 'like words used, (vi. 16—19,) by way of dehortation 'from fornication; and (2 *Cor.* vi. 16.) from communion 'with heathen, in their idolatrous rites and heathen prac'tices; and by way of inducement to "cleanse ourselves

18 Let no man [s] deceive himself: [t] If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, [u] let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

19 For [x] the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. [y] For it is written, [z] He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

20 And again, [a] The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, [b] that they are vain.

21 Therefore let no man [c] glory in men; [d] for all things are yours;

22 Whether [e] Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, [f] or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours;

23 And [g] ye are Christ's; [h] and Christ *is* God's.

s vi. 9. xvi 33 Is. xliv. 20 Jer xxxvii. 9 Luke xxi. 8. Gal. vi. 3 7 Eph v. 6. 2Tim.iii.13. Tit. iii. 3 Jam. i. 22. 26. 1 John i. 8

t i. 18—2.. iv. 10. viii. 1, 2. Prov iii 5. 7. xxvi 12. Is v 21. Jer viii. 8 Rom. xi. 25. xii 16

u Matt xviii 4 Mark x. 15. Luke xviii. 17.

x i. 19, 20. ii. 6 Is xix. 11—14. xxix. 14—16. xliv. 25. Rom. i. 21, 22.——y Job v. 13. z Ex. i. 10 xviii. 11. 2 Sam. xv. 31. xvi. 23. xvii. 14 23. Esth. vii. 10. Ps vii. 14, 15. ix. 15, 16. cxli. 10.——-a Ps. xciv. 11.

b Job xi. 11, 12. Ps ii 1. Rom. i. 21. Col ii. 8.

c 4—7. i 12, &c. iv. 6

d Rom. iv 13. viii 28. 32. 2 Cor. iv. 15. Rev. xxi. 7

e 5—8. ix.19—22. 2 Cor. iv. 5. Eph iv. 11 12.

f Rom. viii. 37—29 Phil i. 21.

g vi. 19. 20. vii. 22 xv 23. John. xvii 9, 10. Rom. xiv. 8. 2 Cor. x. 7 Gal iii 29 v 24.

h viii. 6. xi. 3. Matt. xvii. 5. John xvii. 18. 21 Eph. i. 10. Phil. ii. 8—11.

"from all filthiness of flesh and spirit," (2 *Cor.* vii. 1;) 'more naturally incline us to refer these verses to the corrupting of the temple of God, by uncleanness and fornication, or by idolatrous practices; both which the Corinthians did.' (*Whitby.*) It does not, however, appear, that there is any necessity of confining the interpretation to this or the other kind of defilement: and in proportion as the declaration is made *general*, it becomes more and more important. The verb, rendered *destroy*, is the same with that before translated *defile.* The Jews polluted the temple of God by their crimes, and were given up into the hands of their enemies as polluted, to be destroyed by them: and part of the awful doom of the wicked is thus expressed, "He that is filthy, let him be filthy still."

V. 18—23. 'The Corinthians were induced to eat things offered to idols, in the idol-temples, by men pretending to great knowledge. (viii. 1, 2.) They also introduced among them the doctrine of the lawfulness of fornication. (v. 1.) These teachers seem to have been the Nicolaitans, who received their doctrine from the philosophers.' (*Whitby.*) However this may be, the persons more immediately concerned in the preceding warning would probably despise it, especially from one whom they disregarded, as far beneath them in knowledge and wisdom: but let them not deceive themselves in this matter; if any of them appeared to be wise in this world, instead of trusting to such a distinction, let him become a fool in his own opinion and that of worldly men; as this would be absolutely necessary, in order to his being made wise unto everlasting life. For God accounted this world's wisdom to be folly; he ensnared the worldly-wise in their own politics, and he knew their reasonings and imaginations to be vain and worthless. (*Notes, Job* v. 12—14. *Ps.* xciv. 10, 11.) Let therefore none glory in men, as if some eloquent, learned, or sagacious leader were a great honour to them, and they might value themselves on their relation to him: whereas all things were theirs if indeed they were believers: the abilities, gifts, and services, of apostles and ministers were intended for their benefit; the world and every thing in it belonged to them, as far as it could do them good; its possessions would be given them, if really profitable; its enmity would discipline them for heaven; and all providential appointments would promote their sanctification: life would be ensured to them, till their work was done and they were ripe for their reward; death, at the appointed hour, would come as their friend to deliver them from sin and sorrow, and convey them to their Father's mansions: present comforts and trials would concur in promoting their advantage; and the future judgment and its eternal consequences would be altogether in their favour. Thus all things were theirs, even as much as if the whole property of the creation had been vested in them: seeing they belonged to Christ, the Heir of all things, and were one with him, his chosen and redeemed people, the members of his body, his beloved, the trophies of his victories, and the jewels of his crown; and as "Christ is God's," his beloved Son, his appointed Surety, the Brightness of his glory, and the grand Medium of displaying all his perfections in the sight of all worlds, and to all eternity. These were truly honourable distinctions; and they ought to recollect, that, by glorying in men, they acted inconsistently with their relation and obligations to Christ, to whom alone they should unreservedly devote themselves.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

Ministers should suit their instruction to the state and wants of their hearers; and teach them such things, as more immediately tend to their edification, rather than insist continually on those subjects, which are agreeable to the inclinations of any party. Babes in Christ must be fed with milk, and not with strong meat: many doctrines, which they may hereafter feed upon, would at present be useless or pernicious; because they are not able to perceive their tendency, or their harmony with other truths. Men may have much doctrinal knowledge, and yet be mere beginners in the life of faith and experience: nay, their fondness for speculations, and their acuteness in them, may prove them to be in a great degree carnal, and but imperfectly grounded in the first principles of experimental and practical religion. Thus many professed Christians, and preachers too, show themselves to be yet carnal, by their vain-glorious emulations, their eagerness for controversy, their selfish fiery zeal, their disposition to prefer and exalt themselves, and to despise and revile others; and their apparent delight in disturbing the peace of the Church. This is the tendency of sin, not of grace; the temper of the *carnal*, the *natural*, and not of the *spiritual* man: and we need much of that "love which hopeth all things," to suppose that such wranglers have any spirituality, or are even babes in Christ. It is, however, an universal rule, that these dispositions are proportionably proofs, that the carnal mind of worldly men is prominent and prevalent: and while so many are saying, "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos;" we may

CHAP. IV.

The apostles and preachers of the Gospel, should be accounted of, as servants to Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God: and they are required to be faithful, 1, 2. *They must be left to the judgment of the Lord at his coming,* 3—5. *The apostle exhorts the Corinthians not to be puffed up for one against another; as all have their different endowments from God,* 6, 7. *He contrasts their vain-glory with his own despised and afflicted state, and lowly conduct,* 8—13. *He warns them, as their only father in Christ, and exhorts them to imitate him,* 14—16. *For this purpose he had sent Timothy unto them,* 17; *and intended to come himself, and make trial of the power of those who opposed him,* 18—21.

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fairly demand of them, whether they be not carnal. For what are the most able ministers but servants of Christ and of his people? They do not come in their own name, or about their own business; they seek not their own glory; sin and folly are all that they have of their own, and their wisdom and grace are wholly from the Lord. By his help they may plant and water; but he alone can give the increase: so that they are nothing, and he only must be considered as the object of adoring love and gratitude. Faithful ministers are afraid of receiving undue honour: though their rank and abilities may differ, they are all one; they are engaged in the same work, and aim at the same object: they are fellow-labourers of God, in his spiritual husbandry and building; and he will *graciously* reward the services, which, *by his grace*, they have performed. Indeed, all those, who, in their several places, labour by scriptural means to promote the cause of true religion, are "workers together with God:" but all ungodly men, especially persecutors, false teachers, seducers, tempters, and such as employ their ingenuity in disseminating infidelity, impiety, and licentiousness, are fellow-workers with the devil, in rendering others wicked and miserable, and their recompense will be proportioned to their zeal, diligence, and success.

V. 9—15.

It is a great comfort to the minister of Christ, when, on reflection, he is humbly conscious of having, like a wise master builder, laid a right Foundation: but every one should also take heed what he buildeth upon it. For while many attempt in vain to substitute some other foundation, in the stead of Christ, and so perish with their deluded followers, there are also numbers, who lay the right Foundation, and yet build worthless rubbish upon it, to their own great loss and danger, and to the great detriment of their hearers. In expectation therefore of that solemn day, when every man's work shall be manifested and tried as by fire, we should now be careful to build with approved and precious materials: we should avoid superstitious inventions, unscriptural doctrines, enthusiastical delusions, and philosophical speculations, as well as a variety of trifling inquiries and disputations, about which many, who seem to lay the right Foundation, waste their time and lose their labour, while they injure the building and endanger their own souls. We should bestow pains to procure gold, silver, and precious stones, for this work; that by sound doctrine and scriptural instructions we may build up the souls of believers in knowledge, hope, love, and obedience; that by our labours, example, and prayers, they may grow up a holy temple to the Lord; that so our work may abide the trial, that we may receive a full reward, and have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of Christ. It is then peculiarly incumbent upon ministers, in all their studies, pursuits, sermons, publications, and conversation, to recollect that their work must be tried by fire; to anticipate the sentiments, which the day of judgment will obtrude upon them, concerning their present occupations; and to reflect on the irreparable loss of spending their time of service to no purpose, or perniciously; to consider the tendency of their undertakings, to compare them with the word of God, and to judge themselves, that they may not be judged of the Lord. For if shame and sorrow could enter heaven, surely the minister, whose work shall be burned, yet he himself saved as through fire, would be overwhelmed with them!

V. 16—23.

When faithful admonitions have no effect on men's minds, their state is very awful. It is proper, however, to warn them, with all solemnity, concerning the guilt and danger of defiling the temple of God by their false doctrines and bad examples. Many of them will indeed despise the warning, and deceive themselves. The reputation of being wise in this world is no favourable evidence of a man's character; as the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, who takes the wise in their own craftiness, and exposes the vanity of their counsels and speculations. It cannot therefore be too earnestly inculcated on all, to cease from their own wisdom, and to be willing to think themselves fools, and to be thought so by others, that they may become wise by the teaching of the word and Spirit of God. But we should all remember that true Christians are the temple of God, who dwelleth in them by his sanctifying Spirit: and they, who know not this, can hardly be thought even babes in Christ. If we are conscious of this spiritual consecration to God, to be his living temples, let us be careful to have our sacred character adorned by a holy conversation, and to avoid whatever may defile either ourselves or our fellow Christians. And surely he is deceived, who deems himself the temple of the Holy Spirit, and yet is unconcerned, or but little concerned, about personal holiness, or about the peace and purity of the Church. If indeed we are the children of God, we have something nobler to glory in, than in men, and our relation and attachment to them: for, all things

LET a man so [a] account of us as of [b] the ministers of Christ, [c] and stewards of the [d] mysteries of God.

2 Moreover, it is required in stewards, [e] that a man be found faithful.

3 But with me [f] it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's [*] judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self:

a 13. 2 Cor. xii 6. b iii 5 ix. 16—18 Matt xxiv. 45. 2 Cor. iv. 5. vi 4 xi. 23. Col. i. 25. 1 Tim. iii. 6. c Luke xii. 42. xvi. 1—3. Tit. i. 7. 1 Pet. iv. 10. d ii. 7. Matt xiii. 11 Mark iv 11. Luke viii 10. Rom. xvi. 25. Eph. i 9 iii. 3—9. vi 19 Col i. 26, 27. ii. 2. iv. 3 1 Tim iii. 9. 16 ——e 17. vii 25. Num xii 7. Prov. xiii. 17. Matt xxv. 21. 23. Luke xii. 42. xvi. 10—12 2 Cor ii. 17. iv. 2. Col. i. 7. iv. 7. 17.—— —f ii. 15 1 Sam. xvi. 7. John vii. 24

* Gr. *day*. iii 13.

4 For [g] I know nothing by myself; [h] yet am I not hereby justified: [i] but he that judgeth me is the Lord.

5 Therefore [k] judge nothing before the time, [l] until the Lord come, [m] who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have [n] praise of God.

g Job xxvii 6 Ps. vii. 3—5. John xxi. 17 2 Cor. i 12. 1 John iii. 20, 21. h Job ix. 2 20. xv. 14. xxv. 4. xl. 4. Ps xix. 12. cxxx. 3 cxliii. 2. Prov. xxi. 2. Rom iii 19, 20. iv 2. i 5 Ps. xxvi. 2. 1. 6. 2 Cor. v. 10. k Matt. vii. 1, 2. Luke vi. 37. Rom. ii. 1. 16. xiv. 4. 10—13 Jam. iv. 11.——l i. 7. xi 26 xv 23 Matt. xxiv. 30. 46. 1 Thes. v. 2. Jam. v 7. 2 Pet. iii. 4. 12. Jude 14 Rev. i. 7 ——m iii 13. Ec. xi. 9. xii. 14 Mal. iv. 18. Luke xii. 1—3 Rom. ii. 16. 2 Cor iv. 2. Heb iv. 13. Rev. xx. 12.——n Matt xxv. 21 23. John v. 44. Rom. ii. 7. 29. 2 Cor. x. 18. 1 Pet. i. 7. v. 4.

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are ours, apostles, prophets, ministers, ordinances, providential dispensations, earth, heaven, life, death, things temporal, and things eternal; because we are one with Christ, and his purchased and redeemed people, and he is One with the Father: so that, as the glory of God is displayed in Christ his Son, our salvation is secured in Christ our Head, who will cause us to sit down as conquerors through him "upon his throne, even as he hath "overcome, and hath set down with his Father upon his "throne."

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. Lest the Corinthians should suppose, from what the apostle had said, that little respect or affection was due to their ministers, he here showed them in what estimation they ought to hold them, and by what measure they ought to regulate their regard to them. Whether they were apostles, evangelists, or ordinary teachers, they were to consider them, not indeed as lords, but as the ministering servants of Christ for their benefit, in the highest and most important offices; even as the stewards of the mysteries of God; that, as his immediate representatives, they should, by his authority, preside in his family, take care of his interests and honour, instruct and direct the services of their brethren, and give every one his portion in due season. (*Note, Matt.* xxiv. 45.) Thus they were intrusted with the mysterious and sublime truths of the Gospel, that they might preach them to the people, and apply them with suitable admonitions, exhortations, encouragements, and warnings, as every one's case required, in order to the conversion of sinners, and the establishment and edification of believers. Some, by the mysteries of God, understand also the administration of the sacraments, which were commonly called *mysteries* by the fathers; but though this is a part of the minister's work, yet the external ordinances are not called mysteries in Scripture; and this name, afterwards given them, helped to lead men to form a wrong judgment concerning them. It was, however, well known, that exact fidelity was the most essential qualification required in a steward: a man of strict probity, attached to his master's interest, and impartial in his conduct towards his fellow servants, might be a valuable steward, though his accomplishments were but moderate; but nothing could compensate for the want of faithfulness. Thus a minister, who uprightly and simply sought the glory of God and the good of souls, and who impartially dispensed the truths of God, without respect of persons, or regard to his own interest, honour, ease, or indulgence, would be accepted by the Lord, and ought to be valued by believers, though not so eminent in natural endowments, or even in spiritual gifts and attainments, as others were, who *sought themselves* in their admired ministrations.

V. 2—5. The apostle counted it a very small matter, compared with the acceptance of his gracious Lord, what judgment the Corinthians, or any man, formed of him; whether they supposed him to be faithful, or not; or whether they were offended with him for his faithfulness, and despised him because he had not come with excellency of speech or of wisdom. Indeed, he did not rely on his own judgment concerning himself; because he was aware of the deceitfulness of the human heart, (which their self-confident teachers ought more deeply to study:) for though he was not conscious of any unfaithfulness or self-seeking in his ministry, yet this was not sufficient to justify him before God, who often saw that evil in the heart which pride hid from the man himself. He therefore sought to the Lord to judge him, and so waited for that day when he must appear before his tribunal. (*Note*, iii. 10—15.) But knowing that many of them were disposed to judge unfavourably of him, through the artifices of their seducers; he exhorted them not to judge such matters before the time, but to leave them, till the Lord should come to judgment, when characters and actions would appear in another light than they then did. For he would both discover the secret sins of men's lives, which they had veiled in darkness from the view of their neighbours; and disclose the motives and intentions, which lay concealed in the impenetrable recesses of the heart; and which would in many instances appear to be designing, ambitious, and selfish, when a man's words and works were most specious and plausible. Then the faithful steward would be proportionably honoured, with the commendation of God himself, which would abundantly counterbalance the contempt and reproach of men; but it must be a day of detection and confusion to all hypocritical, ambitious, and self-seeking teachers, however admired and extolled. 'Hence note, that Jesus Christ must have the knowledge 'of the secrets of the hearts of all men subject to his 'judgment; and so must be that God, who alone knows 'the hearts of all men. (*Whitby*.) (*Marg. Ref.*) 'This 'saying of Paul,' ("Judge nothing before the time,") 'must be restrained to a certain hypothesis: for both the 'spirits are to be tried, and we ought to "judge our-"selves whether we be in the faith." 'The apostle does 'not even condemn the private judgments of charity; and 'much less either civil or ecclesiastical polity. For he is 'not properly discoursing about the examination of men's 'doctrine or manners; but rather concerning the estimate

6 And [o] these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and *to* Apollos, [p] for your sakes; [q] that ye might learn in us not to think *of men* above that which is written, that no one of you [r] be puffed up for one against another.

7 For [s] who * maketh thee to differ *from another?* [t] and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive *it,* [u] why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received *it?*

8 Now [x] ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings [y] without us; [z] and I would to God [a] ye did reign, that we also might reign with you.

o i. 12. iii. 4—17. 2 Cor. x. 7. 12 15 xi. 4. 12—15.
p ix. 23 2 Cor. iv 15. xii. 19 1 Thes i. 5 2 Tim ii. 10
q Job xi. 11. 12. Ps. viii. 4. cxlvi. 3. Is. ii. 22 Jer vii. 5, 6 Matt xxiii. 8 — 10. Rom xii. 3. 2 Cor xii. 6.
r iii 21 iv. 18, 19. v. 2. 6. viii. 1. xiii. 4. Num. xi. 28, 29. John iii. 26 Col. ii. 18.
s xii. 4—11. xv. 10. Rom. ix. 16 —18 Eph. ii 3 —5 2 Thes. ii 12—14 1 Tim. i. 12—15 Tit. iii. 3—7.
* Gr. *distinguisheth thee.*
t iii 5 vii. 7. 1 Chr xxix. 11—16. 2 Chr i. 7—12. Prov. ii. 6. Matt. xxv. 14, 15. Luke xix 13 John i. 16. iii. 27. Rom. i 5. xii. 6. Jam i. 17 1 Pet. iv. 10.——u v. 6. 2 Chr. xxxii 23—29 Ez. xxviii 2—5. xxix. 3. Dan. iv. 30—32 v 18—23. Acts xii. 22, 23.——x i 5. iii 1, 2. v. 6. Prov xiii 7. xxv. 14. Is v 21 Luke i. 51—53. vi. 25. Rom. xii. 3. 16. Gal. vi. 3. Rev iii. 17.——y 18 Acts xx 29, 30 Phil. i. 27 ii. 12.——z Num xi. 29 Acts xxvi. 29. 2 Cor. xi. 1.——a Ps. cxxii. 5—9 Jer xxviii 6. Rom. xii. 15. 2 Cor. xiii. 9. 1 Thes ii. 19, 20. iii 6—9. 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12. Rev. v. 10.

9 For [b] I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, [c] as it were appointed to death: for [d] we are made a † spectacle unto the world, and [e] to angels, and to men.

10 We [f] *are* fools [g] for Christ's sake, but ye [h] *are* wise in Christ; [i] we *are* weak, [k] but ye *are* strong; ye *are* honourable, [l] but we *are* despised.

11 Even [m] unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, [n] and are naked, [o] and are buffeted, [p] and have no certain dwelling-place;

12 And [q] labour, working with our own hands: [r] being reviled, we bless; [s] being persecuted, we suffer it:

b xv. 30 — 32. 2 Cor i. 8—10. iv. 8—12. Phil. i 29, 30. 1 Thes. iii 3.
c Ps xliv. 22. Rom viii. 36. 1 Thes. v. 9. 10. Rev. vi. 9—11.
d Heb. x. 33. xi. 36.
† Gr. *theatre.* Acts xix 29. 31.
e Heb. i 14. Rev. vi. 11—14. xvii. 6, 7.
f i. 18—20. 26—28. ii 14 iii. 18. 2 Kings ix. 11. Hos ix 7. Acts xvii. 18. 32. xxvi. 24.
g Matt. v. 11. x. 22—25. xxiv. 9. Luke vi. 22. Acts ix. 16. 1 Pet. iv. 14.
h 8 x 14, 15. Jer. viii. 8, 9.
i ii 3. 2 Cor. x. 10. xi 29 xii. 9, 10. xiii. 3,4. 9.
k iii. 2. x. 12.——l Prov. xi. 12 Is. liii. 3. Luke x. 16. xviii. 9. 1 Thes. iv 8 ——m ix. 4. 2 Cor vi. 4,5 xi. 27. Phil. iv. 12.——n Rom viii 35.——o Acts xiv. 19. xvi. 23. xxiii 2. 2 Cor. xi. 23—25 2 Tim iii 11.——p Matt. viii. 20 ——q ix. 6 Acts xviii. 3 xx 34 1 Thes. ii. 9. 2 Thes. iii. 8 1 Tim iv. 10.——r Matt. v 44. Luke vi 28. xxiii. 34 Acts vii. 60. Rom xii. 14 20, 1 Pet. ii 23. iii. 9 Jude 9.——s Matt. v. 11. 1 Pet. iii. 14 iv. 12—14. 19.

‘ that is to be made of each person by men, which, says he, the Lord will at last judge. Finally, when he says that he “ knew nothing by himself,” it must be referred to the subject of which he was treating, namely, the ministerial office, which he testifies he had fulfilled among the Corinthians with so good a conscience, that he could not charge himself with any fraud or negligence. This wonderfully suited both those teachers, who seemed to themselves so excellent in comparison of Paul, and these hearers, who, (like the persons who sat in the theatre, in order to confer the crown on the best performer, so boldly extolled or depressed whom they would. But indeed, says Paul, I cannot pronounce concerning myself, in that manner which ye do concerning me and others.’ (*Beza.*) (*Note,* 2 *Cor.* i. 12—14.) ‘ This only forbids our censures of things uncertain, of which no righteous judgment can be passed. This appears both from the words and the occasion of them. From the words, for they respect “ the hidden things “ of darkness,” and “ the counsels of the heart.” From the occasion of them, they passing their censures on St. Paul, and questioning his fidelity in his office, of whom they had no authority so to judge, nor occasion so to judge.’ (***Whitby.***)

V. 6, 7. In speaking of those who had been considered as heads of different parties at Corinth, the apostle had chiefly mentioned himself and Apollos; and thus, to avoid giving offence, he had, as by a figure, transferred the case from those who were really concerned, to persons whom he could not be thought disposed to undervalue, that in them the teachers might learn not to be wise in their own conceits, and the people not to think too highly of men, calling them masters, or glorying in being their disciples, and thus esteeming them as something more than servants or stewards, or above what he had written according to the word of God, and on other accounts than because of their faithfulness. Indeed both they and the teachers, (whom they placed in competition with each other, and about whom they were puffed up,) should inquire who had made them to differ, either in spiritual gifts, or even by converting grace, from their idolatrous neighbours or their fellow Christians. Was this difference the effect of their superior merit, docility, or goodness? What had they, which they had not received as free gifts, or as talents committed to their stewardship? Why then did they glory in them, and boast of them, as if they had been the independent authors of those endowments, by which they were distinguished from others, and were authorized to employ them to their own glory or advantage, without being accountable to God for them? Surely, such self-exaltation must be most absurd, abominable, and sacrilegious. It is evident, that the apostle is here more immediately speaking of natural abilities and spiritual gifts, and not of special and efficacious grace. Yet if we all are by nature entirely depraved, if we must be born again, and new created, if it “ is God that worketh in us to “ will and to do of his good pleasure,” and if “ by grace “ we are saved through faith, and that not of ourselves, “ it is the gift of God,” the apostle's reasoning seems equally conclusive against all kinds and degrees of spiritual pride, and glorying in ourselves and other men, as against that which he was specially opposing.

V. 8. After the apostle had left Corinth, and the Church had got more eloquent or flattering teachers, they were satisfied and pleased: they thought themselves rich and happy, and seemed to reign as kings without him and his fellow-labourers, who had treated them as children, and kept them under, more than was agreeable to them. Many of them, it is probable, were in prosperous circumstances, and exempted from persecution; they had abundance of spiritual gifts, they grew vain of their distinctions, and they deemed themselves pre-eminent above other churches, and so used this improper language one among another. But the apostle intimated, that this was a mere delusion; he most cordially desired that they should be as happy, prosperous, honourable, and eminent, as they thought themselves; for then he knew that he should have comfort in them, and credit among them. If they had really reigned as kings, he should have reigned with them, instead of being despised by them, in addition to all his other troubles.

13 Being defamed, we entreat: [t] we are made as the filth of the world, *and are* the off-scouring of all things unto this day.

14 I [u] write not these things to shame you, but, as [x] my beloved sons [y] I warn *you.*

15 For though [z] ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *have ye* not many fathers: [a] for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel.

16 Wherefore I beseech you, [b] be ye followers of me.

17 For this cause have [c] I sent unto you Timotheus, [d] who is my beloved son, and [e] faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of [f] my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.

18 Now some [g] are puffed up, as though I would not come to you.

19 But [h] I will come to you shortly, [i] if the Lord will, and will know, [k] not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power.

20 For [l] the kingdom of God *is* not in word, but in power.

21 What will ye? [m] shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, [n] and *in* the spirit of meekness?

t Lam. iii. 45. Acts xxii. 22.
u ix. 15. 2 Cor. vii. 3. xii. 19.
x ix. 2 Cor. vi. 11—13. xi. 11. xii. 14, 15. 1 Thes. ii 11.
y Ez. iii 21 Acts xx. 31. Col. i. 28. 1 Thes. v. 14.
z 2 Tim. iv 3.
a iii. 6 10. ix. 1, 2. Acts xviii. 4—11. Rom. xv. 20. 2 Cor. iii. 1—3. Gal. iv 19. Tit. i. 4. Philem 10—12. 19. Jam i. 18. 1 Pet i. 23.
b xi. 1 John x 4, 5. Phil. iii. 17. 1 Thes i. 6. 2 Thes. iii. 9. Heb. xiii. 7. 1 Pet. v. 3.
c xvi. 10. Acts xix. 21, 22. Phil. ii. 19. 1 Thes iii. 2. 6.——d 15. 1 Tim. i. 2. 2 Tim. i. 2.
e 2. vii. 25 Num. xii 7 Prov. xiii. 17 Matt. xxiv. 45 xxv 21. 23. Eph. vi. 21. Col. i. 7. iv. 9. 2 Tim. ii. 2. Rev. ii. 10. 13.
f vii. 17. xi. 2. 16. xvi. 1. 2 Tim. iii. 10.
g 6—8 v 2.
h xvi. 5. Acts xix. 21 2 Cor. i 15—17. 23 ii. 1, 2.
i Acts xviii. 21. Rom. xv. 32. Heb vi. 3. Jam. iv. 15.
k 18. 2 Cor. xiii. 1—4.
l i. 24 ii 4. Rom. i. 16. xiv. 17. xv. 19 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. 1 Thes. i. 5.
m v. 5 2 Cor x. 2 6. 8. xii. 20. 21 xiii. 2, 3. 10.
n 2 Cor. x. 1. 1 Thes. ii. 7 Jam. iii. 17.

V. 9—13. It appeared to St. Paul, that God had chosen the apostles to be set apart, like those condemned persons in the public shows, who were brought forth *last*, without any defensive armour, to fight with each other, or to be exposed to wild beasts, till they were slain in the sight of the spectators, and who, if they escaped at that time, were only reserved to another day of slaughter, being appointed unto death, and having no hope of more than a short respite. Thus the apostles were distinguished by a larger share of contempt, hardship, and suffering, than any of their brethren, and were appointed to martyrdom at the end of their course, and as the only termination of their trials; that, conflicting with exceedingly urgent difficulties and distresses, in patient faith and persevering hope, and supported by omnipotent grace, they might be a spectacle to the whole intelligent creation, both men and angels, while all holy beings beheld them with solicitous affection and astonishment, and unholy beings with malice, rage, and disappointment. In this conflict Paul and his brethren were counted fools for Christ's sake, not only by unconverted Jews and Gentiles, but by the Christians at Corinth also, who seemed to be wise in Christ, through the admired instructions of their speculating teachers, the liberty to which they supposed themselves entitled, and the politic methods which they used for escaping contempt and persecution. They deemed the apostle, and such as he, weak, timid, and scrupulous Christians, men of feeble minds, narrow capacities, and inferior attainments; but they supposed themselves strong in faith, of great discernment, and superior to such fears and disquietudes as troubled others. Nay, it is probable that they deemed themselves honourable on account of their affluence, knowledge, and wisdom, and despised the apostle and his friends, as mean and obscure persons. Thus, while they lived in plenty, he and his companions in travel, (and probably the other apostles,) continued even to that day exposed to hunger and thirst; they often wanted even suitable raiment to appear in before their auditories, they were buffeted with contempt and cruelty, they wandered about without any settled habitation, and they earned their mean and scanty subsistence by the labour of their own hands. Yet, when they were reviled, they blessed and prayed for those who reproached them; they endured persecution patiently, they returned humble entreaties for defamation; but, while thus rendering good for evil, they were treated as the filth of the world, and the refuse and scum of the earth, even to that very time; they were considered as below contempt, or as worthy of execration, as pestilences and nuisances, who ought to be extirpated and purged out of society, as the common sewer carries away the filth and offscouring of the city, to prevent infection and disease. (*Marg. Ref.*) Some understand the words of certain human victims, peculiarly mean and vile, whom the idolaters used to offer to the infernal gods, with vehement expressions of abhorrence and execration.

V. 14—17. The apostle assured the Corinthians, that he did not thus state his distresses and their prosperity and self-sufficiency, in order to put them to shame for neglecting him, and adding to his troubles, but he affectionately warned them, as his beloved children, that their ambition, carnal *security*, attachment to false teachers, and lamentable divisions, would expose them to great dangers and evils. For though they had got ten thousand instructors to teach them religion, as school-masters are hired to educate other men's children, yet they would not find them endued with the disinterested, faithful, and prudent affection of a father, or entitled to the authority and honour due to a parent. This he regarded as his own character, disposition, and claim; for he had been the instrument of Christ Jesus in their conversion to the faith, by successfully preaching the Gospel to them. As they were his children, he was tenderly solicitous for their welfare; and therefore he must speak with authority as a parent, and had a right to their respectful obedience; he, however, would rather beseech them in love, to be followers of him, in preference to their new teachers, to adhere to the doctrines, regard the admonitions, obey the commands, and imitate the example, that he had given them. For this purpose, not being at that time able to come himself, he had sent Timothy to them, who was his beloved son, converted by his ministry, resembling him in spirit and conduct, and faithful in the Lord, as "a steward of his "mysteries." And Timothy, when he came, would recal to their remembrance the apostle's doctrines, and the regulations he made in every Church which he planted, that whatever had been put into disorder since he left Corinth might be rectified before he came again.

CHAP. V.

The apostle sharply reproves a scandalous incest, protected from censure in the church at Corinth, 1, 2. *By the authority of Christ he orders the excommunication of the incestuous person,* 3—5. *He shows that the leaven of sin must be purged out, in order to keep the true passover, by faith in Christ,* 6—8. *Scandalous professors of Christianity must be shunned,* 9—13.

V. 18—21. Some of the teachers and their adherents at Corinth were so puffed up with their imaginary importance and superiority, that they were confident the apostle would not dare to come among them, or attempt to intermeddle in their affairs. But he assured them that he fully intended to come, if the Lord would enable him, and then he would make trial, not of their oratory and tinselled eloquence, but of their power to support themselves in opposition to his apostolical authority, and the miracles which he should perform in confirmation of it. For the kingdom of God was not set up in the world, or in men's hearts, by well chosen words or eloquent harangues; but by the power of God, exerted in working miracles to prove the divine original of the Gospel, and in the efficacious operation of the Holy Spirit to convert the souls of men. The Corinthians could not but know, that the apostle's testimony had been thus confirmed among them. Would they then choose that he should come to them with the rod of correction, denouncing spiritual censures, and inflicting miraculous judgments on the refractory, as he had done on Elymas, and Peter on Ananias and Sapphira? Or would they that he should come to them in the spirit of tender love and meekness, to encourage, commend, and comfort them? This would depend on their conduct, in respect of those abuses which he was about to specify; for if they were not remedied, he must be compelled to exercise some salutary severity on the offenders.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

The ministers of Christ should be deeply sensible of the importance of their trust, as well as of the dignity of their office; that as "stewards of the mysteries of God," they may be faithful to him and to his Church; disregard their own interest, indulgence, and reputation; and willingly endure reproach and suffering, for the honour of their Lord and the salvation of souls. Thus they should apply themselves with diligence, impartiality, boldness, and simplicity, to dispense the mysteries of God, and "rightly "to divide the word of truth" among the people, according to their characters and conduct; remembering, that faithfulness is indispensably requisite in a steward; and that every other qualification must be contemptible, if this is wanting. Christians also should learn to value ministers, not so much in proportion to the brilliancy of their gifts, as by their integrity and disinterested faithfulness; and they certainly offend the Lord, who slight such as are true to their trust; or who would tempt them to be unfaithful, by flatteries, bribes, frowns, censures, or contempt. Indeed, it ought to be the smallest matter with us to be judged of men, or blamed for that which God approves, even by those whom we most love: yet it requires a superior strength of faith and grace to be totally indifferent to, and uninfluenced by, the opinion of others; and many are thus tempted to waver or warp from the constancy of their testimony. Yet men must be incompetent judges; nay, though we know more of ourselves than any others can do of us, yet our own judgment is not to be depended on, in respect of our faithfulness, any more than our own works, in respect of our justification. We should therefore rely in this, as in all other things, on the Lord; beseeching him to preserve us from deceiving ourselves, and to plead our cause against unjust censures and suspicions: and in respect of others, we should in all doubtful matters refrain from passing judgment, waiting till the Lord come: (*Note, Matt.* vii. 1—5.) Then every secret will be disclosed, every heart will be laid open, and all counsels manifested; every hypocrite will be unmasked, every slandered believer justified, and every faithful servant and steward applauded and rewarded. Waiting for that solemn season, and preparing to render our account, we should beware of thinking of ourselves, or of others, above what is written in God's word, and of being puffed up for one against another; lest we should despise those whom God will then honour, applaud those whose hidden things of darkness he will disclose, or trust in man instead of the Lord himself. If we duly consider what we are by nature and practice; who hath made us in any respect to differ from others; and from whom we have received all our talents; we shall see no ground of glorying in ourselves on any account, but rather of shame and humiliation before God, even if in some respects we are distinguished from our brethren, and if we do not over-rate our endowments.

V. 8—13.

Fallen man is most apt to count himself full, rich, and honourable, when he is most blind, poor, and naked; and mere professors of the Gospel, like glow-worms, shine most in the dark, as to their own opinion of themselves. The absence of faithful ministers concurs with the smooth and enticing words of false teachers, to buoy them up in vain-confidence, and to lead them to admire the wisdom of avoiding the cross, of attempting to serve God and mammon, and of deeming self-indulgence the summit of evangelical liberty. But such ministers as most desire, and would most rejoice in, their real prosperity, will be the last to congratulate them on their admission into this 'fool's paradise;' and they may know to what a precarious and carnal kingdom they are advanced, by their shyness to those pastors, who will also reign with them, if ever they are admitted into the kingdom of heaven. They whom God hath most honoured, have always been proportionably despised, hated, and abused by men; and their sufferings, even unto death, have made them an interesting spectacle to all the intelligent creation. The consideration that so

IT is [a] reported commonly *that there is* [b] fornication among you, [c] and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, [d] that one should have his father's wife.

2 And [e] ye are puffed up, and have not rather [f] mourned, that he that hath done this deed [g] might be taken away from among you.

3 For I verily, [h] as absent in body, but present in spirit, have * judged already, as though I were present, *concerning* him that hath so done this deed.

4 In [i] the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, [k] when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,

5 To [l] deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, [m] that the spirit may be saved in [n] the day of the Lord Jesus.

a i. 11. Gen xxxvii. 2 1Sam. ii. 24

b 11 vi. 9. 13. 18 Acts xv. 20 29. 2 Cor. xii 21 Gal v 19 Eph. v 3 Col iii 5. 1 Thes. iv 7 Rev ii 21. xxi. 8

c Jer. ii. 33. Ez. xvi. 47. 51, 52.

d Gen. xxxv 22. xlix 4. Lev xviii. 8. xx. 11. Deut. xxii. 30 xxvii 20 2 Sam. xvi. 22 xx 3. 1 Chr. v 1. Ez. xxii 10 Am. ii. 7. 2 Cor. vii 12.——e 6. iv 6—8. 18.——f Num. xxv. 6. 2 Kings xxii. 19 Ezra ix. 2—6. x. 1—6. Ps cxix. 136. Jer. xiii 17. Ez. ix 4. 6. 2 Cor vii 9—11 xii 21.———g 5. 7 13 Rev. ii. 20—22.——h 2 Cor. x. 1. 11. xiii. 2. Col. ii. 5. 1 Thes ii. 17.

* Or, *determined*

i Acts iii 6 iv. 7—12 30 xvi. 18. Eph v. 20 Col iii. 17.

k Matt xvi 19. xviii. 16—18. 20. xxviii. 18 20 John xx 23. 2 Cor ii. 10. xiii 3 10.

l 13 2 Cor ii. 6. x. 6. xiii. 10. xxvi. 18. 1 Tim i. 20

m xi 32. 2 Cor. ii. 7. Gal vi. 1, 2. 2 Thes iii. 14, 15. Jam. v. 19, 20. 1 John v. 16. Jude 22, 23.

n i. 8. Phil. i 6. 2 Tim. i. 18. 2 Pet. iii. 12.

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many eyes are upon us, when struggling with difficulties, or conflicting with temptation, should animate us to unconquerable constancy and patience; that holy angels and saints may rejoice, and that evil spirits and wicked men may be disappointed and confounded. The wisest of men, the strongest believers, and the most honoured of God's ambassadors, have been deemed fools for Christ's sake, and treated as weak and contemptible, through bodily infirmities, poverty, want of worldly accomplishments, and an unpliant faithfulness to the souls of men; yea, this hath been their estimate among Christians, and even their own converts, who have counted themselves wise in Christ, strong, and honourable, in exact proportion as they were inferior to those whom they thus undervalued! It is very instructive to reflect on the apostles, as invested with the highest authority in the Church, endued with miraculous powers and conferring them on others, and most eminent in holiness and usefulness; yet even to the end of their lives so entirely poor and destitute, as often to want the very necessaries of life; earning their bread by manual labour, and treated every where as mean, obscure criminals! It would be useful to those, who imagine that the credit of the ministry depends, in a great measure, on their making a creditable, or even a *genteel*, appearance, and who emulate the affluent in the expenses of their families, to meditate carefully on the subject before us; that they might be led to conceive of a more excellent way of maintaining the dignity of character, becoming the ministers of Him "who had not where to lay his "head." If superior rank in the Church were now attended with *apostolical distinctions* alone, it would not so eagerly be pursued. We should, however, not be much cast down, if in some *small degree* we are conformed to the apostles, as to these things; and if we too should be deemed fools for Christ's sake, weak and despicable, even by professors of the Gospel. Though unable to appear like our wealthy hearers, we do not generally want wholesome food, decent raiment, or comfortable habitations; and if sometimes a faithful minister be thus destitute, it is commonly the reproach of the people, rather than any disparagement to him. We should persist in blessing, entreating, and being kind to, our calumniators and persecutors; and if we should be unable "to overcome evil "with good," but still be treated as the "filth of the "world, and the off-scouring of all things;" we may recollect that far better men than we are, have been thus vilified.

V. 14—21.

It is peculiarly distressing, when a faithful minister sees his spiritual children turn away from him with disdain and aversion: but let such a one remember that St. Paul continually experienced the same trial, that he may not be bowed down with discouragement. No man indeed must be followed further than he follows Christ: yet believers should remember that a peculiar regard is due to those whom God hath honoured as the instruments of their regeneration; that it is very criminal to despise or grieve such faithful friends, as feel a real parental affection for them; and that those instructors are commonly influenced by selfish or party-motives, who want to draw them off, on frivolous pretences, from their affectionate care and faithful ministry. We ought, however, to persevere in attempting to do good to those who are thus turned from us or against us: and it may be useful to put them in remembrance of those things, which they have formerly learned, but seem to have forgotten. We should imitate the tenderness of wise and good parents, who are not easily induced to forego all care, even of their disobedient children; but who know how to employ rebukes and corrections, as well as the language of love and the spirit of meekness. The kingdom of God is not set up, or supported, by florid metaphors or well-turned periods, but by a divine power; and they are the most eminent ministers, not who speak most gracefully, but by whom God works most powerfully. Spiritual censures and Scriptural warnings are greatly to be feared, though not followed at present by sensible temporal judgments; and they who are so self-confident as to despise them, are most likely to experience their dreadful effects.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1—5. After the preceding introductory observations, the apostle next proceeded to animadvert on the most flagrant abuse, which was connived at by the Corinthians. A Christian was guilty of incest with his mother-in-law, probably while his father was yet living! (2 Cor. vii. 12.) This was a crime, which even the licentious Gentiles never named without the most indignant detestation: yet it was well known and commonly reported, that this member of the Christian Church was guilty of it; and he seems to have habitually lived with his mother-in-law as his wife. But though so scandalous a wickedness was committed, and escaped censure

6 Your [o] glorying is not good. Know ye not that [p] a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

7 [q] Purge out therefore the old leaven, that [r] ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even [s] Christ our Passover is * sacrificed for us:

8 Therefore [t] let us keep the † feast, [u] not with old leaven, [x] neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; [y] but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.

9 ¶ I wrote unto you in an epistle, [z] not to company with fornicators:

10 Yet [a] not altogether with the fornicators [b] of this world, or with the covetous, or with extortioners, or with idolaters; [c] for then must ye needs go out of the world.

o 2. iii. 21. iv. 18, 19. Jam iv 16.
p xv. 33 Matt. xiii. 33. xvi. 6—12. Gal. v. 9. 2 Tim. ii. 17.
q 13. Ex xii. 15. xiii. 6, 7. Eph. iv. 22. Col. iii. 5—9.
r x. 17.
s xv. 3, 4. Ex. xii. 5, 6. Is liii. 7—10. John i 29. 36. Acts viii. 32—35. 1 Pet. i. 19, 20. Rev. v. 6—9.
y Josh. xxiv. 14. Ps. xxxii. 2. John i. 47. 2 Cor i 12. viii. 8. Eph vi. 24. 1 John iii. 18—21
z Ps. i. 1, 2. Prov. ix. 6. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11.
a x 27.
b i. 20 John viii. 23. xv. 19. xvii. 6. 9. 15, 16 2 Cor. iv. 4. Eph. ii 2. 1 John iv. 5. 17.
c Matt v. 14—16. John xvii. 15. Phil. ii. 15. 1 John v. 19. Rev. xii. 9.

* Or, *slain*.——t Lev. xxiii. 6. Num. xxviii. 16, 17. Deut xvi. 16. Is. xxv 6.——† Or, *holy day*. Ps. xlii. 4. Is. xxx 29.——u 1 6. vi 9—11. 2 Cor. xii. 21. Eph. iv 17—22. 1 Pet. iv. 2, 3 ——x iii. 3. Matt. xvi. 6. 12. xxvi 4, 5. Luke xii. 1. John xviii. 28—30 2 Cor. xii 20. 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2.

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among them, yet they were puffed up with a vain conceit of their gifts and superior attainments, and were not ashamed of it, or concerned about it. Probably the guilty person was of considerable rank among them, and a zealous adherent of some of their popular teachers, so that a party-spirit, and a false notion of Christian liberty, secured him from censure. But, if they had been properly disposed, they would have mourned over such an enormity, and humbled themselves before God, with earnest prayers, entreating him to remove all obstacles, that he, who had done this nefarious deed, might be separated from their company. For though the apostle was absent, and could not therefore exert himself as he would otherwise have done, and though he was aware that his peremptory interference would give great offence, yet, "being present in "spirit," having the whole affair clearly before his mind, (perhaps by a supernatural operation of the Holy Spirit,) and being full of concern for the honour of Christ, and the welfare of the Church, he had already determined in the case, and had passed sentence on the criminal, as if he had been upon the spot. He therefore charged them in the name, by the authority, and for the honour of Christ, that, when they met together as a Church, they would consider him as present in spirit among them, to ratify their sentence with his apostolical authority, and to enforce it by the power of Christ, and thus to expel the incestuous person from their communion, that he might not be considered as a Christian, but as a heathen, a subject of Satan's kingdom. Yet this was not to be done in hatred, or for his ruin, but in hopes that it would be the means of bringing him to repentance, and the mortification of his fleshly lusts, that so his soul might be saved in the day of Christ. Probably the apostle expected that this solemn sentence of excommunication would be attended by some miraculous infliction of pain and disease, to the wasting, or even the death of his body; yet by "delivering him over "to Satan," he seems to intend his expulsion from the visible kingdom of Christ into that of the devil, and not that Satan would inflict the correction which might follow. No doubt evil spirits are able and willing to disorder the body, or distract the mind, or destroy life, if God permit; yet it seems more reasonable to think that God by miracle inflicted the disease, than that he permitted Satan to do it. It should, however, be noted, that, when supernatural visitations do not accompany ecclesiastical censures, temporal pains and penalties ought not to be annexed to them.—Abuses of this kind have made way for the disuse or relaxation of salutary discipline throughout a great part of the Christian Church. 'A mother-in-law marries her son-in-'law, with no favourable auspices, by no authority! Oh! 'incredible wickedness! and unheard of through life, ex-'cept in this one instance.' (*Cicero.*)

V. 6—8. It was evident that the Corinthians had no good cause to glory in their eminence and prosperity, for their connivance at the gross wickedness before mentioned was alone sufficient to prove that pure religion was greatly declined among them. What! did they not know that a little leaven would soon ferment and sour the whole lump of dough? And that corrupt principles and examples, if connived at, would diffuse their baleful efficacy through the whole Church? The judgment of men would thus be corrupted, their conduct would be lax and licentious, and they would altogether become a scandalous community. As the Jews therefore used to search with candles in every corner of their houses, that they might cast out all the leaven before they made the unleavened bread for the passover, so ought they to purge out such crimes and offenders. These evils, however congenial with their old state of idolatry, were utterly inconsistent with the purity of a Christian Church, which should be a new lump, as they were to resemble the unleavened bread used at the passover. The Jews, indeed, had only the type and shadow of good things to come, in their appointed feast; but Christ himself, the true Passover, had been sacrificed for his Church, to atone for their sins, and to be the spiritual sustenance of their souls. It behooved them therefore to keep the sacred feast, not with the old leaven of heathen licentiousness, nor yet with the leaven of malice, ambition, and contention, but with that simplicity and sincerity of repentance and holy obedience, which were the truth and substance shadowed forth by the unleavened bread. This might either be applied to the habitual feast of communion with God, by faith in Christ, or to their commemorating his death in the Lord's supper; and it included both personal purity, and the purity of the religious society. (*Notes*, &c. *Ex.* xii.) Some expositors confidently maintain that the incestuous person was one of the teachers who opposed the apostle, or *the opposing teacher*, supposing that the apostle had a single false teacher in his mind. But this is not probable; and in the second epistle, where he directs the Corinthians to comfort the incestuous person, as brought to deep repentance, and in danger of being "swallowed up of over much sorrow," he yet speaks of "false apostles, ministers of Satan, trans-"formed into the ministers of righteousness," which indeed wholly subverts this supposition. Lewdness 'is 'the old leaven to be purged out, because the Corinthians 'were infamous for it to a proverb.' (*Whitby.*)

11 But now I have written unto you, not to keep company, if any man that is [d] called a brother be [e] a fornicator, [f] or covetous, [g] or an idolater, [h] or a railer, [i] or a drunkard, [k] or an extortioner; [l] with such an one, no not to eat.

d vi. 6. vii 12. 15. viii. 11 Acts ix. 17.
e *See on*, 1. v. 9, 10. Ps. l. 16—21. 2 Cor xii. 20, 21. Gal. v. 19—21. 1 Thes. iv. 3—8. Rev. ii 14. 20 xxi 8. xxii. 15
f Ps. x. 3. Mark vii 21—23. Luke xii 15, &c Eph v. 5. Col. iii. 5. 1 Tim iii. 3. vi. 9, 10 2 Pet. ii. 14, 15 ——
g x. 7, 8. 14. 18—22. ——
h vi. 10. Ps. ci. 5 ——
i xi. 21. Matt. xxv. 49—51. Luke xii 45, 46. xxi. 34. Rom. xiii 13. Eph v. 18. 1 Thes. v. 7, 8 ——
k Ez. xxii. 12. Matt. xxiii 25 Luke xviii 11.
l 13. Matt xviii. 17. Rom. xvi. 17. 2 Thes. ii. 6 14, 15. 1 Tim. vi. 5. 2 John 10, 11.

12 For [m] what have I to do to judge [n] them also that are without? [o] do not ye judge them that are within?

13 But them that are without, [p] God judgeth. [q] Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

m Luke xii. 14. John xviii. 36.
n Mark iv. 11 Col. iv. 5 1 Thes iv. 12 1 Tim. iii. 7.
o vi. 1—5.
p Ps. l. 6. Acts xvii. 31 Rom. ii. 16 Heb. xiii. 4. 2 Pet. ii. 9.
q 1. 5. 7. Deut. xiii. 5. xvii. 7. xxi 21. xxii. 21. 24 Ec. ix. 18.

V. 9—13. Probably the apostle had in some previous epistle, (which has not been preserved,) warned the Corinthians not to associate with fornicators, or persons who were known to live in any kind of lewdness. Some expositors indeed are of opinion, that the apostle did not refer to any epistle which he had before written, but to what he had enforced in the preceding verses of this chapter. But this certainly is not the most obvious meaning of the passage. And why should we suppose, that all his letters, (any more than all his sermons,) must be preserved as a part of the sacred volume? Can it be thought probable, on reflection, that this zealous apostle, so admirably qualified to give epistolary instruction, who lay so long in prison, and was, in various ways, so long kept at a distance from his friends and children, should, in the course of his whole ministry, write no more letters than are now extant? However this may be, he did not mean to prohibit all intercourse with fornicators, or with covetous men, or with such as oppressed the poor by iniquitous exactions; or even with idolaters, provided they were not professed Christians; for so general were these crimes, that such a prohibition would have been equivalent to a command to leave their families and occupations, and to become hermits and recluses, which would by no means be for their good, or for the honour of God. He would therefore now more explicitly say, that if one called a brother, a member of the Christian Church, was guilty of fornication, or similar crimes, or of reviling, or intemperance, he ought not only to be excommunicated, but his society should be shunned, as infectious, by every believer, and they all ought even to refuse to eat with him, till he had given evidence of his sincere repentance. Thus the infection might be stopped, and the scandal prevented, and the most effectual method would be taken to convince offenders of their guilt and danger. But the apostle did not deem himself required, or authorized, to determine any thing concerning those that were not professed Christians, (which might be the reason why no mention is made of censuring the woman who had been guilty in this matter, she probably being a heathen,) but did it not belong to them to exercise a judicial authority over the members of their own Church, and to censure the scandalous? (iv. 5.) As for those *without*, they must be left to the judgment of God, who would not permit them to escape unpunished. Therefore, let the Corinthians proceed to do their duty, by putting away from among them this notorious offender, without regarding the displeasure that might be excited by it; otherwise the apostle would be compelled to come unto them with a rod, and to exert his miraculous powers in inflicting punishments on them.—Dr. Hammond, and some others, by far-fetched criticisms, interpret almost all the words here used of some kind or degree of lewdness. Thus the *covetous* the *extortioners*, and even the *railers*, are supposed to mean debauched or licentious characters, as if covetousness, extortion, and reviling, were not totally inconsistent with Christianity, or as if such a writer as St. Paul would have needlessly accumulated words, in speaking of one species of wickedness, and not have dropped a hint concerning other kinds of wickedness, which are equally abominable in the sight of God!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

How grievous is it, that those crimes should sometimes be notoriously committed by professors of the Gospel, which heathens would be ashamed of! Wo be to the world because of such offences! And wo be to them by whom such offences come! yea, to those by whom they are connived at! Spiritual pride, ambition, and false doctrines and teachers, directly tend to introduce and perpetuate these scandals; for men's gifts, influence, notions, and connexions, are in such circumstances more regarded than their conduct. So that religious societies, as well as individuals, are generally most puffed up, when they have most need to be ashamed, and to mourn; and sometimes those men are gloried in, especially when eminent in gifts or affluence, who must be taken away, as mortified limbs, before the Church can thrive in vital godliness. When a man has wisdom, zeal, and love, he can have but one judgment in cases of this kind; and if he possesses authority or influence, he will use it, whether present or absent, in exciting those, who are more immediately concerned, to prefer the honour of the Gospel to every personal or party-interest, to venture all consequences in bearing testimony against such scandals, and to separate from among them those who have done such deeds. It would be desirable that all the ministers and Churches of Christ were enabled to exercise this salutary discipline, in the name and by the authority of their Lord, and to deliver over into the visible kingdom of Satan, all who evidently disgrace their profession, and that those who have such discipline among them, did always exercise it with exact impartiality, due solemnity, and tender compassion to the souls of offenders. But, alas! it hath been so generally abused by men's carnal passions, or rendered inefficient by family-connexions, secular and party-influence, and an undue regard to the rich above the poor, that a more complete revival of pure and spiritual religion seems necessary, before it can produce its full effect. Far more, however, might be done in most places than now is, if fear of man, respect of persons, and carnal policy, did not sometimes deter those concerned from decidedly acting according to their judgment. But, alas! many even glory in their prosperous state, when

CHAP. VI.

The Corinthians are reproved for going to law before heathen magistrates, instead of settling their differences among themselves, 1—6, *and for selfishness and dishonesty,* 7, 8. *Neither fornicators, adulterers, &c. nor thieves, nor covetous persons, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God,* 9, 10. *Some of the Corinthians had been such, but they were washed, &c.,* 11. *All lawful things are not expedient,* 12. *Christians, whose bodies are the members of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Spirit, must flee fornication, as a sin against their own bodies,* 13—19; *that as bought with a price, they may glorify God in body and soul,* 20.

DARE any of you, having [a] a matter against another, [b] go to law before the unjust, and not before [c] the saints?

2 Do ye not know that [d] the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge [e] the smallest matters?

3 Know ye not that we shall [f] judge angels? how much more things that [g] pertain to this life?

4 If then [h] ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge, [i] who are least esteemed in the church.

5 I speak [k] to your shame. [l] Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?

6 But [m] brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.

[a] Matt. xviii. 15—17. Acts xviii. 14, 15. xix. 38.

[b] 6, 7.

[c] i. 2. xiv. 33. xvi. 1. 15.

[d] Ps. xlix. 14. cxlix. 5—9. Dan. vii. 18. Zech. xiv. 5. Matt. xix. 28. Luke xxii. 30. 1 Thes. iii. 13. Rev. ii. 26, 27. iii. 21. xx. 4.

[e] 4. 2 Cor. iv. 18. 1 John ii. 16, 17.

[f] Matt. xxv. 41. 2 Pet. ii. 4. Jude 6.

[g] 4. Ps. xvii. 14. Luke viii. 14. xxi. 34. 2 Tim. ii. 4. iv. 10.

[h] v. 12.

[i] Acts vi. 2—4.

[k] iv. 14. xi. 14. xv. 34.

[l] iii. 18. iv. 10. Prov. xiv. 8. Jam. i. 5. iii. 13—18.

[m] 1. 7. Gen. xiii. 7—9. xiv. 24. Neh. v. 8, 9. Ps. cxxxiii. Acts vii. 26. Phil. ii. 14, 15. 1 John ii. 9—11. iii. 11—15.

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abuses prevail, which fully authorize us to say, "your glorying is not good." Few seem sufficiently aware, that "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump;" and that the honour and success of the Gospel, and the flourishing of the Church, require that the old leaven be diligently sought out and purged away, though the numbers and wealth of the society should be greatly diminished by it; and that none should be deemed a part of the true Church, who does not appear to have renounced and mortified his old sins, that thus the whole company may be a new and unleavened mass. So far is the sacrifice of "Christ our Passover for us" from rendering this personal and public sanctification unnecessary, that it furnishes the most cogent reasons and effectual motives for it; else we can neither live by faith in him, nor join in his ordinances, with comfort and profit. This feast cannot be solemnized, these provisions cannot be relished, along with the old leaven of sensual indulgence, or that of malice and wickedness, but must be attended with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

V. 9—13.

When individuals, who mourn over those that have done evil, cannot prevail to have them put away from among them, they should refuse to associate with them, and protest against their scandals by withdrawing from them: and though we should not be severe on the infirmities, or even the occasional falls, of such as are humbled for them, yet when any one, who professes the Gospel, is a fornicator, or covetous, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, charity itself requires of us to avoid all fellowship with him, even more than we do with persons guilty of similar crimes, who make no profession of religion; lest we should appear to allow of his sins, because he is of our party and sentiments. But how grievous is it, that we must needs still go out of the world, (though called Christian,) if we should resolutely refuse all intercourse with such characters as are here described! So prevalent is vice on every side! We must, however, leave those that are without, and who are strangers or enemies to the doctrines of grace, to the judgment of God. We should first judge ourselves, and take heed to give no offence to others: then we should shun such professors of the Gospel, as would be an offence to us, and a reproach to the cause; and thus attending to our own duty in this respect, we should wait and pray for times of greater purity in the Church of God.

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1—6. The apostle here reproved another lamentable evil in the Corinthian Church. He abruptly inquired, as one astonished, whether any of them could venture to go to law with their brethren before the heathen magistrates, who were unrighteous persons, and might be expected to be unjust judges in such matters. Whereas they ought to have decided all their differences, (if such there were,) by the arbitration of the saints, the holy disciples of Christ. What! with all their superior knowledge, did they not understand that believers, being first declared righteous and heirs of God, at the day of judgment will be assessors with Christ in judging the world, and will concur in the sentence denounced by him against the wicked? And if this honour was intended them, were they not worthy to be intrusted with the decision of such causes, as related only to the comparatively trifling concerns of this life? Whereas, even fallen angels, whose slaves they once were, and by whom they were long harassed, will be judged by them; and the punishment of those proud and malignant spirits will be embittered by this mortifying circumstance. If, then, they had causes relative to secular matters to determine, they need not take off the ministers of the Gospel from their work, nor select such as were qualified for other services: even those of inferior abilities and estimation in the Church

7 Now therefore [n] there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another: [o] Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather *suffer yourselves to* be defrauded?

8 Nay, [p] ye do wrong, and defraud, and that *your* brethren.

9 [q] Know ye not that the [r] unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? be not deceived: neither [s] fornicators, nor idolaters, nor [t] adulterers, nor effeminate, nor [u] abusers of themselves with mankind,

10 Nor [x] thieves, nor [y] covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

11 And [z] such were some of you: [a] but ye are washed, [b] but ye are sanctified, [c] but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

n Prov. xxv. 8—10. Hos. x. 2 Jam iv 1—3.
o Prov xx. 22. Matt. v 39—41 Luke vi 29. Rom. xii. 17 18. 1 Thes. v. 15. 1 Pet. ii. 19—23. iii. 9.
p Lev xix. 13. Mic. ii 2 Mal iii 5. *Marg* Mark x. 19 Col. iii 25. 1 Thes. iv. 6. Jam. v. 4.
q 2, 3. 15, 16. 19. iii. 16. ix. 24.
r Ex. xxviii. 1. Lev. xix. 15. 35, 36. Deut. xxv. 13—16. Prov. xi. 1. xxii. 8 Is. x. 1, 2. lv. 7 Zech v 3. Acts xxiv. 25. Rom. i. 18. 1 Tim. i. 9.——s 10. xv. 50. Matt. xix. 29. xxv. 34. Gal v. 21.
t v. 1. 10. Gal. v. 19—21. Eph. v. 5. Heb. xii. 16. xiii 4. Rev. xxi. 8 xxii. 15
u Gen. xix. 5. Lev. xviii. 22. xx. 13. Deut. xxii. 5. xxiii. 17. Judg. xix. 22. Rom. i. 26, 27. 1 Tim. i. 10
x Ps 1 17, 18 Is. i. 23. Jer. vii. 11. Ez. xxii. 13. 27. 29. Matt xxi. 13. xxiii 14 33. John xii. 6. Eph. iv. 28. 1 Thes. iv 6. 1 Pet. iv. 15.——y *See on*, v. 11.——z xii. 2. Rom. vi. 17—19. Eph. ii 1—3. iv. 17—22. v. 8. Col iii. 5—7. Tit iii. 3. 1 Pet iv. 2, 3——a Ps. li 2. 7. Prov. xxx. 12. Is. i. 16 Jer. iv. 14. Ez. xxxvi. 25. John xiii. 10. Acts xxii. 16. Eph. v. 26 Tit iii. 5. Heb. x. 22. 1 Pet. iii. 21. Rev. i. 5. vii. 14.——b i. 2 30. Acts xxvi. 18. Gal. v. 22, 23. 2 Thes ii. 13. 1 Pet. i 2 22——c Is. xlv. 25. liii. 11. Luke xviii 14. Acts xiii. 39. Rom. iii. 24. 26—30. iv. 5. v. 1. 9. viii. 30. 33. Gal. ii. 16. iii. 8. 11. 24. Tit. iii. 7. Jam ii. 21—26.

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were competent for this business. At present they acted in such a manner as was very shameful; for after having greatly gloried in their wisdom and gifts, there seemed to be not so much as one wise man among them, not one, that could be trusted as an arbitrator between his brethren! So that such disputes were carried before the unbelievers, who would thence naturally conclude the Christians to be a selfish and litigious set of men. Doubtless, therefore, there was a great fault among them, which could not be palliated: their quarrels proved them carnal and selfish: this effect of them was exceedingly dishonourable to the Gospel; and their connivance at these scandals proved, that the Church was far from being in a flourishing state. The Jews were allowed to settle matters of property among themselves, according to their own law; and Christians would doubtless be admitted to exercise the same kind of authority; yet voluntary reference to arbitration seems rather to be intended. 'The apostle is not treating con'cerning the cause to be judged between believers and 'unbelievers, nor of the public administration of justice; 'but of those differences, which nothing hindered from 'being settled by private arbitration. If the Corinthians 'had been such as they ought to have been; this question 'would have been superfluous: for no one would have given 'his brother any occasion for litigation. To decide such 'matters as these, they ought by no means to employ the 'pastors, or teachers, or other rulers, of the Church, or 'the deacons; who were fully occupied in their sacred 'functions: but rather they should choose some of those '(afterwards called the laity,) who being less taken up in 'sacred services, might be more at leisure to attend to 'these secular concerns.' (*Beza.*) The word rendered *least esteemed*, is elsewhere translated, *despised*, or *set at nought*. (i. 28. xvi. 11. *Luke* xviii. 9. xxiii. 11. *Acts* iv. 11. *Rom.* xiv. 3. 10. 2 *Cor.* x. 10. *Gal.* iv. 14. 1 *Thes.* v. 20.) 'It is full of sense, signifying to esteem a man 'to have no worth in him, to disdain, vilify, and nullify 'a man; to set at nought, and basely to esteem a 'thing.' (*Leigh.*) 'If you still retain your secular 'judicatures, you set them to be judges over you, who 'are despised in the Church.' (*Whitby.*) This learned writer reads the clause interrogatively: "Do ye set them "to judge, who are despised in the Church?" But did the Church avowedly despise and set at nought those very magistrates, whom the apostles commanded them to honour and obey? Mr. Locke understands it of private persons not appointed to the magistracy: but it does not appear that the original word was ever used in that sense. In fact, none of the interpretations above given are fully satisfactory: for the meanest Christian could not be despised and set at nought in the Church, except as that Church was corrupted. But may not the apostle refer to the vain glory and self-wisdom of the leading persons at Corinth, who would, by necessary consequence, despise such as were inferior to them in knowledge, utterance, and spiritual gifts, in proportion as they exalted themselves? Yet the meanest real and experienced Christians, whom they set at nought, were competent to decide such causes as they brought before the heathen magistrates; perhaps more competent than their despisers.

V. 7, 8. 'There is a fault among you, that you go 'to law at all; it being either, on the one side, want of 'patience and Christian contentment, that you do not 'rather bear some injuries, than thus seek to redress 'them; or, on the other, covetousness and injustice, which 'move you to do wrong to, and defraud, your brethren.' (*Whitby.*) No doubt there were faults on both sides, though the dishonest party was most criminal. ***Fault.*** (ἥττημα.) 'That is, a want of fortitude of mind, which 'causes you to be "overcome with evil,"—whence dis'putes and litigations arise.' (*Beza.*) (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 9—11. The apostle here plainly declared his doubts concerning some of the professed Christians at Corinth, as their conduct was so contrary to the precepts of God's word. What, did they not know that unjust or dishonest persons shall not inherit the kingdom of God? There is vast energy in these inquiries, when we consider that they were addressed to a people, who were puffed up with an imagination of their superiority to others in wisdom and knowledge. If, however, they did not pay a proper regard to so plain and evident a truth, he must warn them not to deceive themselves, or each other, and to take heed that Satan did not deceive them: for they would certainly find, that persons who lived in the practice of any of the vices and iniquities which he proceeded to enumerate, would be excluded from heaven at last, whatever their profession, gifts, or creed, had been. The word *effeminate* does not seem merely to denote persons of a soft and self-indulgent temper and conduct in other matters, but such as violated the order of nature by abominable practices, only to be named with those of "the abusers of them"selves with mankind." He did not, however, mean, that they, who had been guilty of these or similar abominations, were excluded from salvation; for even some of

12 ¶ All [d] things are lawful unto me, but all things [e] are not * expedient: all things are lawful for me, [f] but I will not be brought under the power of any.

13 [g] Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: [h] but God shall destroy both it and them. Now, the body *is* not for fornication, [i] but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.

14 And [k] God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us [l] by his own power.

15 Know ye not that [m] your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make *them* the members of an harlot? [n] God forbid.

16 What! know ye not that he which is joined to [o] an harlot is one body? [p] for two (saith he) shall be one flesh.

17 But [q] he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.

d x. 23. Rom. xiv. 14.
e viii. 4. 7—13. ix. 12. x. 24—33. Rom xiv. 15—23 2 Thes iii. 9.
* Or, *profitable.*
f ix. 27. Rom vii. 14 Heb. xii 15, 16 Jude 12.
g Matt. xv. 17. Mark vii. 19. Rom. xiv. 17
h x. 3—5 John vi. 27 49. Col. ii. 22, 23.
i 15. 19, 20 iii. 16, 17. Rom vi 12, 13 vii. 4. xii 1. xiv. 7—9. 2 Cor. v. 15. xi. 2. Eph. v. 23. 1 Thes iv. 3—7.——k xv. 15—20 Acts ii. 24 xvii. 31. Rom. vi. 4—8. viii. 11. 2 Cor. iv. 14. Phil. iii. 10, 11. 1 Thes iv. 14.
l John v. 28, 29. vi. 39, 40. xi. 25, 26. Eph i 19, 20. Phil. iii 21.
m 19. xi 3. xii. 27 Rom. xii. 5. Eph. i. 22, 23. iv. 12 15, 16. v. 23 30. Col. ii. 19.
n Gen. xliv. 17. Luke xx. 16. Rom. iii 3, 4. 6. 31. vi. 2. 15. vii. 7. 13. Gal. ii. 17. iii. 21. vi. 14.
o Gen. xxxiv. 31. xxxviii. 15 24. Judg. xvi. 1. Matt. xxi. 31, 32. Heb. xi 31.
p Gen. ii 24. Matt. xix. 5, 6. Mark x. 8. Eph. v. 31.——q xii 13 John iii 6. xvii. 21—23. Eph. iv. 3, 4. v. 30. Phil. ii. 5.

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the true Christians at Corinth had been habitually criminal in many of these respects; and probably most of them in one or other of them. But, then, they had been washed, not only by the water of baptism, but in "the Fountain "opened for sin and uncleanness;" so that they were sanctified from the love and practice of sin, and to the love and service of God, by the operation of the Holy Spirit, as well as pardoned and justified by faith in the name of the Lord Jesus. Thus their character and conduct were changed, as well as their state: but if any one of them still practised these vices, he deceived himself, if he supposed himself to be an accepted believer. The arrangement of the expressions in the eleventh verse shows, that no argument can be drawn *merely from that circumstance*, in respect of controverted points of doctrine. 'Here is the figure called *Hyperbaton:* for we "are "justified in the name of the Lord Jesus," 'and "sanc"tified by the Spirit of our God." (So *Philem.* 5.) 'To be justified, still signifies, (in all Paul's epistles,) to 'be absolved from the guilt of sin, and approved as righ'teous, either at present, or before God's tribunal. And 'so "the name of Christ," 'when we are said to be 'justified by it, must signify faith in Christ dying for 'us; "for in him shall all that believe be justified." (*Whitby.*) 'The apostle begins with those vices, with 'which a rich and luxurious city abounded, seriously 'warning them, that repentance and forgiveness, justifica'tion and sanctification, are joined by an indissoluble bond.' (*Beza.*)

V. 12—17. It is surprising that expositors should speak of the *Judaizing* teachers as the authors of the divisions at Corinth, when their philosophizing disposition, and their abuses of Christian liberty, plainly show them to have been speculating Gentile converts, who ran into the opposite extreme, and introduced a specious system of antinomianism. As all meats might lawfully be eaten, the ceremonial law being no longer in force, they were disposed to extend the same principle even to fornication, as if that too were only prohibited by the ceremonial law, or as if the moral law also had lost its force! This false principle, added to their heathen maxims and habits, seems to have made way for their connivance at the conduct of the incestuous person. Now, says the apostle, admitting the truth of this position, that "all things are lawful to "a Christian," which might be granted in respect of meats, yet all things are not expedient to him, or consistent with his real benefit, and that of his brethren or neighbours: so that even this liberty must be used under certain limitations. (*Notes, Rom.* xiv. 13—23.) Moreover, a Christian should habituate all his natural inclinations to subjection; and not allow them, by unrestricted indulgence, even in lawful things, to obtain a power over him, so that he cannot refrain when it is requisite that he should. Indeed, all kinds of food were created for the support of the body, and for no other purpose; and the stomach and bowels were formed to receive, digest, and convert them into nourishment: yet both the meat and the body, (in respect of its present subsistence,) will soon be destroyed, according to the appointment of God. But he did not form the body, to be employed in fornication and promiscuous intercourse of the sexes, which counteract, and, if universal, would entirely defeat, the design of the Creator, in making them male and female; namely, the increase of the human species, and the proper training of children, and all the comforts and advantages of relative and domestic life, as springing from honourable marriage. But even this was a very subordinate end, for which their bodies were created: for they were "for the Lord," to be employed in his service; especially the bodies of believers were "for the Lord Jesus," to be presented as living sacrifices to him, and employed as instruments of righteousness to his glory, (*Notes, Rom.* vi. 12. 13—16. xii. 1;) and the Lord Jesus was appointed to be the Saviour, Proprietor, and happiness, of the body as well as of the soul: for God had raised him up from the grave, as the earnest of the resurrection of all his people, by his power, to glory and immortality. And did they not know that their bodies were members of Christ's mystical body, the Church? Was it then meet that the body of a believer, which stood in so high and honourable a relation to the Lord of glory, the incarnate Son of God, should be disgraced and abused by a vile intercourse with a harlot? They ought to know, that this was to become one body, or flesh, with a licentious woman, by a most degrading and pernicious deviation from the original institution of marriage. Whereas he that was united to the Lord was one spirit with him; this union was formed by the communication of the Holy Spirit, and was of a spiritual and sacred nature, comprising a conformity of judgment and disposition, and a sympathy of soul: and could a Christian think of being one spirit with Christ, and one flesh with an harlot?

18 [r] Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication [s] sinneth against his own body.

19 [t] What! know ye not that [u] your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, [x] and ye are not your own?

20 For [y] ye are bought with a price: therefore [z] glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

r Gen. xxxix. 12—18. Prov. ii. 16—19. v. 3—15. vi. 24—29. vii. 5, &c. ix. 16—18. 2 Tim. ii. 22. 1 Pet. ii. 11
s Rom. i. 24. 1 Thes. iv 5.
t 15, 16.
u iii. 16. 2 Cor vi. 16 Eph ii. 21, 22. 1 Pet. ii. 5.
x 1 Kings xx 4. 1 Chr. xxix. 14. Ps xii. 4. e. 3. Rom xiv. 7—9. 2 Cor. v. 15. Tit. ii. 14.
y vii. 23. Acts xx. 28. Gal. iii. 13 Heb. ix. 12. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. 2 Pet ii. 1. Rev. v. 9.
z x. 31. Matt. v. 16 Rom. vi. 19. xii. 1. Phil. i. 20.

V. 18—20. As this vice was so inconsistent with Christian holiness, and as the temptation of the Corinthians to it, from former bad habits, the example of their neighbours, and abundant opportunities, would be many, they ought to flee from it, as from an enemy whom they dared not face: they should shun all incentives to it, and reject every thought of it or solicitation to it, without parleying with them. For it might further be observed, that other sins in general have their chief effect upon the mind rather than on the body, and commonly injure others more immediately than the man himself: but lewd persons not only sin against God, their neighbours, and their own souls, but against their own bodies also; dishonouring and abusing them to the vilest purposes, and bringing upon them the most painful, loathsome, and destructive diseases. Thus they, as it were, take their bodies, and, by an act of cruelty to themselves, and gradual suicide, present them for sacrifice to the filthiest demons. This is in some degree the case in other kinds of sensual excess; but far more in respect of this vice than any other: as every one must know, who is acquainted with the horrible effects of lewdness in populous cities, and with the vast multitudes that are annually cut off, in early life, and in the most deplorable manner, by the various diseases, with which it hath pleased God to show his abhorrence of it. Moreover, Christians ought to know that their bodies were consecrated to be the temples of the Holy Ghost, who dwelt in them, as the gift of the Father through the Son, to consecrate them to God, and prepare them for his glory; so that in this respect too they were no longer their own, but the property of God the Spirit, who had taken possession of them as his holy habitation. For they had been redeemed from merited condemnation and hopeless slavery, by the atoning sacrifice of Christ, who, having thus bought them with a price, had acquired for himself, and for the Father and the Spirit, as One with him, a new and endearing right to them and their services, in addition to that which he had as their Creator. So that, being wholly and on every account the Lord's, they were bound to devote both body and soul to his glory, in every service to which he called them, and to make no other use of either body or soul, than was consistent with that holy and entire devotedness to God. The language of this chapter is remarkable: "God the Father will raise the bodies of "believers by *his own power*," (14. *John* v. 25—28.) Their bodies are members of Christ, and for him, (as he for them,) his property, to be devoted to him, having been bought with the price of his blood. And they are also the *temples* of the Holy Ghost, and thus his property, so that they are not their own, but God's, to glorify him. Does not all this demonstrate, that St. Paul considered the God, to whom Christians especially belonged, as subsisting in three divine persons, The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to each of whom he shows their peculiar relation? This accords with the form of baptism and benediction. 'The question, "Know ye not this?" 'is repeated six times in this one chapter; which may seem 'to carry with it a just reproach to the Corinthians, who 'had got a new and better instructor than himself, in 'whom they so much gloried.' (*Locke.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

The high privileges and glorious prospects of believers should suggest arguments to them against sin, and for the practice of every duty; that so a just sense of the dignity gratuitously bestowed on them may render them superior to the debasing allurements of vice, and the love of worldly vanities. Surely, the saints of God, and the assessors of Christ in judgment on men and angels, should not so eagerly contend with each other about secular interests, as to make their appeal to the enemies of religion! Surely, they are competent to decide such comparatively insignificant causes among themselves! If there were not utterly a fault among them, such disputes would rarely occur: and if at any time they became unavoidable, it would be easy to decide them by arbitration, were not professors of the Gospel too tenacious of their supposed right, and too much on their own side: for *real* Christians, even of moderate abilities, might generally determine such matters with sufficient equity, if they were impartially set before them, and unreservedly left to them. It must, however, be a shame to any religious company, if there is no man among them so wise and faithful, that his brethren dare trust him to determine their secular differences. Indeed, law-suits with those that *are without*, need seldom be had recourse to, if Christians were disinterested and forbearing in due measure; if they would, in all tolerable matters, suffer themselves to be defrauded and injured, for the sake of peace, and the credit of the Gospel. But brother would never go to law with brother before unbelievers, if there were not a very great fault on one side, or both: and much deliberation, counsel, prayer, and endeavour for accommodation, should surely precede, before a man *dare* to enter upon so perilous and disgraceful a business. But, alas, many professors of the Gospel not only refuse to bear and forgive injuries; but they do wrong and defraud, and that their brethren! Whether such men act contrary to their consciences, or are misled by false principles, they should be reminded, that "the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God:" for no one, continuing an adulterer, a fornicator, or lascivious, a dishonest, covetous, fraudulent, drunken, or malicious man, can have either title to, or meetness for, the holy habitation of God and his saints. Many deceive themselves and others in these matters; but the thing is impracticable, and the hope of it the grossest presumption. As many, however, who are now true

CHAP. VII.

Directions concerning marriage, as a remedy against fornication; and the conduct of husbands and wives to each other, 1—5. *The single state has advantages to those who are capable of it,* 6—9. *Instructions how to act, when one of the parties is an unbeliever,* 10—16. *Every one should abide with God in the state in which he was called,* 17—24. *Further intimations of the advantages of a single life in that troubled state of the church; and a memento concerning the shortness and uncertainty of earthly things,* 24—35. *Directions concerning the marriage of virgins and widows,* 36—40.

a 8. 26, 27. 37, 38. Matt. xix. 10, 11.

NOW concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: *It is* [a] good for a man not to [b] touch a woman.

b Gen. xx. 6. Ruth ii. 9. Prov. vi 29.

2 Nevertheless, [c] *to avoid* fornication, [d] let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.

c 9. vi 18. Prov. v 18, 19. 1 Tim. iv. 3.

d Prov. xviii. 22. xix 14. Mal ii. 14, 15. Eph v. 28. 33.

3 Let the husband [e] render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband.

e Ex. xxi. 10. 1 Pet. iii. 7.

4 The [f] wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.

f Hos. iii. 3. Matt xix. 9. Mark x. 11, 12.

5 Defraud ye not one the other, [g] except *it be* with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, [h] that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.

g Ex. xix. 15. 1 Sam. xxi. 4, 5 Joel ii. 16. Zech. vii. 3. xii. 12—14.

h Matt. xix. 11. 1 Thes. iii. 5.

Christians, were once such characters; so they, who are now the most abandoned, may become Christians: but then they must be "washed, and sanctified, and justified, in "the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our "God."

V. 12—20.

Satan takes advantage of men's ignorance, pride, and lusts, to drive them from one extreme to another. Thus, when they are led to renounce superstitious scruples, they run into inexpedient, or even unlawful, indulgences. But the wisdom from above teaches a man to guard against such mistakes; to abstain from lawful things, when inexpedient; and to exert an authority over his own inclinations; that he may not be brought under the power of any of them. This is a difficult lesson, but of vast importance: and if we consider how soon all animal pleasures, and our present life, shall terminate, the reflection may teach us moderation in the most innocent gratifications, and arm us against temptations to such as are unlawful. Our bodies should be considered as "for the Lord," and be devoted to his service, that they may at length share his resurrection, and be made like to his glorious body. How degrading, then, how ungrateful, how sacrilegious, to make the members of Christ the members of an harlot! Or to defile the temple of the Holy Ghost, and to alienate the Lord's peculiar property to the vile purposes of fornication! It is, however, needful to fortify our minds on every side against these dangerous temptations, by which so many eminent men have been cast down, and shamefully overcome: and in this view even the horrid diseases incident to those, who thus sin against their own bodies, may be profitably reflected upon, especially by the young and inexperienced, in order to caution them to flee from so destructive a vice, and to keep at the utmost distance from all its fascinating allurements. But nobler motives should animate the believer's soul: being united to Christ as one spirit, and bought with a price of inestimable value, he should consider himself as wholly the Lord's, by the most endearing and indissoluble ties; that, seeking all his happiness in his favour, he may live wholly devoted to him, and may "glo-"rify him in body and spirit, which are his." (*Notes, Prov.* ii. 16—20. v. vi. 24—35. vii. 6—27.)

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1—5. It seems, that they, who retained their regard to the apostle's authority at Corinth, had written to him, desiring his decision of several questions which had been started among them: and he here proceeded to answer their inquiries, especially respecting marriage. While some of them pleaded for the lawfulness of fornication, others seem to have imbibed the sentiments of the Pythagoreans, and to have deemed marriage itself inconsistent with Christian purity, or at least inimical to intellectual improvement. On the other hand, the Pharisees generally taught, that it was sinful for a man to live unmarried beyond his twentieth year; but at the same time they laid down many superstitious rules concerning the conduct of married persons. In determining, therefore, this matter, the apostle first allowed, that, in many cases and circumstances, it might be profitable to a man to live unmarried, and might render him more useful to others, provided he were able and willing to live with that entire chastity, which the single life required. Nevertheless, "because of fornications," on account of those propensities which God originally, for wise reasons, implanted in human nature, and which man's sinfulness has rendered generally too predominant to be kept in absolute subjection; in order to prevent fornication and other lewd practices, and to remove the temptations to them; "let "every man have his own wife, and every woman her "own husband." In all cases this was allowable; in very many it was far best that it should be so. Nor ought they to imagine it a virtue in them to live apart; or that it was even allowable for one of them to withdraw, without the consent, or contrary to the inclinations, of the other: but in every respect, they should consider mutual compliance and affection an incumbent duty; and the proper means of living in harmony and purity, and at a distance

6 But I speak this [i] by permission, *and* not of commandment.

7 For [k] I would that all men were even as I myself: [l] But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.

8 I say therefore [m] to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I.

9 But if they cannot contain, [n] let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.

10 And unto the married I command, [o] *yet* not I, but the Lord, [p] Let not the wife depart from *her* husband:

11 But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, [q] or be reconciled to *her* husband: [r] and let not the husband put away *his* wife.

12 But to the rest [s] speak I, not the Lord; [t] If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away.

13 And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.

14 For [u] the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: [x] else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.

[i] 12. 25. 2 Cor. viii. 8. xi. 17.
[k] ix. 5. 15. Acts xxvi. 29.
[l] xii. 11. Matt. xix. 12.
[m] 1. 26, 27. 32. 34, 39.
[n] 2. 28. 36. 39. 1 Tim. v. 11. 14.
[o] 12. 25. 40.
[p] 15. Jer. iii. 20. Mal. ii. 14—16. Matt. v. 32. xix. 6—9. Mark x. 11, 12. Luke xvi. 18.
[q] Judg. xix. 2, 3. Jer. iii. 1.
[r] Deut. xxii. 19. Is. l. 1. Mark x. 2.
[s] 6. 25. 2 Cor. xi. 17.
[t] Ezra x. 2, 3. 15—19.
[u] vi. 15—17. Ezra ix. 1, 2. 1 Tim. iv. 5. Tit. i. 15.
[x] Ezra ix. 2. Is. lii. 1. Mal. ii. 15. Acts x. 28. Rom. xi. 16.

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from temptation; remembering that they had an unalienable property in each other's person, in respect of all the purposes for which marriage was appointed. This places the husband and the wife entirely on the same ground, and as much forbids him to take another woman, as it does her to cohabit with another man; so that it is absolutely decisive against polygamy. Nor ought married persons to deprive each other of that preservative against temptation which is their due; so that they ought not to separate, but *by consent*, for the spiritual work of fasting and prayer on extraordinary occasions: and even this should not generally be for any long time; lest Satan should take advantage of their weakness, to harass and defile their minds by improper thoughts, or even to tempt them to unlawful indulgences.

V. 6—9. These things the apostle spoke to them as what were allowable, not as giving an absolute commandment. Men might use their own discretion about marrying; and married persons concerning their conduct in that state; provided they did not needlessly cross each other's inclinations, do injustice to one another, or throw any temptation in the way. For the apostle would have wished, that all his Christian brethren had been as free from disquietude in that respect as he was; that if the glory of God, and the circumstances in which they were placed required it, they might live unmarried with as much content as he did. Some think that he was a widower, but this is uncertain. We cannot suppose that he wished marriage to cease among Christians; but only that every one might be enabled calmly to use his prudence in that respect, without being necessitated to marry, when otherwise it would not have been adviseable. But the apostle knew, that his experience in this matter was not a rule for other men; as this superiority to the animal inclinations was a special gift of God, which he gave to one and not to another, as he saw good, and that in different proportions. (*Notes, Matt.* xix. 9—12.) He would therefore remind unmarried persons, and such as had been left in widowhood, that their condition had many advantages, which rendered it good for them to abide in it: but if any of them found that they could not obtain the gift of entire continence, it was allowable, and even *incumbent on them*, to marry; as it would be far better for them, more holy in itself, and more becoming their profession, to marry, than to be harassed with polluting temptations, and continually in danger of being drawn into forbidden gratifications. 'This whole passage is framed against those, who 'condemn second marriages, when the first has been dis'solved by death.' (*Beza.*)

V. 10—14. As to married persons, the apostle did not counsel, but command them; and not by his own authority, but by that of Christ, and according to his precepts, that they should not separate from each other; which was common among the Gentiles as well as the Jews, and that on very frivolous pretences. The wife must not leave her husband; or if she had been parted from him, she must not think of marrying again; rather, she ought to make every advance and concession, to bring about a reconciliation with him; and the same rules were to be observed by the husband. Doubtless the exception is implied, which our Lord made in the directions given by him in this particular. And though Jesus had not given express rules in the following cases, yet the apostle deemed himself authorized to enjoin, that the Christian who was married to an unbeliever, whether a heathen or a Jew, who chose to live with him, notwithstanding this difference of religion, should not put her away; as the Jews, for reasons peculiar to their situation, were required to do by their idolatrous wives. (*Notes, Ezra* x.) Christians, indeed, ought not to marry unbelievers: yet if that relation had been entered into, either before conversion, or through inattention to this rule, it would cause great confusion and scandal to dissolve it on that account. The same held good in respect of a Christian woman, who had an unbelieving husband, that chose to live with her. Nor ought any person to suppose that this union, as one flesh with unbelievers or idolaters in lawful marriage, was inconsistent with being one spirit with the Lord, as fornication had been declared to be, (vi. 15—17:) for the unbelieving husband or wife was sanctified to the believer, by the appointment and command of God; so that their marriage was holy and honourable. If this had not been so appointed, but Christians had been commanded to put away their unbelieving partners, as the Jews did their idolatrous wives, the children of such marriages

15 But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. [y] A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such *cases:* [z] but God hath called us * to peace.

16 For what knowest thou, [a] O wife, whether thou shalt save *thy* husband? or † how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save *thy* wife?

17 But [b] as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath [c] called every one, so let him walk: and [d] so ordain I in all churches.

18 Is any man called [e] being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised: is any called in uncircumcision? let him not become circumcised.

19 [f] Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, [g] but the keeping of the commandments of God.

20 Let every man [h] abide in the same calling wherein he was called.

21 Art thou called [i] *being* a servant? [k] care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use *it* rather.

22 For he that is called in the Lord, *being* a servant, [l] is the Lord's ‡ freeman: likewise also he that is called, *being* free, [m] is Christ's servant.

23 Ye [n] are bought with a price; [o] be not ye the servants of men.

24 Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein [p] abide with God.

y Matt. xii. 50. Jam. ii. 15.
z xiv 33. Rom. xii 18 xiv 19 2 Cor. xiii. 11. Gal. v. 22. Heb. xii. 14. Jam iii. 17, 18.
* Gr. *in peace.*
a ix 22. Prov xi. 30. Luke xv. 10. 1 Tim. iv. 16. Jam v 19, 20. 1 Pet iii 1.
† Gr *what.*
b 7. Matt. xix. 12. Rom. xii. 3—8. 1 Pet iv. 10, 11.
c 18—21.
d iv 17. xvi. 1. 2 Cor. xi. 28.
e Acts xv 1. 5. 19. 24. 28. Gal. v. 1—3. Col. iii. 11.
f viii. 8 Rom. ii. 25—29. iii. 30. Gal. v. 6. vi. 15.
g 1 Sam xv. 22. Jer vii 22, 23 Matt. v. 19. John xv. 14. 1 John ii 3, 4 iii. 22—24 v 2, 3. Rev xii 14
h 17 21 23 Luke iii 10—14. 1 Thes iv 11 2 Thes. iii. 12.
i xii. 13. Gal iii. 28. Col. iii. 11. 1 Tim vi. 1—3. 1 Pet ii 18—24.
k Luke x. 40. 41. xii. 29 *Marg.* xxi. 34. Phil. iv. 6 11 1 Pet v 7.
l Luke i. 74, 75. John viii 32—36. Rom. vi 18—22. Gal v 1. 13. Eph vi 5, 6 Col. iii. 22—24. Philem. 16. 1 Pet ii. 16.
‡ Gr. *made free.*
m ix. 19 Rom. i 1 Gal. i. 10. Col. iv. 12. 2 Pet. i. 1 Jude 1 ——— n vi 20. Lev. xxv. 42 Acts xx 28. Tit. ii. 14. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. iii 18 Rev. v 9. ——— o Matt xxiii. 8—11. Gal ii. 4. ——— p x. 31. Gen. v. 22—24. xvii. 1. 1 Sam. xiv. 45. Col. iii. 23, 24.

would have been accounted relatively unclean, and so excluded from baptism, as those of the Jews in the above-mentioned case were from circumcision: but, on the contrary, they were accounted holy in the Christian churches, and thus admitted among them, as a part "of the visible "kingdom of God." This exposition of the Scripture before us has indeed been much controverted; and some have explained *holy*, or *unclean*, to mean *legitimate*, or *illegitimate:* but in all the places, where these words are found in Scripture, there is not one that will fairly admit of this sense. No doubt, the children of heathens, who were lawfully married, were as legitimate as those of Christians, yet they are never said to be *holy*. Something more must be meant by the believer *sanctifying* the unbelieving party, than merely legalizing their marriage; for that would have been the case, if both had been unbelievers; and the children would not *really* be more *holy* in respect of their nature, if one parent was a believer, than if both were unbelievers. But as the word *unclean* is frequently used in a relative sense, denoting *unfit to be admitted to God's ordinances*, and *holy* the contrary; as in this sense the male children of the Jews were *holy*, and so partakers of circumcision; while those of the Gentiles, and even such as had one idolatrous parent, were *unclean*, and excluded from circumcision: so I cannot but conclude, after long attention to the subject, that the baptism of the infant-offspring of Christians is here referred to, as at that time customary in the churches; and that the Corinthians knew that this was not objected to, when only one parent was a Christian. 'Hence then the argu-'ment for infant-baptism runs thus: If the holy seed 'among the Jews was therefore to be circumcised, and to 'be made *federally* holy by receiving the sign of the cove-'nant, and being admitted into the number of God's holy 'people, because they were born in sanctity, or were '*seminally* holy; for "the root being holy, so are the "branches also:" 'then, by like reason, the holy seed of 'Christians ought to be admitted to baptism, and receive 'the sign of the Christian covenant, "the laver of rege-"neration;" 'and so be entered into the society of the 'Christian church. (*Whitby.*)

V. 15, 16. The apostle further observed, that if the unconverted wife or husband chose to depart, and to disannul the marriage, according to the laws of the community, the believer was not required to act in opposition to it, or as if in bondage by the preceding contract. Yet separations ought to be avoided, if this could be done: for God had called them to live in peace with all men, as far as possible; and therefore they ought so to act, that if a separation took place, no part of the blame should attach to the Christian. Such an union, indeed, would occasion much grief and trouble with an unbeliever; yet that ought patiently to be endured: for how did the believing wife and husband know, but that God would make use of them for the conversion and salvation of their unbelieving companions, by their pious, affectionate, and exemplary behaviour, edifying converse, and fervent prayers? The fathers in general interpret this, as allowing the deserted person to marry again. 'Such a total and perpetual 'desertion must, (on this interpretation,) dissolve the 'matrimony, and render the deserting person as dead to 'the other. A brother or a sister is not enslaved, after 'all means of peace and reconciliation have been in vain 'attempted, and the unbeliever hath entered into another 'marriage or rather hath dissolved the former by adul-'tery; as may well be supposed of those heathens, who 'thus separated from their Christian mates. And this 'interpretation seems to be confirmed, from the former 'words relating to the case of the believing wives and 'husbands; "if they depart, let them remain unmar-"ried;" 'it being not to be supposed that believers would 'dissolve the bond of matrimony by adultery. Therefore 'the apostle seems to grant this in the case of unbelievers 'departing from Christians on the account of their faith." (*Whitby.*) Total and perpetual desertion, when accompanied by evident *adultery* in the deserting party, undoubtedly sets the other party at full liberty, according to the scriptural rule; for deserting a husband or wife, to live with another man or woman, or in any way *evidently* adulterous, must as much dissolve the marriage, as a divorce explicitly given on account of adultery. (*Notes, Matt.* xix. 1—9.)

q 28 34 36—38. Ps. lxxviii. 63.
r 6 10 12. 40. 2 Cor. viii. 8—10. xi. 17.
s iv. 2. xv. 10. 2 Cor ii. 17. iv. 1, 2 1 Tim. i. 12.
t 1. 8. 28. 35—38. Jer. xvi 2—4 Matt. xxiv. 19. Luke xxi. 23 xxiii. 28, 29. 1 Pet iv. 17.
* Or, necessity.

25 ¶ Now [q] concerning virgins, I [r] have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath [s] obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.

26 I suppose therefore [t] that this is good for the present * distress; *I say*, that *it is* good for a man so to be.

27 Art [u] thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.

28 But and if thou marry, [x] thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. [y] Nevertheless, such shall have trouble in the flesh: [z] but I spare you.

u 12—14. 20.
x 36. Heb. xiii. 4.
y 26. 32—34.
z 35. 2 Cor. i 23.

V. 17—24. The preceding subject led the apostle to digress to a more general topic. In ordinary cases, and without good reasons to the contrary, it was proper that every man should continue to serve God, by the improvement of those gifts that he had distributed to him, and in that situation in which he had called him. This was the general rule, which the apostle gave in all the churches. Thus, if a Jew, or circumcised proselyte, had been converted; let him not deny, conceal, or be disquieted about his circumcision; or refuse that regard to the ceremonial law, which might tend to conciliate his unbelieving brethren: but let not the uncircumcised convert submit to that abrogated ordinance, or at all take that yoke upon him. For in fact the difference was in itself immaterial, unless they put such matters in a wrong place: but obedience to the commandments of God was the great concern. While the Mosaic dispensation continued in force, it was proper that its requirements should be complied with; and it might be still expedient for the Jewish converts to pay some regard to them: but the Gentiles had nothing to do with them, and need only regard the precepts of the moral law, and the institutions of Christ, from a principle of faith in him, and love to him. It is obvious, that the apostle is not here speaking of the way of justification, but of the conduct of justified believers. In like manner, it was commonly adviseable for every man to abide in that profession, trade, or station, in which the grace of God had called him to the knowledge of Christ, provided it were an honest employment. For the Gospel would teach a man how to behave in any condition, and patiently to bear its inconveniences. If then any one had been converted in a state of servitude, even to a heathen master, (which was the common case of the servants in those days,) let him be less solicitous about his liberty, than about glorifying God in that trying situation. But as it would frequently deprive him of religious advantages, especially that of meeting with his brethren on the Lord's day, or at other times, and as it would expose him to many temptations, if he had a fair opportunity of obtaining his freedom, he would do well to embrace it. The converted slave, however, was called to the noblest liberty, as the freedman of Christ, and emancipated from Satan's yoke: and the Christian, who enjoyed his outward liberty, should consider himself as the servant of Christ, his property, and bound to devote himself to him, and obey his will. As therefore all Christians had been bought with an invaluable price to be the Lord's servants, they ought not by choice, or from secular motives, to become the servants of men; because that would interfere with their devoted obedience to their common Lord: so that every man ought contentedly to abide with God, by constantly performing the duties of that situation, in which he was converted to the faith of Christ. As ministers were at that time entirely taken from among the converts to Christ in every Church, many of whom had doubtless been previously employed in other occupations, and as seminaries for educating men for this service were not then known, so, it is evident that the apostle did not mean to forbid that change, when it could be made advisedly and on good grounds, as well as from proper motives; and in other respects his general rule might admit of some exceptions. 'They should not 'change, upon a presumption that Christianity gave them 'a new and peculiar liberty so to do.' (*Locke.*) The context favours the supposition, that those changes which some might be induced to make, from an erroneous judgment, in respect of their liberty, or duty, as Christians, was the primary object which the apostle had in view: yet his *general* language seems to imply, that he meant to extend the rule to various other cases. Dr. Whitby and some others explain the words, "Ye are bought with a "price," of those slaves, who had been charitably ransomed at the expense of their fellow-christians. But their fellow-christians obtained no property in them by thus ransoming them, as Christ does by ransoming us; the advice is general, and not limited to these persons; and it is far more obvious to suppose that the apostle used this expression in the same sense in which he had done before. (*Note*, vi. 18—20.) *Abide with God*, &c. 'Neither de'serting his master upon pretence of being God's servant, 'nor doing any thing against the laws of God, in obedi'ence to his master.' (*Whitby.*) It may be added; But serving God by faithfully, diligently, and meekly 'serving 'his master, in all things lawful.'

V. 25—28. The apostle here resumes his former subject, with especial reference to those who had never been married: for he seems to use the word rendered *virgins* in this latitude, including both young men and young women. Christ had given no commandment in this matter, but had left them free to marry, or not, as they saw good; and the apostle had received no special revelation about it. He did not therefore speak *authoritatively*; but he gave them counsel, according to the spiritual judgment which he possessed, as one who had obtained mercy to be faithful in his stewardship of divine mysteries; for he ascribed his faithfulness to the compassion and mercy of God, by a very remarkable expression, *pitied of God to be faithful.* Considering the unsettled state of the Church, and the persecutions to which it was, or might be, exposed, he considered it advantageous to live unmarried; that they might be less encumbered in removing from city to city, and have fewer temptations to shrink from imprisonment and death: and that they might be more disengaged, and

29 But this I say, brethren, [a] the time *is* short: it remaineth, [b] that both they that have wives be as though they had none;

30 And they [c] that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not;

31 And they that [d] use this world, as not abusing *it:* [e] for the fashion of this world passeth away.

32 But [f] I would have you without carefulness. [g] He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord:

33 But he that is married, [h] careth for the things that are of the world, [i] how he may please *his* wife.

34 There is difference *also* between a wife and a virgin: the unmarried woman [k] careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy [l] both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please *her* husband.

35 And this I speak for your own profit; [m] not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is [n] comely, [o] and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction.

a Job xiv 1 2. Ps. xxxix. 4—7. xc. 5—10. ciii 15. 16. Ec. vi. 12 ix. 10. Rom xiii. 11, 12. Heb xiii. 13, 14. 1 Pet. iv. 7. 2 Pet. iii. 8, 9. 1 John ii. 17.

b Ec. xii. 7, 8. 13, 14. Is xxiv. 1, 2 xl 6—8. Jam. iv. 13—16. 1 Pet i 24.

c Ps xxx. 5 cxxvi. 5, 6. Ec. iii 4. Is xxv. 8. xxx. 19. Luke vi 21 25. xvi. 25. John xvi. 22 Rev vii. 17. xviii 7.

d ix 18. Ec. ii. 24—26. iii 12, 13 v. 18—20. ix. 7—10 xi. 2, 9, 10 Matt. xxiv 48—50 xxv. 14—29 Luke xii. 15—21. xvi. 1, 2. xix. 17—22. xxi. 34. 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18. Jam. v. 1—5.

e Ps lxxii. 20. Ec i. 4. Jam. i 10, 11. 1 Pet. i 24. 1 John ii. 17.——f Ps. lv. 22. Matt. vi. 25—34. xiii. 22. Phil. iv. 6——g 1 Tim. v. 5.

h Neh. v. 1—5 Luke xii. 22 1 Thes. iv. 11, 12. 1 Tim v. 8.

i 3 1 Sam. i. 4—8. Eph. v 25—33. Col. iii. 19. 1 Pet. iii. 7.

k Luke ii 36, 37. 2 Cor. vii 11, 12. viii. 16 xi. 28. 1 Tim. iii. 5. Tit. iii 8.

l vi. 20. Rom. vi. 13. xii 1, 2. Phil. i 20. 1 Thes. v. 23

m 2. 5—9. 28. 36. Matt. xix. 12

n 36 Eph. v. 8. Phil. iv. 8, 9. 1 Tim. i. 10. Tit. ii 8

o 33, 34 Luke viii. 14. x 40—42. xxi 34.

ready for any service which should be proposed to them for the furtherance of the Gospel, as their anxieties, occupations, attachments, and impediments, would be fewer in the single than in the married state. But if a man were either married, or contracted to a woman under promise of marriage, he ought by no means to attempt the violation of his engagements, in order to possess more liberty for the service of God, though the unmarried might be counselled to avail themselves of their advantages, and not to involve themselves in additional difficulties, during those distressing times. Yet if either man or woman should deem it best, all things considered, to marry, they would break no law of God, and ought not to be blamed for it. Indeed, they would probably have additional outward trouble and suffering; but the apostle would not insist on this, or censure their conduct as imprudent, lest he should deter some from marrying, whose duty it was to marry, or lest he should give occasion to any of representing that state as unholy. (*Note, Jer.* xvi. 2—4.)

V. 29—31. In speaking on this subject, it was proper that Christians should be reminded of the shortness of life, and the transitory nature of earthly things at all times. "The remainder of their days was short, or contracted, "so that both those," &c. So it is understood by some, who join the words rendered "it remaineth" to the preceding part of the verse. Or, it remained therefore to be observed, that married persons should reflect how speedily their union must be dissolved, that they might sit loose to the satisfactions of that endeared relation, and be habitually prepared for a separation; that they who mourned any temporal loss should moderate their grief; that the prosperous and joyful also should repress their rejoicing, by more serious recollections; that they who were purchasing houses or lands should consider the uncertainty of their tenure, and not deem themselves owners of such fleeting possessions; and that those who were laying out their worldly riches should be careful not to abuse them, or to expect happiness from their pleasures and enjoyments, seeing "the fashion," the whole scheme, form, and show of this world, was passing away, as a pageant or procession through the street, and would soon vanish as a phantom. So that the spirit of a pilgrim and traveller ought in all cases to be maintained. 'To have and use 'these things, as though we had them not, or did not use 'them, is to be moderate in the enjoyment of, not to be 'much affected with them, when we have, or much 'afflicted, when we want or lose, them.' (*Whitby.*)

V. 32—35. By the preceding counsel the apostle meant to preserve believers from perplexing cares, in that unsettled state of the Church. For he was sensible that an unmarried man, having grace proportioned to his state, and being enabled to live in it superior to its temptations, might wholly employ himself in contriving the best methods of serving and pleasing the Lord; and, not having the charge and expense of a family, he might employ his time, talents, and substance, more entirely in promoting the glory of God, and the good of mankind, and be ready to travel to any part of the world for this purpose, if an opportunity presented itself. But the believer who was married must needs employ more of his thoughts and time about secular concerns, that he might provide for and attend to his family, and render things agreeable and comfortable to his wife, whom he was commanded to love and cherish as his own flesh, and this would exclude him from several active services, to which he might otherwise have been competent. The difference between a virgin and a married woman was of a similar nature; the former might wholly dedicate her time and thoughts, her body and soul, to the service of God, in following after holiness, and in doing good; but the latter must be engaged in the business of the family, and in other duties of her station, according to the will of her husband, whom God had commanded her to obey. So that, though marriage was most suited to men and women in general, yet individuals, who desired peculiar advantages for progress in personal religion, and for doing good, might possess them in an unmarried life, and *to such* it might be good not to marry, even if the times had been more favourable. This counsel of the apostle was far from countenancing them to shut themselves up in convents, and thus to put the lighted candle under a bushel; on the contrary, it instructed them to "let "their light shine before men," by an uninterrupted series of active services, for the glory of God, and the benefit of the world. Yet he only gave them this counsel for their

36 But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass [p] the flower of *her* age, [q] and need so require, let him do what he will, [r] he sinneth not; let them marry.

37 Nevertheless, he that standeth steadfast in his heart having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well.

38 So then, he that giveth *her* in marriage [s] doeth well; but he that giveth *her* not in marriage [t] doeth better.

39 The [u] wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; [x] only in the Lord.

40 But [y] she is happier if she so abide, after my judgment: [z] and I think also that I have the Spirit of God.

p 1 Sam ii. 33.
q 9 37.
r 28.
s 2. Heb. xiii. 4.
t 1. 8. 26. 32—34. 37.
u 10 15. Rom. vii. 2, 3.
x Gen. vi. 2. Deut. vii. 3, 4. Mal. ii. 11. 2 Cor. vi 14—16.
y 1 8 26 35.
z 25. ix. 1—3 xiv. 36, 37 2 Cor. x. 8—10. xii. 11. 1 Thes. iv 8.

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profit, and would not by any means cast a snare on them, by persuading those to a single life, who had not a sufficient command over their own passions. He meant not that this was required of them, but that in some cases it would be comely, and enable them to wait upon God in his ordinances and commandments, without having their thoughts or affections divided or distracted by other cares or attachments.

V. 36—38. Hitherto the apostle's meaning has been evident, but these verses are not without difficulty. Some explain them of a man's resolutely continuing in a single state, supposing "the necessity" mentioned to be matter of personal consciousness, and not any thing arising from the conduct of another; but such a construction of the original is, by their own allowance, without example. Others would refer them to the case of a man who had betrothed a virgin, and was in doubt whether he should complete the marriage; but *to marry* is not the same as *to give in marriage*. It seems therefore most obvious to explain the passage of a parent, or guardian, who had the charge of a virgin. If such a one thought that he acted unsuitably, in letting the virgin live single till she had passed the prime of her life, and if any attachment, or other circumstance, rendered it needful, let him determine as he saw good, or, as it may be rendered, "as she willeth," without supposing it sinful to allow her to marry. But, on the other hand, if a man was established in his judgment, that it was best for his daughter, or ward, to remain unmarried in such evil times, and if he saw no necessity from any thing in her behaviour, disposition or attachments, to deviate from his own inclinations respecting her, and he so determined in his mind to keep her unmarried, he did well. So that the parent or guardian, who gave a virgin in marriage to a proper person, did well, and was by no means to be blamed, though she might thereby be exposed to additional difficulties in those unsettled times, on which account, he who did not give his daughter, or ward, in marriage, did better; that is, he acted more for her real advantage, provided she was satisfied in a single state.

V. 39, 40. The law was still in force, which bound the wife to her husband as long as he lived, (that is, except when legally divorced for a sufficient reason,) but afterwards she might without sin marry any other man, provided he were a Christian, and, in the judgment of charity, a true believer. The apostle, however, judged that widows would be happier, if they continued in that condition, in the present state of the Church; and, whatever some of the Corinthians might suppose, he thought himself to be guided by the Holy Spirit, in giving these counsels and instructions. The language employed in several places of this chapter has led most expositors to conclude, that the apostle did not write by inspiration in the particulars referred to; and doubtless these intimations, thus understood, would rather prove, than invalidate, his immediate inspiration in other parts of his writings. Yet there seems no sufficient ground for the distinction; sometimes he spoke by way of permission, concerning what was allowable; sometimes by way of counsel, concerning what was adviseable; and at other times by commandment, concerning what was absolutely binding on their consciences. But in all this he might be, and doubtless was, guided by the Spirit of inspiration.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—9.

That which is good in itself may not always be best for a man, when all circumstances are weighed, and all the variety of inward evils and outward temptations, connected with it, are duly considered. So that those things which are good for one, may not so much as be recommended to another, because he is incapable of overcoming the difficulties to which they expose him. For, though none may be dispensed with in breaking the divine law, even that perfect rule leaves men at liberty to serve God in that way which is most suited to their capacity and various circumstances, of which others are often incompetent judges. Thus, if they who find advantages for serving God in the single state, imagine that others might do the same, they show themselves to be ignorant of the situation of fallen man in this ensnaring world; for there is no doubt but many, who, from various motives, live unmarried, experience that circumstance to be a great hinderance to them in respect of their souls, and are unable, or unwilling, to persevere in that kind of celibacy, which the apostle describes as *good*. To prevent therefore the fatal effects of unchastity, it is generally expedient, and always allowable, that "every man should have his own "wife, and every woman her own husband:" all restrictions of this allowance uniformly tend to licentiousness; and no tongue can express the mischiefs which arise from covetous, licentious, and constrained celibacy. Every part of the conduct of married persons also ought to be so regulated, as to render them agreeable to and satisfied with each other. Whatever therefore, on either side, tends to give Satan an opportunity of tempting the

CHAP. VIII.

Humble love is preferable to that knowledge which puffeth up, 1—3. *Idols are nothing; seeing Christians worship only one God, through one Lord and Mediator,* 4—6: *yet this knowledge, and the liberty connected with it, may be so used as to enfeeble or stumble weak believers,* 7—11. *In this case we sin against Christ,* 12. *The apostle would rather for ever abstain from meat, than thus stumble a weak brother,* 13.

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other party to any of those evils which marriage was instituted to prevent, or to render it ineffectual for any of those ends for which the Creator appointed it, must be highly criminal, under whatever specious pretence it may be done, and the offending party is answerable to God for the consequences of the deviation from his commandments. For not only adultery and polygamy are inconsistent with the duties of this relation, and with the mutual property of married persons in each other, but also whatever is disobliging, and tends to weaken the attachment, and to open the way for either of them to look with more satisfaction on another object. Every thing in the Christian's conduct should be regulated in subserviency to his communion with God. Abstinence, and abstraction from lawful indulgences, may for a time be greatly subservient to that end; yet, when carried beyond proper bounds, they often produce contrary effects, and give Satan peculiar advantages against us. They, who, like the apostle, are enabled to live with purity and contentment in an unmarried state, should copy his example, by laying themselves out with double diligence to glorify God, and to be useful to mankind; they should also imitate his prudence and candour, in not prescribing to others, or despising others, who are not endued with the same gift, remembering that in this also God had made them to differ. In counselling others, we should use caution, lest, by exciting a man to grasp at advantages which are out of his reach, we should cast him into circumstances of insuperable temptation, urge him to that which is contrary to his duty, and dissuade him from what is best for him, and indeed incumbent on him; for, in such matters, no man is competent to judge for another, but every one must determine for himself or rather he ought to seek counsel from God, how he ought to act.

V. 10—17.

Is is the express commandment of God, that married persons should not separate from each other, if it can possibly be avoided; and that such as have separated should endeavour to be reconciled, or else live single. It is also his will, that husbands and wives should be careful to please each other in lawful things, though it leave them less time for religious exercises, than they enjoyed in a single state. Even if a believer hath been married to an unbeliever, either before conversion, or by inattention to the rule of the sacred word, the cross of that incongruous union must be patiently endured, and the duties of the relation cheerfully performed; that by kindness, by a good example, and by fervent prayers, the unbelieving party may be won over, and the immortal soul saved. Nor need any doubt, but that, even in that case, the marriage state is sanctified to them; and they may still hope that their children would be made partakers of the spiritual grace, as well as the outward sign, of baptism, by means of their redoubled diligence to "bring them up in the nurture and "admonition of the Lord." In every state and relation, we should remember that God hath called us to peace: and that every thing should be done to promote domestic and social harmony, as far as truth and holiness will permit.

V. 13—24. 29—31.

It is proper that every man should walk with God, according to the gift distributed to him, and the duties of his station in the community. Believers should not show an inconstant and unsettled temper. Even a disposition to change from one sect to another, on frivolous pretences, is frequently injurious and dishonourable; for these generally are as nothing, compared with that cheerful obedience to God's commandments, which both evidences our faith in Christ, and recommends his Gospel to others. So superior are a believer's privileges to all temporal things, that even the want of personal liberty, the most valuable of earthly blessings, should not much disquiet him; nor ought he to be careful about it, though called to serve God in a state of slavery. If the Son of God has made him free from sin and Satan, he has a far nobler liberty, even in bondage, than his unconverted master ever formed an idea of. The lowest condition of his freedmen is honourable; and, being "bought with a price," we are all his servants, and should abide with God in our proper place and work, well satisfied with his appointment, and not desirous of a change, unless a substantial reason can be given for it: nor ought a believer so to attach himself to any man, from secular motives, as to restrict himself from his liberty in the service of God. But whatever our state or service, may be, we should remember that the time is short; our temporal comforts and trials will soon be terminated; our season of preparation or of usefulness will speedily expire. Let us then study to sit loose to earthly satisfactions, to bear up under temporal sorrows; to be sober and considerate in prosperity, and cheerful in adversity; to deem heaven our sole inheritance, and "to use the things of the world, as "not abusing them, seeing the fashion" of this vain world is passing away like a shadow. Thus we may be helped forward by them in our pilgrimage, kept out of the way of temptation, and enabled to serve God and our generation to better advantage, as we pass through the world to heaven.

V. 25—28. 32—40.

They who have obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful, and who have most studied the word of God and human nature, will be the most candid and cautious in giving their judgment, or passing their censures; for whatever may be good, in respect of present difficulties or peculiar circumstances, they know that marriage is ho-

NOW as [a] touching things offered unto idols, we know that [b] we all have knowledge. [c] Knowledge puffeth up, [d] but charity edifieth.

2 And [e] if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

3 But if any man [f] love God, the same [g] is known of him.

4 As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, [h] we know that an idol *is* nothing in the world, and that [i] *there is* none other God but one.

5 For though there be [k] that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many;)

6 But to us *there is but* [l] one God, the Father, [m] of whom *are* all things, [n] and we * in him; [o] and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom *are* all things, [p] and we by him.

[a] 10. x. 19—22 28. Num xxv. 3. Acts xv 20. 29. xxi 25. Rev. ii. 14 20.
[b] 2. 4 7. 11. i. 5. iv. 10. xiii. 2. xiv. 20. xv. 34. Rom. xiv. 14. 22. Col. ii. 18.
[c] iv 18. v 2. 6. xiii. 4. Is. v. 21. Rom. xi. 25. xii. 16.
[d] xiii. 8—13. Eph. iv 16.
[e] Prov. xxvi 12. xxx. 2—4. Gal. vi. 3. 1 Tim. i. 5—7 vi. 4
[f] ii. 9. Rom. viii. 28. Jam. i. 12. ii. 5. 1 Pet. i. 8. 1 John iv. 19 v. 2, 3 —— [g] Ex. xxxiii 12. 17. Ps. i. 6. xvii. 3. cxxxix. 1, 2. Nah. i. 7. Matt. vii 23. John x. 14. xxi 17. Rom. viii. 29. xi. 2 Gal. iv. 9. 2 Tim. ii. 19. Rev. ii. 9. 13. 19. iii 8, 9. 15, 16.
[h] x. 19, 20 Ps. cxv 4—8. Is. xli. 24 xliv. 8, 9. Jer. x. 14. li. 17. 18 Hab. ii. 19, 20. Acts xix. 26.
[i] 6. Deut. iii 24 iv. 39. vi. 4. xxxii. 39 Is. xxxvii. 16. 20. xliv. 6. 8. xlv. 5. 14 Jer. x. 10. Mark xii. 29. Eph. iv. 6. 1 Tim. i. 17 ii. 5. Jude 25.
[k] Deut x 17. Jer. ii. 11 28. xi 13. Dan v 4. John x. 34 Gal. iv. 8. 2 Thes. ii. 4.
[l] *See on*, 4. Jon i. 19. Mal. ii 10. John x. 30 xiv. 9. 10. xvii. 3 xx. 17. Eph i. 3 iii. 14. iv 6. 1 Pet. i. 2, 3. —— [m] Acts xvii. 28 Rom. xi 36 Eph. iv 6. —— [n] John xiv. 20 xvii. 21—23 —— * Or, *for him* vi 13. —— [o] xii. 3 Matt. xi. 27. xxviii. 18. John v 20—29. xiii. 13. xvii. 23 Acts ii 36. v 31. Eph. i. 20—23. Phil. ii. 9—11. Col. i. 16, 17. 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6. 1 Pet. i. 21. Rev. i. 18. —— [p] John i. 3. Heb. i 2, 3.

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nourable, and fornication is abominable, in all persons and circumstances. They will therefore be careful not to speak as if marriage were sinful in any, and not to throw a snare upon those that pay deference to their judgment. And though they foresee that others will have trouble in the flesh, by marrying in certain circumstances, and might in some respects be happier in a single state; yet they will spare them, without attempting to restrict the liberty which God hath allowed, or condemning them for what they do conscientiously. They will only counsel them for their profit, and to what is comely, and that they may serve God without distraction. Great discretion is also needful for parents and guardians, in their conduct respecting young persons, that they do not, by laying down rules and making determinations, according to *their views* of what is most for their interest, lead them into dangerous temptations; for it may be *doing well* to permit young persons to marry, when their attachment or inclinations are that way; when otherwise, it would be *doing better* to prevent them; as even apparent imprudence, and its troubles, are better than sin and its effects. How absurd, then, must vows of celibacy and perpetual virginity be! especially in young persons, and perhaps at the instance of others! The probable consequence of them will be, either the violation of the vows, or a life spent amidst temptation and mental defilement, or still worse. This was man's policy. How different from the wisdom of God, even in this chapter, which contains in it more in favour of a single life, than all the rest of the Scripture taken together does! Believers, when under no other restriction, should be sure, in contracting marriage, to remember that of the apostle, "only in the Lord." What miseries have many endured through the remnant of their lives, and what bad consequences have they entailed upon their families, by transgressing it on some vain pretence or other!

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1—6. It is probable that the Corinthians had proposed another question, concerning the lawfulness of Christians eating the flesh of those animals which had been sacrificed to idols. It was customary with the idolaters to feast on these oblations, both in the temples and in their own houses, and many of them were publicly sold in the shambles. On this flesh several of the Christians at Corinth would feast without scruple; declaring that they knew the idol to be a mere senseless log, and the supposed deity represented by it a mere nonentity. This was, in some respects, taken from a misunderstanding of these Scriptures, which speak of idols as *vanity*. They therefore imagined that it was an evidence of superior knowledge, to eat of such sacrifices, even in the very temples of the idol! Now, says the apostle, we know that all of us, who are acquainted with the Gospel, have this kind and measure of knowledge; but we are also aware, that these speculations puff men up in a vain conceit of their superior abilities and attainments, and foster a haughty, self-sufficient, unteachable temper, which is diametrically opposite to genuine Christianity, and prevents a man from making any progress in spiritual and experimental knowledge and wisdom; whereas holy affections, and love to God, to heavenly things, and to the brethren, prepare men for receiving further instruction, and tend to their edification. If any one therefore presumed that he knew any thing pre-eminently, and so despised warnings and instructions, he certainly knew nothing in that holy, humble, and sanctifying manner, wherein he ought to know God, and his truth and will. (iii. 18.) But, on the other hand, if any man really loved God, valued his favour, and sought his glory, he was thus evidenced to be known and approved of God, even though his speculative knowledge were comparatively little; or, (as some render it,) "God was known of him," in a saying manner. (*Note. John* xvii. 3.) In respect therefore of the question, it might be allowed, as well known among Christians, that an idol had no real existence, further than the senseless image, which *specifically* represented nothing in the world; for there were no such deities as those to whom the temples were consecrated; (though Satan and evil spirits were *virtually* worshipped in them all;) and that there was but one true and living God. The Gentiles indeed had many deities, celestial, terrestrial, and infernal; superior and inferior, who were adored as independent gods, or as constituted lords and mediators; yet Christians knew that there was but one God, even the Father; of whom, as the self-existent Author of all things, every creature proceeds, in whom all Christians had their spiritual life and happiness, and unto whom they were devoted; and one Lord Jesus Christ, the appointed Mediator between God and man, the Lord of his redeemed people, and of all things for their benefit; by whom all things at first were created, and by whom believers were redeemed and reconciled to God. The Lord Jesus cannot

7 Howbeit, [q] *there is* not in every man that knowledge: for some, [r] with conscience of the idol, unto this hour, eat *it* as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak, is defiled.

8 But [s] meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, * are we the better; neither, if we eat not, † are we the worse.

9 But [t] take heed, lest by any means this liberty of yours become [u] a stumbling-block to them that are [x] weak.

10 For if any man see thee, [y] which hast knowledge [z] sit at meat in the idol's temple, [a] shall not the conscience of him which is weak be ‡ emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols?

11 And through thy knowledge [b] shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

12 But [c] when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, [d] ye sin against Christ.

13 Wherefore, [e] if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

q 1. 10, 11.
r 9, 10. x 28, 29 Rom. xiv 14 23.
s vi. 13. Rom. xiv. 17. Col ii 20 – 23. Heb. xiii. 9.
* Or, *have we the more.*
† Or. *have we the less*
t 10. x. 24. 29. Matt. xviii. 6, 7. 10. Luke xvii 1, 2. Rom. xiv. 20, 21. Gal. v. 13 1 Pet ii. 16. 2 Pet. ii. 19.
u x. 32. Lev xix. 14. Is. lvii 14. Ez. xiv 3 xliv. 12. Rom xiv. 13–15. Rev ii. 14
x 12. ix. 22. Is xxxv. 3. Rom. xiv. 1, 2. xv. 1. 2 Cor xi. 21.——y 1,2 ——z x 20, 21. Num xxv. 2. Judg. ix. 27. Am. ii. 8.
a x. 23, 29. 32 Rom. xiv. 14. 23
‡ Gr *edified* 1.
b 13. x. 33. xi 1. Rom. xiv 15. 20, 21 xv. 1–3.
c Gen. xx. 9. xlii. 22. Ex xxxii. 21. 1 Sam. ii. 25. xix. 4. 5. xxiv. 11. Matt. xviii 21
d xii. 12 Ex. xvi 8. Matt. xii. 49, 50. xviii. 10, 11. xxv. 40. 45 Acts ix. 4. 5.
e vi 12. ix. 12. 19–23. x. 33. xi. 1. xiii. 5. Rom xiv. 21. 2 Cor. xi. 29. 2 Thes iii. 8, 9.

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here be spoken of, in respect of his original nature, as if inferior to the Father, any more than in those texts, which speak of his mediatorial Person, character, office, and authority. The One God, even the Father, signifies the Godhead, as the sole Object of all religious worship: and the Lord Jesus Christ denotes the Person of Emmanuel, God manifest in the flesh, One with the Father and One with us, the appointed Mediator and Lord of all: through whom we come to the Father, and through whom the Father communicates all blessings to us, by the influences and operations of the Holy Spirit. So that this passage proves, that Christ the Mediator is the Object of our worship, as One with the Father and the Spirit, in the unity of the Godhead; and as opposed to all other pretenders to divine adoration.

V. 7—13. Christians, who were matured in knowledge and judgment, knew indeed that an idol was the senseless representative of a nominal deity, which had no existence: and many of the Corinthians, being puffed up with a groundless conceit of their own superior attainments, boasted of their knowledge in this respect, and assigned it as the reason of their conduct, in partaking of the sacrifices even in the temples of the idols. But, had there been no other reasons why they should refrain from doing this, (which the apostle afterwards purposed to consider, (*Note*, x. 18—22,) regard to their weaker brethren should have sufficed. For not every professed Christian, no, nor every true believer, had this knowledge: so that some of them, even to that time, ventured to eat of the idol-sacrifices, who retained a superstitious regard to the supposed invisible object of worship. They had an impression upon their minds, that they were joining in an idolatrous sacrifice, and thus through weakness their consciences were defiled. Now, for what purpose did the Corinthians thus lead their brethren into temptation and sin? Meat, of whatever kind, did not recommend them to God, or give them any religious advantages above those who abstained from it, whether out of scruples of conscience, or regard to their brethren. They ought therefore to be far more cautious and circumspect, in using, what they considered as their liberty and privilege; and not to act in such a self-confident and imprudent manner, as tended to seduce those into sin, who were weak and unconfirmed in the faith. For if a person of this description saw a Christian, who had the reputation of superior knowledge, sit at meat in the idol's temple, he would be encouraged to follow his example; and induced to do that which either brought on him the guilt of acting against the dictates of his own conscience by eating, while he doubted the lawfulness of so doing; or to commit real idolatry, through an erroneous conscience, thus emboldened to think, that it was not inconsistent with Christianity to pay some degree of regard to those idols, which they had been used to worship. The word, translated *emboldened,* is literally *edified:* and thus the apostle intimated, that instead of edifying their weaker brethren, in their most holy faith, by their example and endeavours, they were confirming them in the superstitious regard, which in some degree they still retained for idols, and even inducing them to join in those idolatrous rites, by which the worshippers had "fellowship with devils." Thus their knowledge, of which they made so ostentatious a display, directly tended to the ruin of those for whom Christ died, and, whatever might be the event, through the special grace of God preventing the fatal consequence, yet, by thus giving a wound, mortal in its nature, to a member of Christ's mystical body, they committed a very heinous sin against the Saviour himself, which would not pass without severe rebukes. On this account, the apostle declared, that rather than thus cause his weak brother to offend, or thus displease his gracious Lord, he would to the end of his life eat only vegetables, and taste flesh no more for ever. (*Note, Rom.* xiv. 15.) The word rendered *weak*, often means *sick* or *diseased;* and some learned men explain these verses, not of a *doubting* conscience, but of an *erroneous* conscience; that is, not of one who ate, though he *doubted* the lawfulness of so doing; but of one, who *erroneously* thought he might lawfully partake of the sacrifices, with some degree of regard to the idol, and in expectation of some advantage to himself or family. And indeed, considering the inveterate habits of such as had been brought up, and perhaps grown old, in idolatry, and likewise the corrupt state of the Corinthian Church, it is not unlikely that some professed Christians retained a hankering after their former usages; especially, as feasting with their neighbours and relations, on these occasions, would in part exempt them from reproach and persecution. The apostle, however, by "a weak brother," seems particularly to mean the man with a doubting conscience; not him with the erroneous one, at least, not exclusively.

CHAP. IX.

The apostle asserts and proves his authority, 1—3; and shows that the ministers of the Gospel have a right to marry, and, with their families, to be supported by the people, 4—14: yet he had not availed himself of this right; and had in many things waived the exercise of his liberty, to promote the salvation of souls, 15—23. He proposes to them the example of his exceeding earnestness in securing an incorruptible crown, 24—27.

AM [a] I not an apostle? [b] am I not free? [c] have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? [d] are not ye my work in the Lord?

2 If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: [e] for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord.

3 Mine [f] answer [g] to them that do examine me is this;

[a] 2. 3 i. 1. xv. 8, 9 Acts ix. 15, xiii 2 xiv. 4. xxii. 14, 15. xxvi. 17, 18 Rom i. 1. 5. xi 13. 2 Cor. xi 5. xii 11, 12. Gal i. 1 15—17. ii. 7 8 1 Tim. ii 7 2 Tim i. 11 Tit. i. 1—3

[b] 19. Gal v. 1.

[c] xv. 8. Acts ix. 3. 5 17. xviii. 9. xxii. 6—8. 14—21 xxiii 11. xxvi 16—18

[d] iii 6. iv. 14, 15. Acts xviii. 8—11. 2 Cor. vi. 1.

[e] John vi. 27 2 Cor iii. 1—3. xii. 12.

[f] Acts xxii. 1. xxv. 16. Phil i. 7. 17. 2 Tim. iv. 16. *Gr.*

[g] xiv. 37. 2 Cor. x. 7, 8. xii 16—19. xiii 3 5. 10

Dr. Whitby, after endeavouring to refute the argument which some drew from these verses against conformity to the ceremonies of the Church of England, because they doubted the lawfulness of so doing, makes the following important remark: 'Nevertheless, this seemeth to press 'hard on them, who believe that the schism of such weak 'persons will finally tend to their ruin, and render them 'exiles from the flock of Christ, and yet for things indif'ferent, will, in that dreadful sense, cause their weak bro'ther to offend: since this they do, for that "which com"mends them not to God," 'which doing they are not the 'better, or omitting they are not the worse. For if schism 'and idolatry be equally damnable, and equally cause my 'brother to offend, and him to perish for whom Christ 'died, we are equally to take heed in both cases, lest our 'power, to do the thing indifferent, become a stumbling 'block to the weak, or the erroneous, in their judgment of 'these things. For let men imagine what other differ'ence they please in the case, while the sad issue or event 'is in general the same, to wit the perishing of my bro'ther, and my power to have abstained from that which 'through his erroneous conscience gave occasion to it, is 'the same, I fear the guilt will be the same.' This cannot easily be answered by those, who think nonconformity a fatal schism, and yet require things allowedly indifferent as terms of conformity.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

◆

Satan as effectually injures some men's souls by tempting them to be proud of their intellectual powers, as he does those of others by alluring them to the grossest sensualities. That knowledge, therefore, which puffeth up the possessor, and renders him self-confident, dogmatical, and unteachable, is as dangerous, at least, as self-righteous pride; even though a pure evangelical creed be the object of it: and they, who are elated, because they thus know much about the truth, know nothing yet as they ought to know, and need to be sent to school to learn the *first* rudiments of heavenly wisdom. For without holy affections and divine love, all human knowledge is worthless, and far beneath the attainments of apostate angels: but sanctified affections, and humble grateful love, are not only evidences of the Lord's merciful acceptance, but are important steps to 'good understanding in the way of godliness.' The proud speculator is probably at the top of his attainments: but the loving disciple, though comparatively ignorant, shall daily be edified and make progress in heavenly wisdom; so that he shall be abundantly enriched from the fulness of Christ. While we refuse all kinds and degrees of worship to the many, that are called gods and lords, and to those saints and angels, which antichristianity hath devised for mediators, remembering, that "to us there is one "God, even the Father, of whom are all things, and one "Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things," let us examine whether we really come to God by faith in the divine Saviour: whether we be spiritual worshippers of the living and true God, according to his word.

V. 7—13.

◆

If our evidence of conversion is clear and decisive, and our views distinct and satisfactory, let us bless God for the consolation; but let us not suppose that this measure of knowledge and assurance is vouchsafed to all believers: or that we are better in ourselves, or more beloved of God, than our weaker brethren, the younger children of the same family. Let us beware of self-preference, vain-glory, and self-indulgence, and of despising those who are disquieted by needless scruples; who, though less conformable, may serve God more conscientiously and humbly than we do. Such Christians as have knowledge, should also beware of abusing their liberty, and of approaching to the verge or appearance of evil; "lest by "any means this liberty *of theirs* should prove an occa"sion of stumbling others," if not of guilt to themselves. For, should a weak believer see one, who is reputed to have knowledge, sitting at some of those feasts, or in some of those places of public concourse, for which many plead, (perhaps as plausibly as the Corinthians in behalf of eating in the idol's temple,) might he not be tempted to do the same, though contrary to the convictions of his own conscience? And thus, through such a man's knowledge and carnal self-indulgence, would the soul of a weak believer, for whom Christ died, be endangered, and his conscience wounded; or one, who was beginning to inquire after salvation, might be turned aside and utterly perish. How can men thus sin against their brethren, and violate the law of love, without offending Christ and endangering their own souls too; seeing they act so contrary to the spirit of the apostle, who would have eaten no flesh to the end of life, rather than cause his weak brother to offend; and to the mind of Him, who shed his precious blood, and poured out his dying prayers, for his misguided murderers?

4 Have [h] we not power to eat and to drink?

5 Have we not power [i] to lead about [k] a sister, * a wife, as well as other apostles, and *as* [l] the brethren of the Lord, [m] and Cephas?

6 Or I only and [n] Barnabas, [o] have not we power to forbear working?

7 Who [p] goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who [q] planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? [r] or who feedeth a flock, and [s] eateth not of the milk of the flock?

8 Say I these things [t] as a man? [u] or saith not the law the same also?

9 For it is written in the law of Moses, [x] Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. [y] Doth God take care for oxen?

h 7–14. Matt. x. 10. Luke x. 7. Gal. vi. 6. 1 Thes. ii. 6. 2 Thes iii. 8, 9. 1 Tim. v. 17, 18.

i 1 Tim. iii. 2 iv. 3. Tit. i. 6. Heb. xiii. 4.

k vii. 15. 39. Cant. iv. 9, 10. 12. v. 1, 2. Rom. xvi. 1. 1 Tim. v. 2.

* Or, *woman.*

l Matt. xii. 46–50 xiii 55. Mark vi. 3 John ii. 12. Acts i. 14. Gal. i. 19.——m i. 12. Matt. viii. 14. Mark i. 30. John i. 42.——n Acts iv. 36. xi. 22. xiii. 1, 2. 50, xiv. 12. xv. 36, 37.——o iv. 11, 12. Acts xviii. 3 xx. 34, 35. 1 Thes. ii. 9. 2 Thes. iii. 7, 8.——p 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. 1 Tim. i. 18. vi. 12. 2 Tim. ii. 3, 4. iv. 7.

q iii 6–8. Deut. xx. 6. Prov. xxvii. 18. Cant. viii. 12.

r Jer xxiii. 2, 3 John xxi. 15–17. Acts xx. 28 1 Pet. v. 2.

s Prov. xxvii. 27. Is. vii 22.

t vii 40. Rom. vi. 19. 1 Thes. ii. 13. iv. 8

u xiv. 34. Is. viii. 20. Rom. iii. 31.

x Deut xxv 4. 1 Tim v. 18.

y Num xxii. 28–35. Deut. iv. 14. Ps. civ. 27. cxlv. 15, 16. cxlvii. 8, 9. Jon. iv. 11. Matt vi. 26–30 Luke xii. 24–28.

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1—3. Some expositors seem to think that the apostle here began a new subject, and entered upon a formal vindication of his conduct among the Corinthians; but he appears rather to have digressed from his subject, in order to illustrate it by his own example, &c.; and accordingly he resumed and concluded it in the next chapter. He had before declared his readiness to deny himself the eating of flesh, during the remainder of his life, rather than stumble his weak brother; and he here proceeded to show what he had actually done in this respect, to promote the Gospel. But in order to state this clearly, it was necessary to prove his apostolical office, and that he had a right to a maintenance and other privileges in that character. He therefore inquired, Whether he were not an apostle; and whether he too were not free as well as the Corinthians, if he chose to exercise his liberty. Indeed he was aware that some of them would question his apostleship; but could they deny that he had seen the Lord Jesus, who repeatedly appeared to him, that he might be an unexceptionable witness of his resurrection and glory? And were not they his work in the Lord, who, by employing his ministry for their conversion, had affixed his seal to his apostolical commission? For he certainly would not thus have attested a direct imposture. So that they were the last persons, who ought to have made a doubt of this, being themselves the seal and demonstration of it. This therefore might serve as a brief, but sufficient, answer to those, who examined him concerning the credentials of his commission. *Mine answer*, &c. (3.) ‘ Namely, what is ‘ said in the preceding verse: therefore this is improperly ‘ by some joined to the next verse. He adds this by the ‘ way, as if he had said, So far should you be from doubt‘ ing of my apostleship; that I am used to answer those, ‘ who call that in question, by declaring what the Lord ‘ hath by me done among you.’ (*Beza.*)

V. 4, 5. It being then determined, that he was the apostle of Christ: he next inquired, whether he had not an indisputable right to eat and drink at their expense. And even whether he had not the privilege or liberty of marrying a believing woman, and of taking her along with him in his travels; receiving from the Churches a maintenance for her and his family also. This several of the apostles did; especially Peter, the apostle of the circumcision, who was attended by his wife when he went to different places to preach the Gospel. The words "a sister, a wife," are so determinate, that they leave no doubt but several of the apostles were married, and took their wives with them to those places, where they more statedly resided. To render them a *sister, a woman*, as some do, would form an unmeaning tautology, or rather one calculated to mislead the reader: for *a sister* must be *a woman;* and the latter word would be wholly redundant, if not intended to show in what relation she was supposed to stand; namely, that of *a wife*, according to the general acceptation of the word. ‘ This declares, in effect, that St. Peter continued to live ‘ with his wife after he became an apostle; and also that ‘ St. Peter had no rights, as an apostle, which were not ‘ common to St. Paul. A remark utterly subversive of ‘ popery, if traced to its obvious consequences.’ (*Doddridge.*) ‘ Clemens of Alexandria not only saith, that he ‘ that marrieth hath the apostles as examples, and that St. ‘ Peter carried his wife with him till his martyrdom; ‘ but confutes the enemies of martyrdom from these words. ‘ Adding, that they carried about their wives, not as ‘ wives, but as sisters, to minister to those who were mis‘ tresses of families, that so the doctrine of the Lord ‘ might, without any apprehension, or evil suspicions, en‘ ter into the apartments of the women.’ (*Whitby.*) The former part of this quotation shows what the records, or tradition, of the Church in that century was; the latter is a proof how soon antichristian notions about marriage began to prevail.

V. 6. The apostle further inquired, whether he and Barnabas alone were destitute of the right of being supported, without earning their bread by labour. These two useful servants of Christ were called to the apostolical office after the ascension of Christ, and set out together to preach among the Gentiles. The circumstances in which they found themselves, probably led them to adopt the method of subsisting by their own labour, in order to promote the Gospel; and they both persevered in it after they separated: while the other apostles, setting out among the Jews, who had been used to support their teachers, were generally maintained by them without working; and were supplied when they journeyed to other places, where Churches had not been planted. Thus Paul and Barnabas, by not *requiring* a support, seemed to have lost their right to one; and were generally left to labour, and struggle with difficulties and necessities, for want of adequate assistance. This view of these verses renders their connexion with the foregoing chapter very clear. The apostle was preparing to show the Corinthians how he waived the exercise of his liberty, in order to do good; that they might see, as in a glass, the impropriety of their selfish exercise of their liberty, "in eating the things offered unto idols."

10 Or saith he *it* altogether for our sakes? [z] for our sakes, no doubt, *this* is written: [a] that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.

11 If we have [b] sown unto you spiritual things, *is it* [c] a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?

12 If [d] others be partakers of *this* power over you, [e] *are* not we rather? [f] nevertheless we have not used this power; [g] but suffer all things, lest we should [h] hinder the Gospel of Christ.

13 Do ye not know that [i] they which minister about holy things * live *of the things* of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?

14 Even so hath the Lord [k] ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.

15 But [l] I have used none of these things: [m] neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me: [n] for *it were* better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void.

16 For though I preach the Gospel, [o] I have nothing to glory of: [p] for necessity is laid upon me; yea, [q] wo is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel.

17 For [r] if I do this thing willingly, I [s] have a reward: but if [t] against my will, [u] a dispensation *of the Gospel* is committed unto me.

18 What is my reward then? *Verily* that, [x] when I preach the Gospel, I may make the Gospel of Christ without charge,

z Matt xxiv. 22. Rom xv 4 2 Cor iv 15.
a iii 9 Luke xvii. 7, 8 John iv. 35—38 2 Tim. ii. 6.
b Mal. iii. 8, 9. Matt x. 10. Rom. xv. 27. Gal. vi 6.
c 2 Kings v. 13. 2 Cor. xi 15.
d 2 Cor. xi. 20.
e 2 iv. 14, 15.
f 15 18. Acts xx 31—34. 2 Cor xi. 7—10 xii. 13, 14. 1 Thes. ii 6—9. 2 Thes. iii 8, 9.
g iv. 11, 12 vi 7.
h Gen. xxiv 56. Neh. iv 8. Luke xi. 52. Rom. xv 22.
i x 18. Lev. vi 16—18. vii 6—8. Num xviii 8—20 Deut. x 9 xviii 1—5 1 Sam ii 28.
* Or, *feed*
k *See on*, 4.
l *See on*, 12.
m 2 Cor. xi. 9—12. xii. 13—18.
n Matt xviii 6. Acts xx. 24. Phil. i 20—23.
o Rom. iv. 2. xv. 17.
p Jer. xx. 7. Am. iii. 8. vii. 15. Acts iv 20. ix 6. 15. xxvi. 16—20.
q Is vi. 5 Luke ix 62 Col. iv 17.
r 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. xxix 5. 9 14. Neh xi. 2. Is. vi. 8 2 Cor. viii. 12. Philem. 14. 1 Pet. v. 2—4,
s iii. 8. 14. Matt. x 41.
t Ex. iv 13, 14. Jer xx 9. Ez. iii. 14. Jon i. 3. iv. 1—3. Mal i 10.
u *See on*. 16. iv. 1. Matt xxiv. 45. Luke xii 42 Gal. ii. 7. Eph. iii. 2—8. Col i 25. 1 Thes ii 4. 1 Tim i. 11—13.
x *See on*, 6, 7 2 Cor. xi. 7—9. xii. 13—18 1 Thes. ii 6. 2 Thes. iii 8, 9.

V. 7—12. Had the Corinthians objected, that St. Paul, by not receiving a maintenance from them, seemed to allow that he was not an apostle, as some suppose; it would have been needless for him formally to prove his right to it: but this was absolutely necessary, if he meant tacitly to instruct them, by his example, to give up their right and self-indulgence, from love to their brethren. He first shows, that he, as well as other ministers of the Gospel, had a right to a maintenance on the principles of natural equity: for who expected others to employ their time, strength, and skill, in their service, without affording them a support? The soldier, when fighting for his country, being thereby deprived of the opportunity of attending to his private concerns, had his charges borne by the state. The person, employed in planting a vineyard, was allowed a maintenance from its produce: and he who tended a flock, was used to eat the milk of the flock. And who could think it equitable to refuse them this recompense for their labour? Ought not therefore the ministers of the Gospel, who gave up other prospects of supporting themselves and their families, that they might with great peril and hardship promote the spiritual good of others, to be maintained in a decent and comfortable manner by them? 'Chrysostom and Theophylact observe, 'that he saith not, Who goeth to warfare, and is not rich? 'Who plants a vineyard, and heaps not up gold of the 'fruits of it? Who feeds a flock, and makes not a merchandise of the sheep? Teaching us, that the spiritual 'pastor should be content with little, and seek only what 'is necessary, not what is superfluous.' (*Whitby.*) Was this merely the dictate of human reason? Verily the law gave an emblematical intimation of it, when it forbade the Israelites to muzzle the ox, which was employed in treading out the grain. (*Deut.* xxv. 4.) If the ox must not be refused a share of that abundance, which men enjoyed through its labour, surely the laborious and patient minister should be supported by those, who received far richer blessings by his instrumentality. For could it be supposed, that God made such particular laws from a regard to oxen? He indeed required men to be merciful to the beasts, and his providential care and bounty extend to all creatures; yet doubtless this prohibition was entirely given for the sake of the human species, that none should receive his neighbour's service without wages: and especially for the sake of ministers, that they should be supported in a suitable manner, as a recompense for their useful and affectionate labours. Thus, when endeavouring to propagate the Gospel among Gentiles, or when labouring amidst great hardship and necessities among unconverted persons, where no support could be expected, any more than the oxen had when plowing the ground, they might be encouraged, by the hope of future maintenance, to persevere in the work; and, when employed in furthering the joy and growth of believers, they might be partakers of the expected recompense, and have some refreshment and relief after their hardships, by a comfortable maintenance, as the oxen eat of the corn, when treading it out for the benefit of others. And, indeed, if the ministers of Christ had sown the spiritual seed of the word of God, which was about to produce, for the benefit of the people, the excellent and permanent fruits of salvation, ought they to deem it a great matter, a large expense to themselves, or a great favour to their ministers, if they allowed them to reap a portion of their *carnal* things; which were of an earthly nature, and could not long be preserved, and which would prove them *carnal*, if they either tenaciously hoarded them, or luxuriously spent them on themselves? If then other pastors, and even the false teachers at Corinth, had been allowed to partake of this privilege, or authority over them, much more was this due to the apostle and his helpers, who first preached the Gospel among them. Nevertheless, they had not availed themselves of this their undoubted right; but had chosen rather to endure labour, pinching want, and every extremity, than to prevent the success of the Gospel: yet the Corinthians would not abridge themselves of the indulgence of a luxurious meal, out of love to their weaker brethren! This is evidently the contrast intended.

[y] that I abuse not my power in the Gospel.

19 For though [z] I be free from all *men*, yet have [a] I made myself servant unto all, [b] that I might gain the more.

20 And [c] unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are [d] under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law:

21 To [e] them that are without law, as without law, (being [f] not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.

22 To [g] the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: [h] I am made all things to all *men*, that I might by all means [i] save some.

23 And this I do [k] for the Gospel's sake, [l] that I might be partaker thereof with *you*.

y vii. 31. viii. 9. Rom. xiv. 15.
z 1. Rom xv. 2. Gal v 1.
a x 33 Matt xx 26—28 John xiii 14, 15 2 Cor iv 5. Gal v. 13.
b 20—22. vii 16 Prov. xi. 30. Matt xviii. 15. Rom xi 14. 1 Tim. iv. 16. 2 Tim. ii 10 Jam v. 19, 20. 1 Pet. iii 1.
c Acts xvi 3. xvii 2, 3. xviii. 18 xxi. 20—26
d Rom. iii. 19. vi. 14, 15. Gal iv 5. 21. v 18.
e Acts xv. 28. xvi. 4. xxi. 25 Rom ii 12. 14. Gal. ii. 3, 4. 12—14.
f vii. 19 22. Ps cxix. 32 Matt v. 17—20. Rom. vii 22. 25 viii 4. xiii 8—10. Gal. v 13 14. 22. 23 Eph vi. 1—3. 1 Thes iv. 1, 2. Tit ii. 2—12 Heb viii. 10
g viii 13. Rom. xv. 1. 2 Cor. xi 29. Gal. vi. 1.
h x 33
i *See on*, 19
k 12. Mark viii. 35. 2 Cor ii. 4. Gal. ii 5. 2 Tim. ii. 10.
l 25—27 2 Tim. ii. 6. Heb iii 1. 14 1 Pet v. 1. 1 John i. 3.

V. 13—18. The apostle here adduced another proof of his right to a maintenance among them. They could not but know, that the priests and Levites, who attended on the worship of the temple, (and so spent their time in that service as not to be at leisure for those employments, by which the other Israelites supported themselves and their families,) were maintained from the first fruits, oblations, and sacrifices, there presented; in like manner the Lord Jesus had appointed, that the ministers of his Gospel should be supported by the people for their services in this sacred function, and not be obliged to engage in any other. (*Matt.* x. 10.) Some expositors argue, from the apostle's frequent reference to the law, that the judaizing teachers were his chief opponents at Corinth. Yet the contrary is evident; and doubtless all professed Christians would become acquainted with, and might properly be referred to, the holy Scriptures, which are replete in every part with instructions to us at this day, though no one thinks of obeying the ceremonial law. The Corinthians, however, well knew, that he had not insisted upon his right in any of these things, nor did he thus write to them, in order to induce them to raise him an income; on the contrary, he deemed himself to have such a ground of glorying, (though not before God, yet with them,) in this self-denying disinterested conduct, that he should account it more desirable to die of want, than, by receiving any thing from them, to render it void. Probably, he had seen some things in the disposition of the Corinthians, which first induced him to decline receiving any thing from them. What had passed since he left them still more confirmed him in his purpose: he thought himself unkindly used by them, and in this way only would he show them his sense of their misconduct. He knew that the false teachers wanted an occasion against him; but this disinterestedness gave him an advantage over them, and it was very important that his example should be contrasted with their own conduct; which he could not so properly have done, had he not previously determined to receive nothing from the Christians at Corinth. Indeed, he had nothing to glory in, (though he had faithfully preached the Gospel,) as peculiarly expressive of his zeal and love, and which he might oppose to the vain-glorious boasts of false teachers. For he had been called to this work in so singular a manner, that a necessity was laid upon him, and he could not decline the service, or execute it unfaithfully, without incurring the heaviest condemnation. If indeed he had, without an express command, (having previously embraced the Gospel,) deliberately and willingly engaged in the work of the ministry, from love to Christ and to the souls of sinners, and zeal for the glory of God, he might have been assured of a gracious and abundant recompense. But, as he was so wonderfully arrested, when violently persecuting the Church, and intrusted with a dispensation to preach the Gospel, without any previous choice or willingness, a line of conduct of a peculiar nature was requisite *for him*, in order to show that he was not actuated by slavish fear, or mercenary principles. For if this had been the case, where would have been his reward? (*Notes, Matt.* vi. 1—5. 16—18.) Or how could he, in his peculiar circumstances, distinguish himself from mercenary teachers, and thus have ground of glorying, through the grace of God, in this distinction? Or how might he possess the assurance of a reward? Truly, by preaching the Gospel freely, without putting his hearers to any expense; and by enduring poverty, hunger, and labour, rather than make an inexpedient and improper use of his liberty and privilege, as an apostle of Christ. Thus he evidenced that he acted from genuine principles of zeal and love, and so enjoyed much comfort and assurance of hope in his own soul. To insist on our due, and use our liberty, when this hinders our usefulness, is to "abuse "our power in the Gospel."

V. 19—23. The preceding instance was not the only one, in which the apostle thus denied himself. Though he was free from obligation to comply with other men's inclinations, or to conform to their customs, yet he had voluntarily become as a slave to all men, or to men of every nation, rank or religious opinion; by renouncing every personal consideration, and making allowance for their prejudices, mistakes, and infirmities, as far as he could consistently with his duty, in order that he might win over the more to the faith of Christ. So that he conversed among the unconverted Jews, as though he had considered the Mosaic law to be still in force; he had circumcised Timothy, that he might give them no offence; and he paid that regard to their rules, which consisted with his duty as the apostle of the Gentiles, without regarding the trouble and self-denial of so doing. Thus he endeavoured to win upon them to attend to his doctrine, for their good. Even to the Jewish converts, who still deemed themselves under the authority of the ritual law, he became as one of them; and joined with them in their worship and purifications, as far as he could without misleading them, in order that he might soften their prejudices and be made useful to them. He conversed as freely among the Gentiles, as if he had been unacquainted with

24 ¶ Know ye not that [m] they which [n] run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize? [o] So run, that ye may obtain.

25 And every man that [p] striveth for the mastery is [q] temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a corruptible crown; [r] but we an incorruptible.

26 I therefore so run, [s] not as uncertainly; [t] so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

27 But [u] I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection; [x] lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be [y] a cast-away.

m Hos. xii 10. n Ps. xix. 5 Ec. ix. 11. Jer xii 5. o 26. Gal. ii 2. v. 7 Phil. ii 16. iii. 14 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. Heb. xii. 1. Jam. i. 12. Rev. iii. 11. p Eph vi 12—18. 1 Tim vi. 12. 2 Tim. ii. 5 iv. 7. Heb xii 4. q Gal. v. 23. Tit. i 8. ii. 2. 2 Pet. i. 6.——r xv 54. 2 Tim. iv. 8 Heb. xii. 28. Jam. i. 12. 1 Pet i. 4. v 4. Rev ii 10. iii. 11. iv. 4. 10

s 2 Cor. v. 1. 8. Phil. i. 21. 2 Tim. i. 12 ii 5. Heb. iv. 1. 1 Pet. v. 1. 2 Pet. i. 10, 11. t Matt. xi. 12. Luke xiii. 24. Eph vi. 12. Col. i 29 u 25. iv. 11, 12. vi. 12, 13 viii. 13. Rom. viii. 13 2 Cor vi. 4, 5 xi 27. Col. iii. 5 2 Tim. ii. 22 1 Pet ii. 11.——x xiii. 1—3. Ps l. 16. Matt. vii 21—23. Luke xii. 45—47 xiii. 26, 27. 2 Pet. ii 15.——y Jer. vi. 30 Luke ix. 25. Acts i 25. 2 Cor xiii. 5, 6.

the law of Moses, in order that he might win them over to embrace the Gospel. Yet did he not disregard the authority and commands of God, but considered himself to be "under the law to Christ," bound to receive the moral law from his hand as a rule of duty, taught by his grace to love it and delight in it; and, being delivered from its curse, engaged by additional motives to yield a prompt obedience to it. In like manner he condescended to the infirmities and scruples of the weak in faith, as if he too had been weak; abridging himself of his liberty, lest he should grieve or ensnare them, without making any ostentation of stronger faith or greater knowledge, or showing any neglect or contempt of them. Thus, in all things lawful, he became all things to all men, by an habitual, cheerful, patient endurance of their infirmities, and toleration of their prejudices and mistakes in things unessential; that, by every means which he could devise, he might save some from the several descriptions of men among whom he laboured. This he did from love to the Gospel and a valuation of its blessings; that he might not only be a partaker of them himself, but that he might share them with numerous converts, and especially with the Corinthians; not being satisfied, as it were, to be saved himself, without he could prevail for the salvation of others also. Nothing could be more suited to shame them out of a selfish use of their liberty, than this statement of his own principles and conduct; or more strongly mark the surprising change which had taken place in him since the time, when, by cruel persecution, he wanted to make all men conform to his religion.

V. 24—27. To illustrate his subject, the apostle called their attention to the Isthmian games, which were celebrated near Corinth. Did they not well know, that though several racers set out to run for the prize, yet it was only awarded to the victorious person, and the rest were disappointed? This induced each of them to exert himself to the uttermost, in order to be successful. Let then the Corinthians do the same in their Christian course; let them run with earnestness, self-denial, and patience, without shrinking from hardships or perils, and without loitering from attention to worldly allurements; that they might obtain the prize, which self-indulgent professors would come short of. They well knew that every man, who contended in those athletic exercises, must prepare himself for them by rule, in respect of his diet, and all other things. This would, in many cases, require peculiar temperance and self-denial; without which they could not expect to succeed. Now, they submitted to this for a garland of herbs, or ever-greens, which would soon wither and decay, even as the honour annexed to them must be very transient; but Christians contended with the enemies of their salvation, in hopes of obtaining an incorruptible crown of glory and felicity; and surely they ought not to shrink from any self-denial or suffering. For his part, the apostle could truly say, that he did not so run in this race as to leave the event of it uncertain, or as willing to be left among the obscure undistinguished multitude of losers. Nor did he fight as the pugilists used to exercise themselves, when their blows only beat the air, having no opponent to contend with; but as they did when actually engaged in the contest. Thus he got the better of his animal inclinations; as they used to subdue their antagonists, when by violent blows they beat them down to the ground, and kept them under till they yielded the victory. For he not only refused his appetites unlawful or inexpedient indulgences, but he habituated them to brook denial in every thing, when there was a call to it; and he inured his body to hard labour and patient sufferings, and thus wore it out, of which the marks and scars might be visible to every one. In this way he sought and possessed the assurance, that he should not, after having preached to others, (like the heralds who called the combatants to the conflict,) be himself rejected, as having no title to the incorruptible crown. This did not imply that the apostle at all doubted of his acceptance or perseverance; but it showed the Corinthians the nature of his assurance, and forcibly cautioned them not to rest in such hopes, as were consistent with indiscriminate self-indulgence even in things lawful. He had abundant occasions and methods of thus bringing and keeping under his body, without using the tortures, austerities, and flagellations of the papists; while he willingly endured hunger, thirst, fatigue, and imprisonment in preaching the Gospel, and was frequently in watchings, fastings, and prayers, as well as habitually temperate in all things. The apostle seems designedly to contrast the continence and temperance of the heathen combatants, for a fading crown, with the luxurious self-indulgence of the Corinthian Christians, whom no motives, either taken from the good of their brethren, their own spiritual advantage, or the honour of the Gospel, could induce to deny themselves the gratification of a sensual feast. "The body," seems here to be meant literally. The *depraved nature*, "the body of sin "and death," must be crucified as a malefactor; but the *body*, or animal frame, must, by wholesome and sometimes sharp discipline, be brought under, and kept under, as a well educated child.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—18.

When the Lord hears the prayers of his ministers, and blesses their labours in the conversion of sinners, he sets his seal to their commission. This should satisfy the con-

CHAP. X.

When Israel came out of Egypt, they all shared in those things which were sacramental signs of spiritual blessings, yet most of them died in the wilderness, 1—5. *Their examples are recorded as a warning to professed Christians, not to imitate their crimes,* 6—12. *God will not suffer his servants to be tempted, so as to have no way of escape,* 13. *Christians must flee from idolatry,* 14. *They cannot have fellowship with Christ and believers in the Lord's Supper, and with idolaters in those sacrifices which are offered to devils,* 15—22. *In the use of things lawful, the good of others should be consulted,* 23—30; *that all may be done to the glory of God, and without giving offence to man,* 31—33.

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scientious in respect of their own call to the work, and be deemed a sufficient proof to others, especially to those converted by them; though no occasional usefulness will prove an unholy man to be a real Christian, or a self-confident boaster to be a faithful minister. However expedient the single life may be in some cases, yet marriage not only consists with the office of a stated pastor, but with that of a missionary or an evangelist, as it did with that of the holy apostles: and though ministers may see good, in some circumstances, to labour for their bread, yet they have an undoubted right to a decent maintenance for themselves and their families; whether natural equity or the word of God be appealed to. They who judge it best not to use this power are the most proper persons to enforce the equity of it; as they may do it with less suspicion of wrong motives; and as otherwise their conduct might be misconstrued to the disadvantage of their brethren. Nor ought they, who reap the spiritual benefit of the minister's labours, to yield a proportion of their temporal goods, as if it were *an alms*, or a great favour conferred on him; for it is at least as much his due, as the soldier's or the labourer's wages. How should it be expected that men will give up the prospect of lucrative employments and creditable professions, to engage in this warfare, to labour in the Lord's husbandry, or to feed his flock, if they cannot do it in hope of living by their profession? How can they face the dangers and endure the hardships of plowing up the fallow ground, by preaching to the ignorant, careless, and profligate, if pinching want be their only prospect, however diligent and successful they may be? Or how can they minister to the comfort and edification of believers, when they are burdened with debts, destitute of necessaries, surrounded by indigent families, or driven into other employments for bread? How can they but suspect that their hearers are deceiving themselves, in professing to love Christ and the Gospel, while they enjoy plenty, and lay up for their children, and leave their pastor to wear out his life in poverty? Ministers have passions and feelings like other men; they find as much inward and outward opposition to the exercise of faith, and hope, and patience, as their brethren, and commonly more: so that their spirits are often depressed, and their hands weakened on these accounts, when a regard to the real dignity of their office forbids them to complain, and induces them to suffer in silence and submission. On the other hand, it behooves ministers to be as disinterested as possible: they had better suffer all things, and even lose their lives, than give reason to suspect that they act from love to filthy lucre, or that any should make their glorying void, when they avow that the love of Christ, and of souls, dictates their affectionate persuasions and solemn warnings. But if they, to whom a dispensation is given to preach the Gospel, and who act according to it, have no ground of glorying, because necessity is laid upon them, and wo is to them if they do not; what will be the case of those who *willingly assume this office, and seek a designation to it*, and then bestow no pains to preach the Gospel, or to preach at all, but only aim to appropriate as much as possible of those funds, that were established for the maintenance of such as labour in the word and doctrine? Wo! wo! to such idol-shepherds, to such hireling priests! yea, to all who encourage and reward their unfaithfulness! But in proportion as we honestly lay ourselves out in this good work, and willingly embrace opportunities of preaching the Gospel without charge, when they offer themselves; and give up our right, lest we should abuse our power in the Gospel, we shall be assured, that we act from genuine principles, and shall have a gracious reward: for "when "the chief Shepherd shall appear, we shall receive a "crown of glory that fadeth not away."

V. 19—27.

Whilst we refuse to flatter the person or palliate the vices of any man, or to deviate from truth and duty to gain favour or applause, we should be ready to give up our own interest, humour, credit, or inclinations, and to be servants to all men, that we may gain the more. A mind freed from narrow bigotry, enlarged by comprehensive views of the grand object of the Gospel, and taught to keep the great end of doing good continually in view, will know when to waive minute discussions, to connive at less dangerous prejudices; and to venture down towards the ground of other men, in order to argue with them upon their own principles, and to bring them to saving views of the Gospel. But while a man postpones or subordinates every other thing to this grand object, as far as consists with important truth and duty; while he becomes all things to all men, that he may gain the more to share with him in the great blessings of salvation, and to be useful to persons of different sentiments and descriptions; and while, on the other hand, he will not give place for a moment, where essential truth or the salvation of souls is at stake; he must expect to be deemed a time-server by bigots, inconsistent by the ignorant, a bigot by the unprincipled; and unsound, weak, or unfaithful, by the self-conceited. Indeed, we should always watch against extremes. If we have to do with those who are superstitious or self-righteous, while we insist on

MOREOVER, brethren, [a] I would not
that ye should be ignorant, how
that all [b] our fathers [c] were under the
cloud, [d] and all passed through the sea;
2 And were all [e] baptized unto Moses
in the cloud and in the sea;
3 And [f] did all eat the same spiritual
meat;
4 And [g] did all drink the same spiritual drink: (for they drank of that spiritual
Rock that * followed them; and [h] that
Rock was Christ.)
5 But [i] with many of them God was
not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness.
6 Now [k] these things were our † examples, to the intent we should not [l] lust
after evil things, as they also lusted.

a xii. 1 xiv. 38. Rom. xi 21.
b John iv. 20. Rom. iv. 11. Gal. iii. 29.
c Ex xiii. 21, 22. xiv. 19, 20. Num. ix. 15—22. xiv. 14. Deut. i. 33. Neh ix 12. 19. Ps. lxxviii. 14. cv. 39.
d Ex. xiv. 22. 29. Num. xxxiii 8. Josh. iv. 23. Neh ix. 11. Ps. lxvi. 6. lxxvii. 16—20 lxxviii. 13. 53. cvi. 7—11. cxiv. 3—5 cxxxvi 13—15. Is. vi. 11—13. Heb xi. 29 Rev. xv 2, 3
e i 13—16. Ex. xiv. 31. John ix. 28, 29. Heb. iii. 2, 3.
f Ex xvi. 4. 15. 35. Deut. viii 3 Neh. ix. 15. 20. Ps. lxxviii. 23—25. cv. 40. John vi. 22—58
g Ex. xvii. 6. Num. xx 11. Ps. lxxviii. 15. 20. cv. 41. Is. xliii. 20. xlviii. 21. John iv 10. 14. vii. 37. Rev. xxii. 17.
* Or, *went with them.* Deut ix. 21.
h xi. 24, 25 Gen. xl. 12. xli 26. Ez. v. 4, 5. Dan. ii 38. vii. 17. Matt. xiii 38, 39. xxvi. 26—28. Gal iv. 25. Col. ii. 17. Heb. x 1.
i Num. xiv 11, 12. 28—33. xxvi. 64, 65 Deut. i. 34, 35. ii. 15, 16. Ps. lxxviii. 32—34. xc. *title.* 7, 8. xcv. 11. cvi 26. Heb. iii. 17. Jude 5.
k 11. Zeph. iii. 6, 7. Heb. iv 11. 2 Pet. ii. 6. Jude 7
† Gr *figures* Rom. v. 14. Heb. ix. 24. 1 Pet. iii. 21.
l Num. xi. 4. 31—34 Ps. lxxviii. 27—31. cvi. 14, 15.

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the necessity of good works, and connive at their mere external forms; we must be very careful to warn them against relying on such things, and in leading them to trust in Christ alone. If we have to do with those, who seem to be without law, and would endeavour to show them, that true religion requires of us no injurious or useless observances, we must still remember, that we are not “without law to God, but under the law to Christ;” and we must not countenance or connive at their loose principles or practices: and, in condescending to the weak and injudicious, we must not tolerate those errors or faults, which may either injure them, or disgrace the Gospel. But a simple heart, a single eye, and an habitual reliance on God for heavenly wisdom, will carry a man through such services, and past such dangers, as cannot be directed or guarded against by any rules. If, however, we would be deemed in earnest in seeking the salvation of other men, we must not be remiss in securing our own. We must run the race vigorously, if we would have them so to “run that they may obtain.” We must endeavour to practise our own exhortations: in striving for the mastery, we must be temperate in all things; and in fighting the good fight, we must contend as those who know they are opposed by real and formidable enemies. Thus subduing our sinful passions, habituating every inclination to submit, “keeping our bodies under, and bringing them into subjection,” we shall best enjoy the assurance, that when we have “preached to others we shall not ourselves be cast-aways;” for this, though tremendous, it is to be feared is not at all uncommon. And when we consider what labour, self-denial, self-abasement, and perseverance, men submit to, for the fading honours and corruptible interests of this world, it should make us ashamed of shrinking from any hardship, abstinence, self-abasement, or suffering, that may be needful in securing the incorruptible crown, for which we are called to contend.

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1—5. In prosecuting his subject concerning things offered to idols, the apostle next referred the Corinthians to the case of Israel, and the judgments of God which came upon them for their carnal self-indulgence. He would not have them ignorant, how that all the fathers of the Jewish nation came out of Egypt under the guidance and protection of the cloud, which gave them light by night, and was an overshadowing canopy to them by day; being an emblem of the Lord's providential care and gracious guidance of his people: and that the whole nation was safely conducted through the red sea, in which the Egyptians were drowned. Thus they were initiated, as by baptism, into the true religion, under the instruction of Moses, the type of Christ, by the over-shadowing cloud, and by the waters of the sea. Thus the whole nation, men, women, and children, were acknowledged as the visible Church of God, even as all professed Christians were admitted into the Church by baptism. (*Notes, Ex.* xiii. 21, 22. xiv. xv.) They all likewise, without exception, were sustained by the manna, which miraculous provision might be called *spiritual meat*, as it typified Christ, the Bread of life to the souls of the true Israel: and they all drank of those waters, which flowed from the rock, and which followed them as a river, through most of their wanderings in the wilderness. This too might be called *spiritual* drink, for it typified the sacred influences of the Holy Spirit, as given to believers through Jesus Christ: and the rock itself might be called *spiritual;* because that Rock was Christ, a type of him who was wounded and smitten for our sins, that salvation might be communicated to our perishing souls. (*Notes, Ex.* xvi. xvii.) Nothing can more clearly show the absurdity of forcing figurative language into a literal meaning, and so grounding doctrines upon it, as the Papists have done in the monstrous notion of transubstantiation, than this text. By such a mode of construction we might prove, that the rock was *literally* the person of Christ, and that *the rock* followed the Israelites in the wilderness! (*Marg. Ref.*) The Israelites, in respect of these things, seemed all alike the people of God, and dear to him: yet was he far from being well pleased with the most of them; so that they were destroyed in the wilderness in such multitudes, that their dead bodies lay in heaps upon the ground, as after the carnage of some terrible battle. *Our fathers.* (1.) The ancestors of the Jewish nation. *The same,* &c., (4.) ‘In fact, the sacraments of the ancients were the same as ours, as they had respect to Christ alone.’ (*Beza.*) Some make their sacraments types of our sacraments, that is, *shadows of shadows:* but a sacrament is well defined by our Church, to be ‘an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.’ It is not, however, obvious, that the word *same* refers in either sense to the Christian sacraments; though the apostle evidently intended to warn the Corinthians, not to presume on their baptism, or attendance on the Lord's supper, or any external forms, professions, or privileges, as securing to them the favour of God, notwithstanding their sins: and nothing could be better suited to his purpose, than the example of Israel.

7 Neither [m] be ye idolaters, as *were* some of them; as it is written, [n] The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

8 Neither [o] let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

9 Neither let us [p] tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, [q] and were destroyed of serpents.

10 Neither [r] murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and [s] were destroyed of the [t] destroyer.

11 Now all these things happened unto them for * ensamples: [x] and they are written for our admonition, [y] upon whom the ends of the world are come.

12 Wherefore [z] let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

13 There [a] hath no temptation taken you but such as is † common to man: [b] but God *is* faithful, [c] who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also [d] make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*.

14 Wherefore, [e] my dearly beloved, [f] flee from idolatry.

[m] 14. 20—22. v. 11. vi 9. viii. 7. Deut. ix 12. 16—21. Ps. cvi 19, 20. 1 John v 21.

[n] Ex. xxxii. 6—8. 17—19.

[o] vi 9. 18. Num. xxv. 1—9. Ps. cvi 29. Rev. ii. 14.

[p] Ex. xvii. 2. 7. xxiii. 20, 21. Num. xxi 5. Deut vi. 16. Ps. lxxviii. 18. 56. xcv 9. cvi. 14. Heb iii. 8—11 x. 28—30.

[q] Num. xxi. 6.

[r] Ex xv. 24 xvi. 2—9 xvii 3. Num. xiv. 2. 27—30. xvi. 41 Ps. cvi 25. Phil. ii. 14 Jude 16.

[s] Num xiv 37. xvi. 46—49.

[t] Ex. xii 23 2 Sam xxiv. 16. 1 Chr xxi. 15 2 Chr. xxxii. 21 Matt. xiii. 39—42. Acts xii. 23. 2 Thes. i. 7, 8. Heb. xi. 28 Rev. xvi. 1.——* Or, *types*.——x ix. 10. Rom. xv. 4.

[y] Phil. iv 5. Heb. x. 25. 37. 1 John ii. 18

[z] iv 6—8 viii. 2. Prov. xvi. 18. Matt. xxvi. 33. 34. 40, 41 Rom. xi. 20 Rev. iii. 17, 18.

[a] Jer. xii. 5. Matt xxiv. 21—24. Luke xi. 4 xxii. 31 46. 2 Cor xi. 23—28. Eph vi. 12, 13. Heb. xi. 35—38. xii. 4. Jam. v 10, 11. 1 Pet. i 6, 7. v. 8, 9. Rev. ii. 10. iii. 10.

† Or *moderate*.

[b] i. 9. Deut. vii. 9 Ps xxxvi 5. lxxxix. 33. Is. xi. 5. xxv. 1. xlix. 7. Lam. iii. 23. Hos. ii 20. 1 Thes v. 24 2 Thes. iii 3. 2 Tim. ii. 11—13. Heb. vi. 18. x 23. xi. 11. 1 Pet. iv. 19. 1 John i 9 Rev. xix. 11.——c Ex xiii. 17. Ps cxxv. 3. Luke xxii. 32. John x. 28—30. Rom viii. 28—39. 2 Cor. i. 10. xii. 8—10. 2 Tim iv. 18. 1 Pet. i. 5 2 Pet. ii. 9——d Gen. xix 20, 21 Ps. cxxiv. 7. Luke xvi. 26. Acts xxvii. 44.

[e] Rom. xii 19. 2 Cor. vii. 1. xi. 11. xii. 15. 19. Phil. iv. 1. Philem. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 11.

[f] 7. 20, 21. 2 Cor. vi. 17. 1 John v. 21 Rev. ii 14. xiii. 8. xxi 8. xxii. 15.

V. 6—12. The apostle, in applying his subject, next observed, that these events were intended to be instructive examples to the Christian Church, or figurative representations of God's dealings with his professed worshippers in all ages: that by the fatal consequences of Israel's disobedience and rebellion, others might be deterred from allowing an evil concupiscence after sinful or inexpedient indulgences. (*Notes*, *Num.* xi. *Ps.* lxxviii. cvi.) The apostle, therefore, warned the Corinthians to "flee from "idolatry," of which they were in great danger; because they loved the luxurious gratification of their appetites and the pleasures of a feast, whatever other reasons they assigned for their conduct. (*Notes*, *Ex.* xxxii.) Some expositors suppose that the word rendered *to play*, signifies *to commit fornication:* but the Israelites are not, on that occasion, charged with this crime, or others of the same nature: and a jovial festive religion, without gross and scandalous immorality, is peculiarly congenial to human nature, as circumstanced in this world; in which regard to character and worldly interest, and some remaining feeling in the conscience, restrain vast numbers of unconverted persons from direct licentiousness, especially where the word of God is so far known, as to render those crimes shameful, and uneasy to the conscience, which the Gentiles practised without shame or remorse. In the next verse the apostle warns the Corinthians against fornication, (to which the inhabitants of Corinth were so addicted, that one Greek word, signifying to commit fornication, is taken from the name of that city, *to follow the custom of Corinth:*) and he adduces the example of Israel, when, by the counsel of Balaam, the daughters of Moab were their tempters, and their fornication was connected with the worship of Baal-peor. Twenty-three thousand died of the plague, besides one thousand slain by the sword, at the command of Moses. (*Notes*, *Num.* xxv. *Marg. Ref.*) He then cautions them against tempting Christ, by provoking him to jealousy, wearying out his patience, and putting his love and power to the proof, as the Israelites had done in the wilderness, when he was with them as JEHOVAH of Hosts, their Redeemer: and from murmuring ungratefully at the Lord's dispensations towards them, the restrictions laid on them, or the spiritual authority exercised over them, as the Israelites had done; and for which they had been cut off by desolating judgments, and the destroying angel, whom the Lord employed against them. (*Notes*, *Num.* xiii. xiv. xvi. xvii. xx. xxi.) These transactions have before been fully considered; and the application of them to the conduct of the Corinthians must be obvious to every attentive reader. The apostle therefore further assured them, that those things which seemed so severe in respect of Israel were merciful in the object; being intended as examples to others, warning them to restrain their appetites and passions, and to exercise holy caution and humble fear. Especially they were written for the admonition of Christians, *on whom the completion of the ages was come:* who had the Substance of all their shadows and the accomplishment of all their prophecies; who enjoyed those advantages, which were the end and perfection of the old dispensation; and who lived under the light of the last and most complete revelation, which was to be vouchsafed to the world. For, in proportion to their light, privileges, and encouragements, so ought their holy obedience to be: their guilt would otherwise be more aggravated than under the darker dispensation of the law; and would be punished with more terrible judgments. It therefore was proper that every man, who supposed himself to stand secure of God's favour, and strong in the faith of the Gospel, without being troubled by weak and superstitious scruples, should take heed that he did not fall away from his self-confident profession, and at last lie under the righteous condemnation of God, having only "the form of god-"liness:" or lest, being a real Christian, he should, (like Peter, when through self-confidence he neglected to watch and pray,) fall into grievous sin, and thus wound his conscience, expose himself to severe rebukes, disgrace his profession, and injure or ruin the souls of others. Many writers suppose that an evil angel is meant by "the de-"stroyer," but this is not probable; for holy angels are continually represented as employed by the Lord, in executing vengeance on his enemies. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13, 14. The Corinthians would be the more inexcusable, should they, through self-confidence and unwatchfulness, fall into sin; because no temptation had befallen them, but such as men in general must meet with from

15 I speak [g] as to wise men; judge ye what I say.

16 The [h] cup of blessing which we bless, is it not [i] the communion of the blood of Christ? [k] The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

17 For [l] we, *being* many, are one bread, *and* one body: for we are all partakers of [m] that one bread.

18 Behold [n] Israel after the flesh: [o] are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?

g xiv. 10. vi. 5. viii. 1. xi. 13. xiv. 20. Job xxxiv. 3, 3. 1 Thes. v 21.
h 21. xi. 23—29. Matt xxvi. 26—28 Mark xiv 22—24. Luke xxii. 19, 20.
i 20. i. 9. xii. 13. John vi 53—58. Heb. iii. 14 1 John i. 3 7.
k Acts ii. 42. 46. xx 7. 11.
l xii. 12 27 Rom. xii. 5 Gal iii. 26—28. Eph i. 22, 23. ii. 15, 16. iii 6 iv. 12, 13. 25. Col. ii. 19. iii. 11. 15.
m 3, 4 21. xi. 26—28.
n Rom iv. 1. 12. ix. 3—8. 2 Cor. xi. 18. 22. Eph. ii. 11, 12. Phil. iii. 3—5.——o ix. 13. Lev. iii. 3—5. 11. vii. 11—17. 1 Sam. ii. 13—16. ix. 12, 13.

19 What say I then? [p] that the idol is any thing? or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing?

20 But *I say*, that the things which the Gentiles [q] sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

21 Ye [r] cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

22 Do [s] we provoke the Lord to jealousy? [t] are we stronger than He?

p i. 28. iii 7 viii. 4. xiii. 2. Deut. xxxii. 21. Is. xl. 17 xli. 29. 2 Cor. xii. 11.
q Lev. xvii. 7. Deut. xxxii. 16, 17. 2 Chr. xi. 15. Ps. cvi. 36, 39. 2 Cor. iv. 4. Rev. ix. 20.
r 16. viii. 10. Deut. xxxii. 37, 38. 1 Kings xviii. 21. Matt. vi. 24. 2 Cor. vi. 15, 17.
s Ex. xx. 5. xxxiv. 14. Deut. iv. 24. vi. 15. xxxii. 16. 21. Josh. xxiv. 19. Ps. lxxviii. 58. Zeph. i. 18.
t Job ix. 4. xl 9—14 Ez. xxii. 14. Heb. x. 31.

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their own hearts, the suggestions of Satan, and the allurements of the world. They had not been tried by severe persecutions to deny Christ, or conform to the customary idolatry, as many had been, and would be. The apostle, however, did not mean to discourage the humble and fearful, by thus mentioning much stronger temptations than those which they had met with: for, if indeed they truly believed, the faithfulness of God to his promise and covenant would secure them from being finally overcome by any temptation. He would so direct and overrule every event, and restrain the malice of tempters and persecutors, as well as communicate strength proportioned to their trials, that they should never be tempted above what they were able; but, in some way or other, he would, in his providence, or by his grace, make a way for them to escape, that they should be enabled to bear the trial, and come forth out of it unhurt, however sharp or durable it might be. This cannot mean, that all believers should be rendered victorious over every particular temptation; because in that case they must all be kept from actual sin, which is contrary to fact and Scripture: yet it must imply, that no concurrence of circumstances should ever cast them into such temptation, as would render the commission of sin unavoidable; and that nothing should ever occasion their final apostacy and condemnation. (*Rom.* viii. 33—39.) However, the examples and warnings, which had been given, sufficiently proved that they ought to flee to the greatest distance from all approaches to, and occasions of, idolatry; for if so small a temptation as a feast was more than they could resist, how could they hope to withstand in the evil day of fiery persecution? The word rendered "a way to escape," is suited to lead the reader's thoughts to the case of a poor shipwrecked mariner, who has indeed escaped to dry ground; but the winds roar, the billows rage, the tide flows, the cliffs overhang, and death, inevitable death, seems still to pursue him, when at length he discovers an opening, or gate, (such as are common in some places where the cliff is high and steep,) and thus a most welcome outlet, or way of escape, is unexpectedly afforded him! The experience of some Christians, who have been peculiarly tried and tempted, till ready to give up hope, and yet at length rescued and filled with admiring gratitude, will show the peculiar propriety of the illustration. (*Heb.* xiii. 7. *Gr.*) A metaphor, taken from them who, 'being surrounded by thieves, are in danger on every 'side.' (*Pareus in Leigh.*)

V. 15—17. The Corinthians valued themselves on their superior knowledge and wisdom; and the apostle would speak to them as wise men, and call on them, impartially and discreetly to judge of what he had further to adduce against their feasting in the idol temples. Would they not allow that the cup of wine, which was used in the Lord's supper to represent spiritual blessings, and as an act of praise and thanksgiving to God, after it had been blessed and set apart by prayer for that purpose, was a token and pledge of their communion in the blood of Christ as the atonement for sin, and their being made joint partakers of it? And was not the bread which they broke a token of their participating of his body? Did not a man's joining in that ordinance imply a profession of faith in Christ crucified, and of adoring gratitude to him for this salvation? Certainly every one would put this construction on it: and if a man really intended in his heart what he thus professed, he would actually have the communion of the Saviour's blood shed and body broken for the sins of the world. For all Christians, by this ordinance and the faith in it professed, and the grace implied, were united, as the grains of wheat in one loaf of bread, or as the members in the human body; seeing they were all united to Christ, and had fellowship with him and one another, by partaking of the same bread, as a token of their feeding by faith on the same spiritual nourishment for their souls. In like manner, to join with idolaters in their feasts, at the temples of their idols, must be understood, as a professed act of communion with the idol and its worshippers: and if this was not intended, it was a sort of hypocritical profession. 'The apostle calls it "the cup of blessing," 'because, when we have it in our 'hand, we praise and bless, with admiration of his in'effable gift, him who shed his blood for us; and not only 'shed his blood, but has made us all partakers of it.' (*Ambrose.*) 'These words, the *loaf* or *bread*, is one, and 'we all partake of one loaf, and therefore are one body, 'show how grossly the Church of Rome has varied from 'Christ's institution, in distributing to the communicants 'severally an unbroken wafer; so that they are neither 'partakers of one loaf, or bread, or of bread broken.' (*Whitby.*)

23 All [u] things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things [x] edify not.

24 Let no man [y] seek his own, but every man another's *wealth*.

25 Whatsoever is [z] sold in the shambles, *that* eat, asking no question [a] for conscience' sake:

26 For [b] the earth *is* the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

27 If any of them that believe not [c] bid you *to a feast*, and ye be disposed to go; [d] whatsoever is set before you, eat asking no question [e] for conscience' sake.

u vi. 12. viii. 9. Rom. xiv. 15 20.
x viii. 1. xiv 3—5. 12 17. 26. Rom. xiv. 19. xv. 2 2 Cor. xii. 19. Eph. iv. 29. 1 Thes. v. 11. 1 Tim i 4.
y 33. ix. 19—23. xiii. 5. Phil. ii. 4, 5.
z Rom. xiv. 14. 1 Tim. iv. 4. Tit i 15.
a 27—29. viii. 7. Rom. xiii. 5.
b 28. Ex. xix. 5. Deut. x. 14. Job xli. 11. Ps. xxiv. 1. 1 12. 1 Tim. vi. 17.
c v. 9—11. Luke v. 29, 30. xv. 2. xix. 7.
d Luke x. 7.
e 25 2 Cor. i. 12. iv. 2. v. 11.

28 But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, [f] eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience' sake: [g] for the earth *is* the Lord's, and the fulness thereof:

29 Conscience, I say, [h] not thine own, but of the other: for [i] why is my liberty judged of another *man's* conscience?

30 For if I by * grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that [k] for which I give thanks?

31 Whether therefore [l] ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

f viii. 10—13. Rom xiv. 15.
g 26. Ex. ix. 29. Ps cxv. 16. Jer. xxvii. 5, 6. Matt. vi 31, 32.
h 32. viii. 9—13. Rom. xiv. 15—21.
i Rom. xiv. 16. 2 Cor. viii. 21. 1 Thes. v 22.
* Or, *thanksgiving*
k Rom. xiv. 6. 1 Tim iv. 3, 4.
l vii. 31. Deut., xii 7. 11. Neh. viii. 10—12. Zech. vii. 5, 6. Luke xi. 41. Col iii. 17. 23. 1 Pet. iv. 11.

V. 18—22. The subject might be illustrated by the case of "Israel after the flesh," the nation of Israel, as distinguished from the whole company of believers. They who feasted in the courts of the temple, upon the flesh of the sacrifices and peace-offerings, of which part had been burned upon the altar, were understood to have fellowship with JEHOVAH and his worshippers, and to expect a share of the benefits arising from such sacrifices; and was not the meaning similar, when any one feasted with idolaters in their idol-temples, upon their sacrifices? Would they then suppose him to mean, that an idol was a real being, to whom worship was rendered? Or that these sacrifices differed materially from other food? Thus he knew that some of them would speculate to excuse their self-indulgence. But, though the deities to which they sacrificed were non-entities, and all the account of their origin and exploits mere fables, yet he must inform them that their sacrifices were actually presented to devils, fallen angels, malignant demons, and that these ambitious rivals of God were gratified by them, in proportion as God was dishonoured and provoked. Perhaps some might fancy that the *name* was not essential, and that God was worshipped in these rites, though under another title: (as modern speculators have asserted that JEHOVAH, and Jove, or Jupiter, &c. are virtually the same; and that the supreme Being is worshipped with equal acceptance in every age and clime;) but the apostle assured them, that these sacrifices were not presented to God, but to the determined enemies of God and man; and he would not on any account have his beloved Corinthians join themselves with devils and their worshippers. Indeed, they could not make the ordinances of Christ to consist with these abominable rites; and if they attempted it, they would provoke the Lord to jealousy by this familiarity with his detested rivals, as if they were stronger than he, and could defend themselves against his judgments; even as a woman, though not guilty of gross adultery, must excite the suspicion and indignation of her husband, if she associated very familiarly with the man of whom he entertained a peculiar jealousy. (*Marg. Ref.*) The apostle joined himself in these inquiries, to show how greatly he abhorred such a conduct, and how he should dread the consequences of being seduced into it. 'Dare you then, being espoused 'to Christ, provoke the Lord to jealousy by idolatry, 'which is spiritual whoredom? "Are you stronger than "he," 'and able to resist him, when he shall let loose 'his fury against you?" (*Locke.*)

V. 23—28. (*Notes*, vi. 12, 13. viii.) The feasting in the idol-temples having been shown to be direct idolatry, the apostle next proceeded to prove, that some limitations must be assigned to their liberty; and expediency and edification consulted in the use even of lawful things. He exhorted them, therefore, not to seek their own indulgence or satisfaction, exclusively or principally, but to study the welfare and advantage of their brethren and neighbours, whom they ought to love as themselves, and for whose greater good they ought to give up every inferior interest. He would, however, allow them to eat without scruple, what they bought in the public market, without asking any questions, whether it had been offered to an idol or not; lest they should receive an answer, which might tend to perplex or wound the consciences of their brethren, if their own were out of danger: for, as the earth and its fulness belonged to the Lord, they might partake of his bounty without hesitation, if they knew no reason to the contrary. In like manner, if an unbelieving friend or relation invited them to his house, and they were disposed to go; (which in many cases would be lawful, and in some even expedient;) let them eat of the provisions set before them, without asking any questions. But if any one informed them that this or the other dish was part of an idol sacrifice, let them refrain from eating of it; because it would be proper thus to protest against idolatry, and to show their judgment of it, for the benefit especially of him who told them, whether he were a Christian or an unbeliever, and that they might not wound the conscience of any man. And as the earth and its fulness were the Lord's, they could not need such defiled food, but might be supplied with other meat, though they abstained from it. Some versions and manuscripts omit the concluding clause; but there appears to me a peculiar beauty in the repetition, and entirely in the apostle's manner. *All things are lawful*, &c. (23.) 'Tertullian, 'speaking of women's apparel, says, 'How much more 'easily will she fear things unlawful, who is cautious and 'scrupulous in things lawful!' 'Thus Clement also, 'They who do whatever is lawful will soon glide into 'that which is unlawful.' (*Beza.*)

32 Give [m] none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the * Gentiles, nor to [n] the church of God:

m 33. viii. 13. Rom. xiv. 13. 2 Cor. vi 3. Phil. i. 10
* Or, *Greeks.*
n xi. 22 Acts xx 28 1 Tim. iii. 5 15.

33 Even [o] as I please all *men* in all *things*, not seeking mine own profit, but the *profit* of many, that they may be saved.

o 24 *See on.* ix 19—23. Rom. xv 2, 3 2 Cor. xi. 28, 29. xii. 19.

V. 29—33. The apostle observed, perhaps with reference to the self-confidence of some at Corinth, that he did not so much mean they were to abstain for the sake of their own consciences; for he supposed them able to discard such ignorant scruples: but for the sake of other men's consciences, especially those of their weaker brethren. Yet they would inquire, why their liberty was to be thus censured and restrained, out of regard to other men's consciences? Or why they were to be blamed and slandered, in eating those things, for which they gave thanks, and which they received in a thankful and believing frame of mind? Thus we may explain the passage as the objection of the Corinthians to the apostle's directions: but it may be understood as his inquiry, Why they should so incautiously use their liberty, as to give cause for its being condemned in the consciences of other men? Or why they should so use those good gifts of God, which they received with grace and thanksgiving, as to give cause for slander or offence? He therefore concluded this subject by admonishing them, whether they ate or drank, in any place or company, or whatever they did, to do it all with an habitual aim at the glory of God: by considering his precepts, and the propriety, expediency, appearance, or tendency of their actions, and the construction which others would put upon them: and by acting with prudence, temperance, thankfulness, consistency, and charity in every thing. Thus the whole tenour of their conduct would show the excellency of the Gospel, and conduce to win over others to it; by which the name and perfections of God would be the more known, adored, and glorified. This great end they ought habitually to have in view: whatever interfered with it ought to be avoided; and every interest, pursuit, and indulgence, should be rendered subordinate, or even, if possible, subservient to it. They would then be careful to give no needless offence to any man, or to throw any stumbling-block in the way, either of Jews or Gentiles; and not to give cause of sin to the Church, or any believer: but to follow the apostle as he followed Christ, (xi. 1.) according to what he had shown them of his principles and conduct; (*Notes*, &c. ix.) in which he had endeavoured to please men of all descriptions, and in all things, as far as consisted with faithfulness; in nothing consulting his own emolument or satisfaction, but the good of many, in order to promote their salvation. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—5.

The mistakes and sins of professed Christians commonly originate from ignorance of the Scriptures, or from a partial attention to them. If this were not common, men could not suppose, that forms, ordinances, or assent to doctrines, would procure them a license to indulge their passions, or impunity in the allowed practice of sin. Men may seem to be converted; they may relate a specious experience, and make a credible profession of faith; they may be admitted members of the visible church, where the strictest discipline is exercised, and statedly hear the most faithful instruction; they may be greatly distinguished by external privileges and gifts; they may be baptized in any form, and receive the *spiritual meat* and *drink* of the Lord's supper, in the purest societies; and yet, not 'feeding on Christ himself in their hearts by faith,' God will not be well pleased with them, but they will die short of Canaan, and perish with the multitude of the ungodly.

V. 6—14.

The examples recorded in the word of God for *our* admonition, who in these latter ages of the world enjoy the full benefit of all preceding revelations, should warn us to repress every evil lusting; to avoid a festive, sensual religion, which gratifies the eye, the ear, the taste, and which connects with sitting down to eat and drink, and rising up to play; to keep at a distance from every forbidden indulgence; and not to tempt Christ, by running ourselves into those dangers in which many have perished; and to avoid all murmurings and disputings, by which the enemy of souls hath made such havock in the church. Above all, we should beware of "a haughty spirit, which "goes before a fall;" and while we think we stand, we should trust in God to preserve us from deceiving ourselves, and from falling by temptation, using every means of security against such fatal and lamentable evils. In these quiet times we have no temptation to resist, but such as is common to man; and if we cannot now stand our ground against the world, the flesh, and the devil, what should we do in the fiery trial of persecution? If we are not prepared to give up a worthless interest or indulgence for Christ's sake, how should we yield our bodies to the flames in his cause? Whether, however, the world smiles or frowns, it is a dangerous enemy; but if we are believers, we shall be enabled to overcome it, with all its terrors and fascinations; nor will our faithful covenant-keeping God suffer us to be tempted above what we are able. We may often be alarmed, harassed, baffled, and even cast down; but we shall rise again superior to our foes; for with every temptation the Lord will be sure to make some "way for us to escape, that we may be able to bear it." Yet his fear put into our hearts will be one great means of our safety; and the greater our humble jealousy is concerning ourselves, the more we shall escape such falls, as, when not fatal, are productive of very painful consequences. We should therefore flee from temptation, and not ostentatiously parley with it.

V. 15—22.

If we would be deemed wise, let us show our wisdom by a circumspect conduct, and not by curious speculations.—Our union and communion with Christ and his people, by partaking of his ordinances, should engage us to avoid

CHAP. XI.

The apostle exhorts the Corinthians to imitate him, as he imitated Christ, 1. *He praises them for observing his injunctions,* 2. *He gives directions concerning men and women prophesying,* 3—16. *He blames them for abuses in their religious assemblies; especially for their divisions,* 17—19; *and their profanation of the Lord's supper,* 20—22; *reminding them of the first institution of it; and showing the danger of partaking of it unworthily,* 23—34.

BE [a] ye followers of me, [b] even as I also *am* of Christ.

2 Now [c] I praise you, brethren, [d] that ye remember me in all things, [e] and keep the * ordinances, as I delivered *them* to you.

3 But I would have you know, that [f] the Head of every man is Christ; [g] and the head of the woman *is* the man; [h] and the Head of Christ *is* God.

4 Every man praying [i] or prophesying, [k] having *his* head covered, dishonoureth his head.

5 But every woman that prayeth [l] or prophesieth with *her* head uncovered, dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were [m] shaven.

6 For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: [n] but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.

7 For a man indeed ought not to cover *his* head, forasmuch as [o] he is the image and glory of God: [p] but the woman is the glory of the man.

8 For [q] the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man.

9 Neither was [r] the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.

[a] iv. 16. x. 33. Phil. iii. 17. 1 Thes. i. 6. 2 Thes. iii. 9. Heb. vi. 12

[b] Rom. xv. 2, 3. Eph. v. 1, 2. Phil. ii. 4, 5.

[c] 17. 22. Prov. xxxi. 28—31.

[d] iv. 17 xv. 2.

[e] vii 17. 1 Thes. iv. 1, 2. 2 Thes. ii 15.

* Or, *traditions.*

[f] Eph. i. 22, 23 iv 15. v. 23. Phil ii. 10, 11. Col. i. 18. ii. 10. 19.

[g] Gen iii. 16. Eph. v 22. 24. Col. iii. 18. 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12 1 Pet. iii. 1. 5, 6.

[h] iii. 23. xv. 27 28 Is. xlix 3—6. lii. 13. lv. 4. lxi. 1—4. Matt. xxviii. 18. John iii 34—36. v. 20. 30 xiv. 28 xvii. 2—5. Eph. i. 20—22 Phil. ii. 7—11.

[i] xii 10 28. xiv. 1, &c.

[k] 14. 2 Sam. xv. 30. xix. 4.

[l] Luke ii. 36 Acts ii. 17 xxi 9.

[m] Deut. xxi. 12.

[n] Num. v. 18.

[o] Gen. i 26, 27. v. 1 ix. 6 Ps. viii. 6 Jam. iii. 9.

[p] 3. Gen. iii. 16.

[q] Gen. ii. 21, 22. 1 Tim. ii 13.

[r] Gen. ii. 18. 23. 24.

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all "fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness," and all conformity to the vanities of the world. When we receive the outward signs of the body and blood of Christ, we should seriously inquire into the sincerity of this profession of faith in him and his atonement, and of our desire to live devoted to his service, and united to his people, as one bread, and one body, with him and them. For "the world lieth in the wicked one;" ungodly men are the servants of the devil, and false religion is his worship, however ingeniously some may varnish over or deny this awful truth: we cannot unite the service of God with that of devils, or have fellowship with Christ and with those enemies whose works he was manifested to destroy; and they who aim at such a coalition are commonly hypocrites in their religion, and only sincere in their idolatrous worship of mammon. If Christians will venture into those places, and join in those sacrifices to "the lust "of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life," which are of no ill repute even in this land, they will certainly provoke the Lord to jealousy; and seeing they cannot endure his omnipotent indignation, why should they foolishly act as if they were stronger than he?

V. 23—33.

* * *

Let us not be abused with vain words about the innocence of this or the other worldly pleasure; these apologies are seldom grounded in truth; but if they were, Are such indulgences expedient? Do they tend to edification? Do they consist with charity? Might not the time and money be better employed? Does not the example grieve or mislead others? Let us not then be so selfish as to seek our own needless indulgence, in preference to the important good of our neighbours. While we trust in the Lord for our temporal provision, and thankfully receive it as his gift, let us be careful to use our liberty or plenty in such a manner, that we may "avoid the appearance of evil," of excess or selfishness, and of whatever may occasion censure or suspicion, and that piety, charity, temperance, and prudence, may so regulate even our feasts and meals, and every part of our conduct, that "whether we eat or drink, "or whatever we do, we may do all to the glory of God." Connected with this great end, we should be careful to give no needless offence to, or occasion any prejudice in, the minds of unbelievers of any description, and not to cause any discord in the church, or disquietude to the consciences even of weak believers; but we should endeavour in all things to please others rather than ourselves, as far as it consists with our duty, or can conduce to their profit and salvation. And let us remember, that he who gives us these admonitions, and calls us to follow him as he followed Christ, was the writer of those scriptures which most fully declare the doctrines of free grace and of God's eternal purposes, which therefore must consist with these practical instructions, though many are unable to perceive that consistency.

NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1. This verse, most evidently, is connected with the conclusion of the preceding chapter; it referred to what the apostle had written concerning his own conduct in the ninth chapter, and it concluded the subject which began in the eighth. He called on the Corinthians to be *imitators of his example,* (even as he imitated Christ,) especially in the charitable and cautious use of their christian liberty, (*Note, Rom.* xv. 1—3.) and he thus hinted, that they had in this respect followed others who had acted contrary to the will and the example of Christ.

10 For this cause ought the woman to have * power on *her* head [s] because of the angels.

11 Nevertheless, [t] neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord.

12 For as the woman *is* of the man, even so *is* the man also by the woman; [u] but all things of God.

13 [x] Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?

14 Doth not even nature itself teach you, that [y] if a man have long hair, [z] it is a shame unto him?

15 But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for *her* hair is given her for † a covering.

16 But if any man [a] seem to be contentious, we have no [b] such custom, neither [c] the churches of God.

* *That is, a covering in sign that she is under the power of her husband.* Gen. xx. 16. xxiv. 65.
s Ec. v 6. Matt xviii. 10. Heb i. 14.
t vii. 10—14. xii. 12—22. Gal. iii. 28.
u viii 6. Prov. xvi 4 Rom. xi. 36 Heb i 2, 3.
x x. 15. Luke xii. 57. John vii. 24.
y 2 Sam. xiv. 26.
z xiv. 35.
† Or, *veil.*
a 1 Tim. vi. 3.
b Acts xxi. 21, 24.
c vii. 17 xiv. 33, 34 xvi. 1. 1 Thes. ii. 14.

V. 2—16. The apostle here entered on another subject, and began to discuss several particulars respecting the public assemblies of the Corinthians; which, with some digressions, he continued to the end of the fourteenth chapter. As he was about to reprove various abuses, he deemed it adviseable to begin by a general commendation of their conduct, in remembering him and observing his injunctions, though this admitted of some exceptions, or misconstructions had taken place, and it would therefore be proper to show them his meaning in these things. In the abundance of spiritual gifts bestowed on the Corinthians, several women had been endued with the Spirit of prophecy, which enabled them, by immediate inspiration, to offer prayers for the congregation, or to give instructions, or even to predict future events; for it is not reasonable to suppose, that a woman could be said to *prophesy*, merely by being present when another prophesied. This seems to have been the only case in which women were allowed to speak in public, and in this respect some abuses had crept in. (xiv. 34, 35. 1 *Tim.* ii. 11—13.) In order to understand what was becoming in this exempt case, the apostle would have them to understand, that Christ was the immediate Head, or Ruler, of every man among them; whose honour was concerned in their conduct; and that the man was the immediate head and ruler of the woman, to whose authority God had subjected her, and who would therefore be disgraced by any impropriety in her behaviour; and that Christ, as Mediator, was subject to God as his Head and Principal, to whose glory his whole conduct in his mediatorial government was referred. As therefore Christ did the will, and sought the honour, of God, so the Christian should avow his subjection to Christ doing his will and seeking his glory, and the woman should acknowledge her subjection to the man, and, (in all things lawful,) do what was pleasing and honourable to him.—According to the custom of those days, a veil on the head was the token of subjection and respect to superiors; if a man therefore should pray or prophesy with such a covering, he would dishonour Christ his Head, by acting out of character, and appearing as if he was placed in subjection to the woman, instead of in authority over her. On the other hand, it would be inconsistent with modesty, and her state of subjection, for a woman to lay aside her veil on such occasions; for thus she would seem to forget her place, and to affect authority, which would dishonour the man whom God had appointed to be as a head over her. Nay, this would be so great an impropriety, that it would be of a similar meaning with the shaving of her head, which was a disgraceful punishment, that was used to be inflicted on women of bad character. If then the women would exercise their gifts uncovered, let them be shorn or shaven; but if they deemed this shameful, let them wear their veils. Some think that these prophetesses had their hair dishevelled after the manner of the Pythian priestesses of Apollo; and if this was so, it would be an additional reason for the apostle thus strenuously to oppose them. The man, indeed, being the image and glory of God, and appointed as his representative in ruling over this lower world, ought not to be veiled on these occasions. But the woman, reflecting, as it were, the man's glory, being formed his counterpart, and the most honourable subject of his delegated authority, ought to avow her willing subjection by wearing the veil. For the woman was not originally created separately, but taken out of the man as a part of him, yet inferior to him; neither was the man created for the woman's advantage, but the woman for that of the man. (*Notes,* &c. *Gen.* ii. 20—25.) On this account therefore the woman ought to be covered with her veil, even when praying or prophesying, as an emblem of her being under the authority of the man. Many conjectures have been formed concerning the meaning of the following expression, "because of the angels;" but probably the apostle referred to the presence of holy angels, (who had witnessed the creation of man,) as spectators, or even in some respects as joint worshippers with believers in their public assemblies, which therefore ought to be regulated with the most exact propriety, that these heavenly worshippers might not witness any thing unbecoming so holy an occasion. But though the woman had been created for and subjected to the man, yet no difference was made between them in respect of their acceptance in Christ, but they were called together to have fellowship with him. Nor ought the authority of the man to be exercised harshly, but in tenderness and love, seeing that, as the woman was originally "from the man," so the man hath ever since been "by the woman," born of her, and tended on in infancy by her tender care; that as both were reciprocally means of comfort and benefit to each other, so they should live together in harmony and affection. But all things were to be considered as derived from God, and regulated by him, whose wise appointments ought to be submitted to. The Corinthians therefore might judge for themselves, whether, according to the constitution of the Creator, it would be comely for a woman to appear uncovered in the act of worshipping him. Even nature would teach them, that if a man wore his hair long, and tired in the manner which custom had appropriated to women, it would be a disgrace to him, 17 ¶ Now in this that I declare *unto you,* [d] I praise *you* not, [e] that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse.

18 For first of all, when ye come together in the church, [f] I hear that there be * divisions among you; and I partly believe it.

19 For [g] there must be also † heresies among you, that they [h] which are approved may be made manifest among you.

[d] 2. 22. Lev. xix. 17. Prov. xxvii. 5 Rom. xiii. 3 1 Pet ii. 14.
[e] 20. 34 xiv. 23. 26 Is. i. 13, 14 lviii 1—4. Jer vii. 9, 10 Heb. x. 25.
[f] i. 10—12. v. 1. vi. 1.
* Or, *schisms.* See on, i. 10. iii. 3.
[g] Matt xviii. 7. Luke xvii. 1. Acts xx. 30. 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2. 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2
† Or, *sects.* Acts v. 17. xv. 5. xxiv. 5. 14. xxvi. 5 xxviii. 22. Gal. v. 20. Tit. iii. 10 *Gr.*
[h] Deut. xiii. 3 Luke ii. 35. 2 Cor. xiii 5—7. *Gr.* 1 John ii. 19.

20 When ye come together therefore into one place, ‡ *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper.

21 For [i] in eating every one taketh before *other* his own supper: [k] and one is hungry, and another is drunken.

22 What! [l] have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? [m] or despise ye the church of God, and shame them § that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise *you* not.

‡ Or, *ye cannot eat.*
[i] 23—25. x 16—18.
[k] 2 Pet. ii. 13. Jude 12.
[l] 34.
[m] x. 32. xv. 9. Acts xx. 28. 1 Tim. iii. 5, 15.
§ Or, *that are poor.* Prov xvii. 5. Jam. ii. 5, 6.

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and be considered as a proof of *effeminacy* and folly. On the other hand, long hair, when decently tired according to the custom of the times, would be an honour to a woman, being given to her as a natural veil; and to wear her hair short, as men used to do, would appear *masculine* and disgraceful; and, for the same reason, she ought to wear her veil on her head when praying, that she might keep her proper place and appear in character. These things the apostle stated as decent and proper; but if any of the Corinthian teachers appeared inclinable to excite a contention about them, he would only add, that he and his brethren knew of no such custom as prevailed among them; nor was there any such in the Churches of God, that had been planted by the other apostles.

V. 17—22. Another exception the apostle must adduce to the general commendation that he had bestowed upon the Corinthians; as when they came together, they behaved so disorderly, that it tended to their detriment rather than their edification; and thus they lost more in one way than they gained in others, in respect of religious improvement. For, in the first place, when they assembled as a society met together for the worship of God, in which they ought to have been of one heart and mind, there were divisions, or *schisms,* among them. Though they met in one place, as one congregation, yet they were divided into parties, and were actuated by carnal competition and mutual animosity. This disgraceful report he had heard, and he believed it in part, or concerning a part of them; for he was so acquainted with human nature and the temper of the Corinthians, that he was aware these *schisms* would be followed by *heresies* also, or by a more entire separation of some of them from the rest, out of zeal for the pernicious doctrines which they had espoused. 'It seems evident from hence, that '*heresy* is something worse than the *schism* abovementioned.' (*Doddridge.*) This Satan was attempting, and God would permit it to take place, in order to distinguish his approved servants by their steadfast adherence to the truth, from the unsound professors of Christianity, which had crept in among them. Their assembling together in one place with such divided hearts was very evil, and their subsequent conduct was so carnal, that though they professed to celebrate the Lord's supper, they could not be said to do this, but rather to substitute a carnal feast in the stead of it. For they brought their own provisions with them, and ate them separately, not waiting for each other, or communicating with each other! So that a selfish or intemperate meal had succeeded to that holy feast of faith and love! and, while the poor went away hungry for want of proper provisions, the rich ate and drank plentifully, if not to excess! What could be said to such a scandalous profanation? Had they not houses to feast in on their abundance, and to which they might invite their friends? Did they despise the assembled Church of God, as if it had been a company of intemperate revellers? Or did the rich purpose to shame their poor brethren, because they had not suitable provisions? Would they have him applaud such profane, uncharitable, and sensual practices? This he would not do, though glad to praise them when he could. Such a refusal of commendation implied the severest rebuke. It is almost unaccountable that a Christian Church, in a short time after this eminent apostle had left them, should run into so abominable a profanation of this sacred ordinance. But the public feasts of the Greeks were commonly conducted in this manner, which appears to us as inconsistent with civility as with piety. The self-conceited Corinthian teachers carried their notions of Christian liberty to an excess almost inconceivable at present; they not only joined in the idolatrous feasts of their neighbours, but they introduced the customs of them into the Church, and so perverted this sacred institution; and, to show the folly of man's wisdom, they were left thus to disgrace themselves more than other Churches, because they thought themselves wiser than they. It is also wonderful that the apostle should express so favourable an opinion of the Corinthians in general, notwithstanding these gross abuses; and we should thence learn caution in condemning whole religious societies, because of such evils as perhaps but few approve of, though numbers are seduced to connive at them. '*Μευειν*, *to be drunk*, is by the gram-'marians thought to have its original from *μετα το θυειν*, '(*after sacrificing*,) because of the free drinking they 'indulged in after their sacrifices. The Judaizing con-'verts thought themselves obliged to drink plentifully at 'their festivals; four large cups of wine, saith Dr. Light-'foot, at the paschal supper, and to be quite drunk, saith 'Buxtorf, at the feast of Purim.' (*Whitby.*) If such sentiments were publicly avowed at the time when the apostle wrote, our *astonishment* at the facts advanced may be abated, but our *abhorrence* should be proportionably increased. 'Though the Corinthians had written to St. 'Paul, requesting his directions in several points, yet 'they had not said one syllable, about the enormities 'which had crept in amongst them, and in the blame of

23 For [n] I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, [o] the *same* night in which he was betrayed, [p] took bread:

24 And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, [q] eat; [r] this is my body, which is broken for you: this do * in remembrance of me.

25 After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, [s] This cup is [t] the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me.

n xv 3. Deut iv. 5. Matt xxviii. 20. Gal. i 1. 11, 12. 1 Thes. iv. 2.
o Matt. xxvi 2. 17 31
p Matt. xxvi. 26 —28. Mark xiv. 22 — 24. Luke xxii 19, 20 Acts xx. 7.
q v. 7, 8. Ps. xxii 26. 29. Prov. ix 5. Cant. v. 1. Is. xxv. 6. lv. 1—3. John vi. 53—57.
r 26 28. x 3; 4. 16, 17.
* Or, *for a remembrance.* Ex. xii. 14. Josh iv. 7. Ps. cxi. 4 Cant. i 4 Is xxvi. 8. Matt. xxvi. 13.
s 27, 28.
t Luke xxii. 20. 2 Cor. iii. 6. 14. Heb. ix. 15—20. xiii. 20.

26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, † ye do shew the Lord's death [u] till he come.

27 Wherefore, [x] whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord unworthily, [y] shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

28 But [z] let a man examine himself, [a] and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup.

29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh ‡ damnation to himself, [b] not discerning the Lord's body.

† Or, *shew ye.*
u iv. 5. xv. 23. John xxi 22. Acts i. 11. 1 Thes. iv. 16. 2 Thes. ii. 2, 3. Heb. ix. 28. 2 Pet. iii. 10. 1 John ii. 28. Rev. i. 7. xx. 11, 12. xxii. 20.
x x. 21. Lev. x. 1—3. 2 Chr. xxx. 18 — 20. Matt. xxii. 11. John xiii. 18—27.
y 29.
z 31. Ps xxvi. 2—5. Lam iii. 40. Hag. i 5. 7. Zech. vii. 5—7. 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Gal. vi. 4.
a Num. ix. 10. 13. Matt. v. 23, 24.
‡ Or, *judgment.* 30. 32 — 34. Rom. xiii. 2. Jam. iii. 1. v. 12. *Marg.*——b 24 27. Ec. viii 5. Heb. v. 14.

'which they all shared: his information concerning these 'irregularities had come to him from other quarters.' (i. 11, 12. v. 1, 2.) (*Paley.*)

V. 23—28. (*Notes, Matt.* xxvi. 26—29.) To remedy the disorders which prevailed among the Corinthians, the apostle referred them to the original appointment of the Lord's supper, with which he had been made acquainted by immediate revelation from Christ, and which he had faithfully delivered to them. This account of that ordinance entirely coincides with that which has been considered, and fully confirms the interpretation given of it. It was of great importance, that it should be here repeated and enforced, that the obligation of the institution to the end of the world might be fully ascertained. It is here added, that as oft as they drank of the cup, they were to do it in remembrance of Christ, in order that the frequent recollection of his love, his sufferings, and their obligations to him, might have a proper effect upon their hearts and lives; for as often as they attended on this ordinance, they would "show forth the Lord's death," that is, profess their faith in it, and declare the end and efficacy of it, till he should come to judgment. The manner in which the quakers evade this decisive declaration, (by saying, till the time when Christ should come, by his spiritual illumination on their minds, to take them off from carnal ordinances,) is a striking instance of perverse ingenuity used in defence of rooted prejudices. The apostle here repeatedly speaks of *the bread*, after its consecration or appropriation to that particular use, which is decisive against those absurd and monstrous interpretations that have been put upon our Lord's words. He further declared, that whosoever should partake of this ordinance "unworthily," that is, in a profane, carnal, or irreverent manner, as an ordinary meal, or a sensual feast, or for secular purposes, would "be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord;" would be chargeable with treating them contemptuously; and, in a measure, with a share of their guilt, who wounded his sacred body and shed his precious blood upon the cross. It was therefore proper for every man, however approved by his pastor and brethren, to examine *himself*, concerning the reality of his faith and repentance, the sincerity of his profession, his intentions in communicating, the state of his heart, and the tenour of his conduct: not in order to find some reason for absenting himself, but that, after such self-examination and serious preparation of heart, he might commemorate the Lord's death in a proper manner, and according to his appointment. This expressly shows it to be every Christian's duty to attend on this ordinance, and that both the bread and the wine should be administered to all without exception. Indeed, in one place, (27,) it is in the original "shall eat this bread, *or* drink this cup, &c." and the needless variation in our version has caused some cavils of the papists, yet the verse would as readily prove, that the wine alone, as that the bread alone, should be received; but in fact it only shows that both bread and wine should be received in a serious, believing, and reverential manner. 'The true form of celebrating the Lord's 'supper must be sought from its first institution, of which 'these were the parts. The pastors must declare the death 'of the Lord by preaching his word; bless the bread and 'wine, having called on the name of God, and explained 'the institution along with their prayers; and, finally, 'deliver the broken bread to be eaten, and the cup to be 'taken and drunk, with thanksgivings. The flock must 'prove themselves, that is, carefully examine their know'ledge, faith, and repentance; they must "show forth "the death of Christ," that is, by true faith consent to 'his word and appointment; and, finally, receive the bread 'from the hand of the minister, and eat it, and drink the 'wine, and give thanks to the Lord. This was the liturgy 'of Paul and the apostles.' *Show forth.* 'That is, pub'licly profess that you believe and embrace it with 'thanksgiving.' (*Beza.*) From one loaf our Lord, having broken it, gave a portion to each person present, and they all drank from the same cup, as a token that all believers alike partake of the blessings signified in that sacred ordinance, and have communion with one another, as one in Christ. How different this from a number of people meeting together, to make a meal each separately from the provisions which they had brought with them! Much has been written by some expositors concerning the love-feasts, which are supposed to have accompanied the administration of the Lord's supper in the primitive times, as having given occasion to the disorders which the apostle here reproves; but it is not certain that he at all refers to them; and indeed it is not probable that they were at this time in use.

30 For this cause [c] many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many [d] sleep.

31 For [e] if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

32 But when we are judged, [f] we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be [g] condemned with the world.

33 Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another.

34 And [h] if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto * condemnation. And the rest [i] will I set in order [k] when I come.

[c] 32. Ex. xv. 26. Num. xx. 12. 24. xxi. 6–9 2 Sam xii 14–18. 1 Kings xiii. 21 — 24. Ps. xxxviii. 1–8. lxxviii. 30, 31. lxxxix. 31–34. Am iii. 2. Heb. xii. 5–11. Rev. iii. 19.

[d] xv. 51. Acts xiii. 36. 1 Thes. iv. 14.——[e] 28. Ps xxxii. 3–5 Jer. xxxi. 18–20. Luke xv. 18–20 1 John i. 9. Rev. ii. 5. iii. 2, 3.——[f] *See on*, 30. Deut. viii. 5. Job v. 17, 18. xxxiii 18–30. xxxiv. 31, 32. Ps. xciv. 12, 13. cxviii. 18. Prov. iii. 11, 12. Is. i. 5. Jer vii. 28. Zeph. iii. 2.]

[g] Rom. iii 19. 1 John v. 19.

[h] 21, 22.

* Or, *judgment*.

[i] vii. 17. Tit. i. 5.

[k] iv. 19. xvi. 2. 5.

V. 29—34. To show still further the necessity of self-examination, the apostle declared that every one, who unworthily partook of this ordinance, would "eat and "drink *judgment* to himself:" his very attendance on this religious service would offend God, and expose him to his righteous judgment, because he made no proper discrimination between the bread and wine, which represented the Lord's body, as offered on the cross to be a sacrifice for our sins to be received by faith, and an ordinary meal. This irreverence, being a heinous crime, would doubtless subject a man to final condemnation, if he did not repent; but it is evident the apostle did not mean, that it was in its own nature unpardonable, or sealed a man's damnation, as many have supposed; for he was addressing Christians, and warning them to beware of incurring those *temporal* judgments, with which God chastised his offending servants. The scruples and consequent negligence of numbers, who seem in other things to obey Christ, have no ground in this passage, except in the apparent harshness of our translation, in which the word that signifies *judgment* is rendered *damnation*, which commonly means eternal punishment. Indeed, the conscious unworthiness and lamented infirmities of those who desire to express their gratitude for redeeming love, are widely different from the profanations of these Corinthians, who yet were not at all supposed to have sinned beyond the hope of pardon; and generally they, who deem themselves most *unworthy*, are least likely to receive *unworthily*, which is commonly the sin of the proud and self-sufficient. But the apostle showed his meaning in what follows; for he observed, that, on account of these profanations, many of them were visited with enfeebling and wasting sickness, and several had even been cut off by death; which, being called *sleep*, was charitably supposed to be that of believers. For if men would call themselves to an account for their conduct, and humble themselves before God in deep repentance, they would escape many temporal calamities, as well as final condemnation; but when Christians were thus judged and visited 'with divers diseases and sundry kinds of 'death,' "they were chastened of the Lord, that," being thus led to repentance, "they might not be condemned "with the world." As this was the case, the apostle exhorted them to tarry for each other, and to commemorate the death of their Lord in charity and peace, as well as in faith and piety; and let them satisfy their hunger at home, and not think of making a full meal, or a sensual feast, of the Lord's supper, by which they exposed themselves to condemnation and very painful visitations, even when meeting together in the Saviour's name. As to the rest, he meant to come shortly, and then he would regulate matters by his apostolical authority. It is manifest that the *custom*, which some scrupulously adhere to as a matter of conscience, often to the injury of their health, of receiving the Lord's supper *fasting*, has not the smallest ground in scripture, and is in fact a mere superstition; as is the still vastly more common *notion*, that irreverence, or even involuntary defects and mistakes in this sacrament, are far more heinous and perilous than in other acts of worship, or even in administering or receiving baptism.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—16.

We should imitate no man, except as he follows Christ, whose example alone is absolutely perfect; nor should we desire that others should follow us, any further than we are enabled to copy our Lord and Master. When we must blame in some things, we should show a disposition to be pleased, by commending and excusing whatever will admit of it. In order to know our duty in various particulars, we should accurately study our relations to God, and to each other in society. His plan of government includes much subordination, and materially differs from those of many who are deemed wise in this world. The immediate government of mankind, especially of Christians, is vested in One who bears our nature, and who, as Mediator, acknowledges the Father as his Head: under this mediatorial authority, he hath appointed man to be the head of the woman, who immediately rules over her; that, as the image and glory of God, he may in this, and other instances of relative authority, shadow forth the glory and obligations of the divine government. But the Lord hath so arranged matters, both in the kingdom of providence and in that of grace, that the authority of the superior, and the subjection of the inferior, relations should conduce to the mutual help and benefit of all parties. Even nature and the common sense of mankind require that men and women should preserve a due distinction in their apparel, behaviour, and appearance, and the contrary to this is contemptible and odious. The particulars by which this distinction shall be expressed are greatly determined by custom; but, however fashions may vary, an *effeminate* man, and a *masculine* woman, will always be disgusting and shameful. The believer's conduct should be so regulated, that it may honour Christ his Head, for even his indiscretions and improprieties will in a measure disgrace his profession: in like manner, the conduct of women will either do credit to their husbands, and those who stand nearly related to them, or they will dishonour them. Much attention therefore to decorum is necessary; but especially in every thing relating to the worship of God, where nothing unseemly or improper for any one's

CHAP. XII.

The apostle instructs the Corinthians in the origin, nature, variety, and use of spiritual gifts, 1—11. *He illustrates the subject, by showing how the members in the human body perform their several functions for the benefit of the whole,* 12—26 : *and applies this to the Church, and its different orders of ministers,* 27—30. *He concludes with exhortation,* 31.

NOW concerning [a] spiritual *gifts*, brethren, [b] I would not have you ignorant.

2 Ye know [c] that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these [d] dumb idols, [e] even as ye were led.

3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that [f] no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus * accursed: and *that* [g] no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

[a] 4—10. xiv 1.12. Eph. iv. 11.
[b] x. 1. 2 Cor. i. 8. 1 Thes. iv. 13. 2 Pet. iii. 8.
[c] vi. 11. Gal. 8. Eph. ii. 11, 12. iv. 17, 18. Tit. iii. 3. 1 Pet. iv. 3.
[d] Ps. cxv. 5. 7. cxxxv. 16. Hab. ii 18, 19.
[e] Matt. xv. 14. 1 Pet. i. 18.
[f] Mark ix. 39. John xvi. 14, 15. 1 John iv. 2, 3.
* Or, *anathema.* xvi. 22. Deut. xxi. 23. Gal. iii. 13.
[g] viii. 6. Matt. xvi. 17. John xiii. 13. xv. 26. 2 Cor. xi. 4.

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state, rank, or character ought to be tolerated. And not only should our sense of the Lord's special presence influence our conduct in this matter; but even that of the holy angels, who in our assemblies must witness many things unworthy of the sacred service, and which should carefully be avoided.

V. 17—22.

Alas! how often do even the professors of the Gospel meet together for the worse instead of the better! Especially how frequently do animosities, and personal or party contentions divide religious societies and corrupt the *apparently united* worship! Indeed, in the present state of human nature, such *schisms* and *heresies* cannot altogether be avoided: but whilst we adore the wisdom of God, in over-ruling these evils for the manifestation of those who are approved by him; we must by no means palliate the guilt of such persons, as thus divide and distract the Church. The Lord, indeed, can take occasion from the most horrid profanations to establish the most beneficial regulations: but that display of his wisdom and goodness is far from excusing the criminals, or exempting them from punishment. We should rejoice, that we are under no temptation to pervert the Lord's supper to an intemperate revel; but we may seriously inquire, whether profanations, equally flagrant and expressive of contempt, are not common among us. How often do avarice, ambition, and extravagance send their infidel, impious, or profligate votaries, to qualify for preferment by this sacred ordinance! How often do custom and ostentation lead sinners of superior rank to exhibit their petty distinctions, even in attending on this humiliating institution! How often is it made the support of Pharisaical pride! Or the cloak with which hypocrites cover dishonesty or secret licentiousness! Shall we praise men for such things? Surely no! nay, we must strenuously protest against them.

V. 23—34.

They who understand what the apostles received from Christ and delivered to the Church, respecting the interesting season when this ordinance was appointed, even that very ordinance in which the Saviour was betrayed; and concerning the meaning, use, and benefit of it, will perceive that a penitent heart, a simple reliance on God's free mercy by faith in Christ, according to the new testament in his blood; a thankful recollection of his sufferings and of his love; a desire to show forth his death, to profess our obligations to him, and to give up ourselves to his service, in doing good to his people, and to all men for his sake, constitute the proper preparation for acceptably communicating. All who are able to come in this frame of mind, are bound in gratitude and by their professed subjection to Christ, to "show forth the Lord's death till "he come." Such persons are not likely to eat and drink unworthily, or to be "guilty of the body and blood of "Christ;" and their fears and scruples are commonly the effect of mistake: for every one is fit to come to this ordinance, who can pray for spiritual blessings in the name of Christ, without hypocrisy and in an acceptable manner. There should, however, be an habitual self-examination; and a more particular one at some times when we have opportunity: this will tend to convince the humble believer of the difference between his case, and that of profane, proud, and carnal communicants. The same method will tend to prevent other evils and mistakes, which might bring chastisements upon us. But the end of such self-examination should be renewed repentance, acceptance of Christ, and prayer for grace to enable us to "discern the Lord's body," and to attend on this ordinance, in a humble, spiritual, and grateful manner. In every respect we act most wisely for our present comfort, as well as for our future good, when we judge ourselves that we may not be judged. Our personal and family trials should remind us, that the Lord hath a controversy with us: but, as we are apt to be partial or dilatory in judging ourselves, we should count it a mercy to be chastened of the Lord, and not condemned with the world; and to suffer any thing, even unto death, by which we may escape the eternal damnation of the wicked. Yet it is prudent for us to act with such caution, piety, charity, seriousness, and temperance, that we may, as much as we can, avoid chastenings, which "for the present seem not "joyous, but grievous," though they "bring forth the "peaceable fruits of righteousness to them who are exer-"cised thereby."

NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1--3. The Corinthians were favoured with a rich abundance of extraordinary gifts and powers, by the operation of the Holy Spirit; which they exercised principally in their public assemblies: and, as they were divided into parties, it seems that they vied with each other in the ostentatious display of these endowments. This gave rise to envyings, covetings, repinings, &c. which were equally opposite to piety and charity. To

4 Now [h] there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

5 And there are differences of * administrations, [i] but the same Lord.

6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which [k] worketh [l] all in all.

7 But [m] the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

8 For to one [n] is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

h 8—11. 28 Rom. xii 4—6. Eph iv 4. Heb ii. 4 1 Pet iv 10. * Or, *ministries.* 28 29 Rom. xii. 6—8 Eph iv 11, 12. i viii. 6. Matt. xxiii. 10. Acts x 36. Rom xiv. 8, 9 Phil. ii. 11. k 11. iii. 7. Job xxxiii 29 John v. 17 Eph. i. 19—22. Col. i. 29. Phil ii. 13. Heb xiii 21. l xv 28. Eph i. 23 Col. iii. 11. m xiv 5. 12. 17. 19. 22—26. Matt xxv 14, &c. Eph. iv. 7—12. 1 Pet. iv. 11. n i. 5. 30 ii. 6—10. xiii 2 8. Gen. xli. 38, 39. Ex. xxxi 3. 1 Kings iii. 5—12. Neh. ix. 20. Job xxxii 8. Ps. cxliii. 10. Prov. ii. 6. Is. xi. 2. l. 4. lix. 21. Dan. ii. 21. Matt. xiii. 11. Acts vi. 3. Eph i. 17, 18.

9 To another [o] faith by the same Spirit; to another [p] the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

10 To another [q] the working of miracles; to another [r] prophecy; to another [s] discerning of spirits; to another [t] *divers* kinds of tongues; [u] to another the interpretation of tongues:

11 But [x] all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally [y] as he will.

o xiii. 2. Matt. xvii. 19, 20. xxi. 21. Mark xi. 22, 23 Luke xvii. 5, 6 2 Cor. iv. 13 Heb. xi 33. p Matt x. 8 Mark v. 13. xvi 18. Luke ix. 2. x. 9. Acts iii 6—8. iv. 29—31. v. 15. x. 38 xix. 11. 12. Jam. v. 14, 15 q 28, 29. Mark xvi 17. 20 Luke xxiv 49 John xiv 12. Acts i. 8. Rom xv. 19. Gal. iii. 5. Heb. ii 4. r xiii. 2. xiv. 1. 3. 5. 24 31. 32. 39. Num. xi. 25—29 1 Sam. x. 10—13. xix 20—24 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2. Joel ii. 28. John xvi. 13 Acts ii 17. 18 29, 30 xi. 28. xxi 9, 10 Rom. xii. 6 1 Thes v 20. 2 Pet. i. 20. 21. s xiv 29. Acts v. 3 1 John iv. 1 Rev ii. 2 ——— t 28—30. xiii 1. xiv 2—4. 22. 27 39. Mark xvi 17. Acts ii. 4—12 x. 46, 47. xix. 6 ——— u 30. xiv 26—28 ——— x 4. vii 7. 17. John iii. 27 Rom. xii. 6 2 Cor x. 13. Eph iv. 7. ——— y Dan. iv. 35 Matt. xi. 26. xx. 15. John iii. 8. v. 21. Rom. ix. 18. Eph i. 11. Heb. ii. 4. Jam i. 13.

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remedy these grievous evils, the apostle began his observations on the subject, by reminding them of what they had been a short time before. He would not have them ignorant of the origin and use of such gifts; for though they prided themselves upon their speculative knowledge, they were in great danger of remaining entirely without instruction in many practical matters. Yet they must know that they had, in general, been Gentiles, who were carried away by a blind attachment to their idols, even as they were led captive by their lusts, by their priests, and by Satan. These were *dumb* idols, (notwithstanding all that was boasted of their oracles,) and therefore they could not confer on their deluded votaries those gifts of tongues, and that utterance, which the converts to Christianity had now received, and which must be ascribed only to the sovereign grace of God. It was then proper for them to understand, that all such gifts were confined within the limits of the Christian Church; so that no man, whether Jew or Gentile, who blasphemed the name of Jesus, or treated him as a deceiver, deserving the death of the cross, spake by the Holy Spirit; but his pretended, or apparent, inspiration must be ascribed either to human imposture, or diabolical agency. On the other hand, no man could sincerely confess Jesus to be the Lord, the promised Messiah, the Son of God, according to his own declarations concerning himself, except he spake under the influence of the Holy Spirit. The knowledge and belief of his truth, and the boldness to profess it, must come from that blessed Agent; in this important sense, all true Christians had spiritual gifts, and none ought either to despise another, or to deem himself over-looked, if he were not favoured with such as were more coveted, but less valuable. Yet the subject rather leads us to suppose the apostle to mean, that this confession from the mouth, even of a nominal Christian, being made under the impulse of the Holy Spirit, (as wicked Balaam prophesied,) was a spiritual gift, which might benefit others, though it should prove of no use to the possessor. (*Note*, 1 *John* iv. 1—3.) 'Nor 'can they who confirm the doctrine of Christ by miracles 'be acted on by any other but the Holy Ghost; for no 'evil spirit would assist them to confirm a doctrine so op'posite to and destructive of their kingdom and designs.' (*Whitby.*) The expression, "say that Jesus is the Lord," more obviously signifies the profession of the true doctrine concerning Christ, than the exercise of saving faith in him, especially in a discourse concerning "spiritual "gifts," or, as some would render it, "spiritual men," or men possessing spiritual gifts, such as are afterwards enumerated, (8—10.) to qualify them for any public stations in the Church. (28.) Many have prophesied in his name, as well as preached and defended his truth, who were workers of iniquity; yet, as far as they avowed "that Jesus was the Lord," they spake by the Holy Spirit. (*Note*, 1 *John* iv. 1—3. *Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4—11. There was a great diversity in the spiritual gifts conferred on the Corinthians, and they valued some of them far more than others; yet they were all from the same divine Spirit, of whose operations they were but instruments and vehicles. There were also various different administrations, or offices, in which men ministered to the benefit of the Church, according to the work assigned and the talents intrusted to them; but they were all the servants of Christ, and were dependent on and accountable to the same Lord. In the effects which followed the exercise of their gifts, whether in miraculous cures, or in the conversion of sinners, the whole was produced by the power of the same God, who wrought all these changes on the bodies and souls of men, through his Son, and by his Spirit, for the glory of his own great name. But the manifestation of the power and glory of the Spirit, in these extraordinary operations, was not made for the credit of the man by whom he wrought, but for the advantage of the Church, and even of those without, that the person who possessed these gifts, or filled up any office in the Church, might profit others; for these things were entirely distinct from that gracious state of the heart, which disposes a man to improve his talents of every kind; and gifts were sometimes bestowed on merely nominal Christians. For the purpose of thus profiting others, the Holy Spirit conferred on one, "the word of wisdom;" by which may be intended such immediate discoveries of the grand scheme of salvation, attended with such powers of discoursing about it, as were suited to render other men "wise unto salvation." To another the same Spirit gave "the word of knowledge," by which might be intended an exact and extraordinary understanding of the Old Testament types and prophecies, and a capacity of explaining difficult subjects, of answering objections, of determining cases of conscience, or of speaking suitable words to different descriptions of persons. Another was endued with

12 For [z] as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; [a] so also *is* Christ.

13 For [b] by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, [c] whether *we be* Jews or * Gentiles, whether *we be* [d] bond or free; and have been all made [e] to drink into one Spirit.

14 For [f] the body is not one member, but many.

15 If [g] the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; [h] is it therefore not of the body?

16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

17 If [i] the whole body *were* an eye, where *were* the hearing? If the whole *were* hearing, where *were* the smelling?

18 But now [k] hath God set the members, every one of them in the body, [l] as it hath pleased him.

19 And [m] if they were all one member, where *were* the body?

z x. 17. Rom. xii. 4, 5 Eph. i. 23. iv 4. 12 15, 16 v. 23 30 Col. i. 18. 24. ii. 19. iii 15.
a 27. Gal. iii. 16.
b x. 2 Is. xliv. 3—5 Ez. xxxvi. 25—27. Matt iii 11. Luke iii. 16. John i. 33 iii 5. Acts i. 5. Rom. vi 3—6. viii 9—11. Eph. v 26 Col. ii 11, 22 Tit iii. 4—6. 1 Pet. iii. 21
c Rom iii. 29 iv. 11 Gal. iii. 28. Eph. ii. 11—16. 19—22. iii 6. Col. i. 27 iii. 11.
* Gr. *Greeks*
d vii. 21, 21. Eph. vi 8
e Cant v. 1 Is. xli. 17, 18 lv 1. Zech ix 15—17 John iv. 10. 14 vi. 63. vii 37—39.
f 12 19, 20 27 28. Eph iv. 25.
g Judg ix. 8—15. 2 Kings xiv 9.
h 16. 22 Rom. xii 3. 10. Phil. ii. 3.
i 21. 29. 1 Sam. ix 9 Ps xciv 9. cxxxix. 13—16. Prov xx. 12.
k 24 28.
l *See on*, 11 iii. 5 xv. 38. Ps cx 3. cxxxv. 6. Is. xlvi 10 Jon. i. 14. Luke x. 21. xii 32. Rom. xii 3. Eph. i. 5. 9. Rev iv. 11.
m 14.

20 But now *are they* many members, yet but one body.

21 And [n] the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

22 Nay, [o] much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:

23 And those *members* of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we † bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely *parts* have more abundant comeliness.

24 For [p] our comely *parts* have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that *part* which lacked:

25 That [q] there should be no ‡ schism in the body; but *that* the members should have [r] the same care one for another.

26 And [s] whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

n Num. x. 31, 32. 1 Sam. xxv. 32. Ezra x. 1—5. Neh. iv. 16—21. Job xxix. 15.
o Prov. xiv. 28. Ec v 9. 2 Cor. i. 11. Tit. ii. 9, 10.
† Or, *put on*. Gen. iii. 7. 21.
p Gen. ii. 25. iii. 11.
q i. 10—12. iii 3. John xvii 21—26. 2 Cor xiii. 11.
‡ Or. *division*.
r 2 Cor vii. 12. viii. 16
s Rom. xii. 15. 2 Cor. xi. 28, 29 Gal. vi. 2. Heb. xiii. 3. 1 Pet. iii. 8. Gr.

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a remarkable degree of faith, which rendered him capable of engaging in very perilous services, for which persons of more exact knowledge might be less competent. This kind and degree of faith was distinct from that gracious faith which justifieth, and so might be considered as a spiritual gift bestowed on certain persons, to enable them to profit others. Some of them were endued with the gift of performing miraculous cures, others were enabled to work miracles of divers kinds. Some predicted future events, others had a supernatural talent of discerning spirits, of perceiving by what principles men were actuated, or of what services they were capable. Some could speak in various languages which they had not learned, and others could miraculously interpret them to the hearers, who understood them not. All these endowments the Holy Spirit freely bestowed, in that measure and diversity which *he saw good*, and conducive to the common advantage of the Church, so that no one had any ground of glorying over others, or of repining, as if he were forgotten in this distribution. This is a most clear and conclusive attestation to the Personality, Sovereignty, and Deity of the Holy Ghost. There is, indeed, much difficulty at present, in determining precisely what the apostle meant by each of the terms here used, which doubtless were readily understood at the time when the gifts spoken of were exercised, some by one, and some by another of them; but the sense which appeared most probable has been chosen, and great exactness on such a subject is not at all necessary. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12—14. (*Note, Rom.* xii. 4, 5.) The apostle next illustrated the wisdom and goodness of the Holy Spirit, in his distribution of these gifts, by the similitude of the human body. This, though formed of many members, constitutes one harmonious whole, while every member has its proper use and capacity for the common benefit. Thus, Christ mystical, or his Church, as united to him, its glorious Head, was one great whole, consisting of many parts. As the thing signified by the baptism of water, all true Christians had been baptized into Christ's body, by the communication of his life-giving Spirit, whether they had been before Jews or Gentiles, slaves or free-men; and by deriving continual supplies of that same Spirit, in answer to their earnest desires and believing prayers, they *drank* more and more into the mind of Christ. Here the apostle doubtless alluded to the wine used in the Lord's supper. Therefore, as the body is one, and hath one common interest, though it consists of many members, so Christians should be considered as incorporated by faith in Christ, and the supply of his Spirit; but if they had all possessed the same gifts, they would have more resembled a detached member, or several of the same kind, than an organized body.

V. 15—26. From the preceding general illustration, the Corinthians might see the absurdity of their emulations, covetings, and murmurs; for, supposing there could be a distinct consciousness in each of the members of the human body, and the foot, dissatisfied with its lowly, laborious, and useful station, should covet the function and the powers of the hand, and complain that, as this was not granted, it could not be deemed a part of the body, or at all regarded in it, would not every one see that this would be false and frivolous? The same would be the case, if the

t *See on*, 12. 14—20. Eph v. 30.
u 7—11. Acts xiii. 1—3. xx. 28 Rom. xii. 6—8. Eph ii 20. iv. 11—13 Heb. xiii. 17. 24. 1 Pet. v. 1—4.
* Or, *kinds*. 10.
x 4—11. 14—20.

27 Now [t] ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

28 And [u] God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, * diversities of tongues.

29 *Are* [x] all apostles? *are* all prophets? *are* all teachers? *are* all † workers of miracles?

30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

31 But [y] covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet [z] shew I unto you a more excellent way.

† Or, *powers*.
y viii. 1. xiv. 1 39.
z xiii 1, &c. Phil iii. 8. Heb. xi 4

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ear should repine, because not placed in the office, and possessed of the powers of the eye. For if every part of the body were formed into an eye, where would be the important sense of hearing? Instead of such monstrous productions, God hath wisely and kindly placed the members, senses, and organs in the human body, as it pleased him; and unspeakably better than any self-conceited counsellor could have directed. Insomuch, that the idea, of every member coveting to be the most honoured part, is associated with that of the destruction of the body; which necessarily consists of many different members, so formed and placed as to become one regular whole. Thus, the eye could not contemptuously deny that it wanted the assistance of the hand: for without the power of executing, of which the hand is the instrument, even sight would be of small value. Nay, the head itself, the seat or source of sensation and reflection, wants the help of the feet to convey it about from place to place. This appears still more clearly, in respect of those parts which seem feeble, and yet are absolutely necessary to life, or to the well being of the whole; such as the various vessels, by which digestion, nutrition, and circulation are carried on, and by which nature throws off whatever is redundant or detrimental. So far, in fact, are the more honourable parts of the body from appropriating the whole of a man's regard, that the contrary often takes place; and those parts which we are accustomed to conceal as less honourable, are covered and decorated with the greatest care and expense. For those that are deemed most honourable do not want such decoration, being comely in themselves. And if any part of the body is wounded, diseased, or pained, all other parts sympathize with it and share the suffering; and on the other hand, they all seem to rejoice and share the pleasure of that member, which is in health and at ease, or which is employed in any honourable or beneficial service.

V. 27—31. The apostle here applies his similitude to the case illustrated. The Church was the mystical body of Christ, and believers were particular members of that body. In placing these members, God, of his sovereign wisdom, had constituted some in the first and most honourable office of apostles; to whom especially he had "given "the word of wisdom," for the instruction of mankind. Next to them he had placed others as prophets, who gave particular instructions by immediate inspiration, as by "the word of knowledge;" and after them he had stationed pastors and teachers, to superintend and instruct particular congregations, or to preach occasionally in other places. Besides the gifts and authority conferred on these persons, many Christians were endued with the power of working miracles, and of healing the sick; others were qualified to attend and be assistant to the apostles in their labours as evangelists, or, as some explain it, to help the pastors in the office of deacons, and in various other services. Some were qualified to preside over and manage the secular affairs of the Church as governors; or they were suitable persons to be left in authority by the apostles; when they were forced away from newly planted churches "that they might set in order such things as were wanting;" while others were best qualified, by speaking a variety of tongues, to attempt the conversion of those who had not yet heard the Gospel. But would it be proper that all Christians should be apostles, prophets, teachers, or evangelists? This evidently was not the case; and if it could be thus ordered, the Church would be like a body, that was all eye, all tongue, &c.; like an army, constituted wholly of general officers, or like a kingdom of all rulers. The Corinthians, indeed, coveted earnestly, or were emulous of the best gifts, or such as were deemed most splendid and honourable; but the apostle was about to show them a more excellent way, even that of love, (*Notes*, xiii.) which would influence them to be content with the gifts already conferred, and to be principally zealous in making a useful improvement of them. Our translation, indeed, renders the clause as an exhortation: but it may with equal exactness be translated, "Ye do covet earnestly," &c. and so imply a reprehension of the corrupt emulation of the Corinthians; and this certainly coincides far better with the argument of the apostle; for *exhorting* them to "covet "the best gifts," or those that were most valued, which the Holy Spirit distributed as he saw good, would have sanctioned that ambitious temper, which he evidently aimed to repress.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

Acute speculators are often most ignorant in practical matters; they who are most elated with the gifts bestowed on them, are commonly most forgetful of the Giver, and the proper use of them; and spiritual gifts have frequently been the support of spiritual pride. In order to prevent these evils, we should often recollect what we were by nature and practice. We have not indeed been carried after dumb idols; yet "we were by nature chil- "dren of wrath, even as others;" we have idolized worldly objects; and most of us have been actually the enemies of God by wicked works, after which we were carried, even as Satan, the world, and the flesh led us. If then we have any knowledge of the truth, or any ability to communicate that knowledge to others, let us give the whole glory to God. There have been many pretenders to inspiration or extraordinary illumination; but all such appearances must be counterfeit in those who refuse the

CHAP. XIII.

Gifts and miraculous powers, without love, are of no worth or efficacy, 1—3. *The properties of love,* 4—7. *Love shall abide, when prophecies and tongues shall cease, and knowledge shall be perfected,* 8—12. *It is greater than faith and hope,* 13.

Lord Jesus those honours which he claimed to himself. For what do such men, but call Jesus accursed! They may speak of him as a good Man or a Teacher; but whilst they reject his priesthood, and deny his Deity, his Oneness with the Father, what do they less than charge him with blasphemy and imposture, in evidently advancing claims to this equality, and with abetting idolatry, in teaching "all "men to honour him even as they honour the Father?" And do they not in effect justify the Jewish rulers for putting him to death, as an Anathema, for saying "I "am the Son of God?" Can such men speak by the Holy Spirit, or according to the language of inspiration? But if indeed we can from our hearts say, that "Jesus is the "Lord;" if we adore him with Thomas, saying, "My "Lord, and my God!" and if we as sinners trust and obey him as our divine Saviour, Teacher, and King, we may be sure that we profess this faith "by the Holy "Spirit;" though we cannot explain the manner in which he hath wrought this conviction, and though we be destitute of all other spiritual gifts. We do not now expect miraculous gifts; but the word of wisdom and of knowledge, and divers special endowments, by the same Spirit, according to our different services to the same Lord; and that we may be the instruments in those operations of the same "God, who worketh all in all," may yet be expected by us. Whatever station therefore be allotted us, and whatever abilities we possess for the duties of that station, we should remember, "that they were given us "to profit withal." Even a capacity to speak, in a proper and scriptural manner, on any topic of religion, will not profit any man, except he have grace, humbly and simply to improve his talent for the edification of others, without seeking his own glory. Such endowments will indeed infallibly expose the possessor to many additional temptations; and as he will need a larger measure of grace to keep him humble and spiritual, so he will probably meet with a more abundant share of painful experiences and humiliating dispensations. We have therefore little cause to envy those who are eminent in abilities and popularity, to covet such dangerous distinctions, to glory in any measure of them bestowed on us, or to despise such as are destitute of them. Numbers have thus been ruined; being lifted up in pride, they have come short of that salvation which they preached to others, or they have been betrayed into such evils as have caused them to terminate their days in disgrace and distress. And the few, who have not been apparently injured by eminency in gifts and popularity, have generally had more to relate concerning "thorns in "the flesh, and messengers of Satan to buffet them," than their more obscure and less admired brethren had any conception of.

V. 12—26.

We should first inquire, whether we have been baptized into the body of Christ by his regenerating grace? And whether we are drinking into his Spirit by receiving daily from his fulness? If this be our privilege, we should be abundantly thankful for so valuable a distinction, and contentedly occupy the place, which it hath pleased God to assign us in his Church; we should attentively consider the relation that we stand in to the Head, and to every member of this mystical body; seek to have our hearts filled with love to the whole, and to every part of the Church of Christ; estimate soberly the functions of our station, and expect to be enabled to perform them; watch against pride, ambition, envy, discontent, selfishness, contempt of others, and thus seek the good of the Church, of those in our own sphere of action, and of every individual, by properly improving our talents and performing the duty of our station. If situated in the lowest place, we should not disdain its services as beneath us; if advanced to a higher station, we should not imagine that we do not stand in need of the prayers and help of our feeblest and most obscure brethren; for these are essential to the perfection of the whole. Nay, we should guard and take care of the weak and feeble believer, even as the God of nature hath, with exquisite skill and kindness, defended those parts of the body, which, though essential to life and health, might otherwise easily have been wounded and destroyed, and cover with affectionate attention the infirmities and uncomeliness of those whom we deem real believers, and who are exposed to disgrace and contempt; that so the more abundant honour may be given to that part which lacked, seeing the more honourable part of our brethren have no need of such assistance and support. Our kind Creator hath effectually provided, that there should be no schism in our natural body; but he has, for wise reasons, seen good to make trial of the members of the mystical body of Christ in this respect; and through the remainder of error and sin in real Christians, through the intrusion of hypocrites, and the artifices of the enemy, many disgraceful and lamentable divisions still prevail.

V. 27—31.

In proportion as the members of Christ have not the same care of others as of themselves, very injurious consequences will appear. If we all filled up our several places in entire and equal love, there could be no envyings, jealousies, murmurs, vain glory, self-seeking, or disregard of others, any more than there is in heaven. We should in that case every one reciprocally care for all the rest; we should sympathize with the afflicted, tempted, distressed, or fallen believer, and help him as we could; we should feel ourselves sharers in the disgrace and reproach of the poor and needy, deem ourselves honoured and prospered, in the reputation, success, and usefulness of our more distinguished brethren, and rejoice in the consolation of such as were glad in the Lord. The meanest Christian would not then repine, or envy the most exalted, but rejoice and bless God on his account; the most eminent would not disregard the meanest, but would

THOUGH [a] I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, [b] and have not charity, I am become [c] *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

2 And though [d] I have *the gift of* prophecy, and [e] understand all mysteries, and all knowledge: [f] and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, [g] and have not charity, [h] I am nothing.

3 And [i] though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, [k] and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it [l] profiteth me nothing.

4 Charity [m] suffereth long, *and* [n] is kind; charity [o] envieth not; charity [*] vaunteth not itself, [p] is not puffed up,

5 Doth not [q] behave itself unseemly, [r] seeketh not her own, [s] is not easily provoked, [t] thinketh no evil;

6 [u] Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but [x] rejoiceth † in the truth;

7 [y] Beareth all things, believeth all things, [z] hopeth all things, [a] endureth all things.

a 2, 3. xii. 8. 29, 30. xiv. 6. 2 Cor. xii. 4. 2 Pet. ii. 18.
b viii. 1. Matt. xxv. 45. Rom. xiv. 15. Gal. v. 6. 22 1 Tim. i. 5.
c xiv. 7, 8.
d xii 8—10. 28. xiv 1 6—9 Num. xxiv. 15—24. Matt. vii 22, 23
e iv 1. Matt. xiii. 11 Rom xi 25 xvi 25 Eph. iii. 4. vi. 19 Col i. 26. 1 Tim. iii. 16.
f xii. 9. Matt. xvii 20 xxi 21. Mark xi 22, 23 Luke xvii. 5, 6.
g 1. 3. xvi 22 Gal v. 6. 22. 1 John iv 8 20, 21.
h 3. vii. 19. viii. 4. 2 Cor xii. 11 Gal vi. 3.——i Matt vi. 1—4 xxiii. 5 Luke xviii. 22. 28. xix. 8. xxi 3. 4 John xii 43. Gal. v. 26 Phil i. 15 18.——k Dan. iii 16—28. John xiii. 37. xv. 13. Acts xxi 13. Phil. i. 20, 21. ii. 3.——l Is lvii. 12. Jer vii 8. John vi 63 1 Tim. iv. 8. Heb. xiii 9. Jam. ii 14—17 ——m Prov. x 12. 2 Cor. vi 6. Gal v 22. Eph. iv. 2 Col i. 11. iii. 12. 2 Tim. ii. 25 iii. 10. iv. 2. Jam. iii. 17. 1 Pet. iv. 8. n Neh. ix. 17 Prov xix 22. xxxi 20. Luke vi. 35, 36 Eph. iv. 32. Col. iii. 12, 13. 1 Pet iii. 8 2 Pet i. 7. 1 John iii. 16—18 iv. 11.

o iii. 3. Gen. xxx. 1. xxxvii. 11. Matt xxvii 18. Rom i. 29. xiii. 13 2 Cor. xii. 20 Gal v. 21. 26. Phil i. 15. 1 Tim. vi. 4. Tit iii. 3. Jam. iii 14—16. iv. 5. 1 Pet. ii. 1.
* Or, *is not rash.* 1 Sam. xxv. 21, 22 33, 34 1 Kings xx. 10, 11 Ps x. 5. Prov. xiii. 10 xvii. 14 xxv. 8—10. Ec vii. 8, 9. x 4. Dan. iii. 19—22
p iv. 6. 18, 19 v. 2. viii 1. Phil ii. 1—5 ——q vii 36. *Gr* xi. 13—16. 18. 21, 22. xiv 33—40 Is. iii. 5 Phil. iv. 8 2 Thes. iii 7——r x 24. 33. xii 25 Rom. xiv. 12—15. xv. 1, 2. Gal. v. 13. vi. 1, 2 Phil. ii. 3—5. 21. 2 Tim. ii. 10 1 John iii 16, 17.——s Num xii 3. xvi. 15. xx 10—12 Ps. cvi. 32, 33. Matt. v 22 Mark iii 5 Jam. i 19, 20.——t 2 Sam x. 3. Job xxi 27 Jer xi. 19. xviii. 18—20. xl. 13—16. Matt. ix. 4. Luke vii. 39 ——u 1 Sam. xxiii. 19—21. 2 Sam. iv 10—12 Ps. x 3. cxix. 136 Prov xiv 9. Jer. ix 1 xiii. 17. xx 10. Hos. iv 8 vii 3. Mic. vii. 8. Luke xix. 41, 42. xxii. 5. Rom. i 32. Phil iii. 18 ——x Ex. xviii. 9. Josh xxii. 22—33. Rom xii. 9. 2 Cor vii. 9—16. Phil. i 4. 18. ii. 17, 18 1 Thes. iii. 6—10. 2 John 4 3 John 3 ——† Or, *with.*——y *See on,* 4 Num. xi. 12—14. Deut. i. 9 Prov. x 12. Cant. viii. 6, 7. Rom. xv. 1. Gal. vi 2. Heb. xiii. 13. 1 Pet. ii. 24 iv. 8.——z Luke vii. 37—39 44—46. xix. 4—10.——a ix. 18—22. Gen xxix. 20 Matt. x. 22 2 Cor. xi. 8—12. 2 Thes. i 4. 2 Tim. ii 3—10 24. iii. 11. iv. 5. Jam. i 12

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peculiarly endeavour to encourage and help him. Thus the good of the whole and of every part would be the uniform object of all, in every station, without any exception; and with the subordination of all personal interests and satisfactions to this superior end. Instead of coveting earnestly the highest stations, or the most conspicuous gifts; instead of acting as if all were to be apostles, prophets, teachers, and rulers; we should then unreservedly leave the appointment of his servants to God, and those whom he employs in his providence: and we should choose the more excellent way of love; endeavouring to occupy with our measure of ability and influence, for the good of our brethren, till our Lord come; remembering that they will not be most applauded at that time, who affected the chief places; but they who have been most faithful to the trust reposed in them, and most diligent in their Master's work.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1—3. The more effectually to expose the radical error of the Corinthians, in over-valuing spiritual gifts, and seeking their own credit in the use of them, without regard to the benefit of their brethren, the apostle in this chapter declares the most eminent of these gifts to be comparatively nothing, and *love* to be every thing. He had told them, that he would "show them a "more excellent way:" and he here averred, (as concerning himself, to give the less offence,) that if he could speak all the variety of human languages most perfectly, and if he could discourse in them with the eloquence of angels, or even use their heavenly language, yet, without charity, he should only resemble the unmeaning noise of the most common and less harmonious musical instruments. Nay, could he also deliver prophecies, which should be verified by the most signal accomplishment; if he could understand and even comprehend all divine mysteries; if he were possessed of all the natural and religious knowledge imaginable; and if he could exercise that special faith on the power of Christ, by which miracles were wrought, to such a degree that even mountains should literally be removed at his word, to the universal astonishment of mankind; yet, without charity, he should be nothing, not a Christian at all; and so far beneath the meanest believer on earth. Nay, if from pride, ostentation, or similar motives, he should give all his goods to feed the poor, even to the starving of himself; or if from party-zeal and obstinate attachment to a system, he should give his body to be burned as a martyr; yet, without charity, he could be nothing better than a deluded hypocrite, and should derive no benefit from it. The apostle meant to show, in the strongest instances imaginable, that nothing could prove a man a true believer, who had not charity. Some of the cases he states cannot be supposed to have ever existed; yet it seems evident, from Scripture, that a man might have the largest degree of that faith, by which miracles were performed, without any of the "faith that "worketh by love:" and that it is possible for a man to expend all his wealth in alms, and die a martyr for the truth, without saving grace! The word *charity* has been of late so appropriated to one external expression of love, which yet may be produced from other principles, that it is desirable for the word *love* to be here substituted, according to the exact meaning of the original, in order to render the passage more intelligible to common readers. 'It must here be taken in the noblest sense; for such a 'love to the whole Church, and the whole world, as arises 'from principles of true piety, and ultimately centers in 'God.' (*Doddridge.*)

V. 4—7. The effects of love which are here enumerated, show that the apostle *primarily* intended those exercises of that holy affection which respect mankind. Yet it is equally evident, that no natural benevolence, which subsists in an unbeliever's heart, can at all answer to the description here given. We must therefore conclude, that he meant that love which is the fruit of the Spirit in the believer's heart, by which especially his faith worketh. The humbled penitent, obtaining pardon and peace by faith in Christ, finds his self-confidence and his attachment to the world broken down: he has also been taught to love the perfections, the holiness, and the cause of God; the person, truth, and precepts of Christ, and his image in his people; to love his neighbours, and even his

8 Charity [b] never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* [c] tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall [d] vanish away.

9 For [e] we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

b 10. 13. Luke xxii. 32. Gal. v. 6.
c 1. xii 10. 28–30. xiv 39 Acts ii. 4. 11. xix. 6
d Jer. xlix. 7 Heb. viii. 13.
e 12. ii. 9. viii. 2. Job xi. 7, 8. xxvi. 14 Ps xl. 5. cxxxix. 6. Prov. xxx. 4 Matt. xi. 27. Rom. xi 34. Eph iii. 8. 18, 19. Col. ii. 2, 3. 1 Pet. i. 10–12 1 John iii 2

10 But [f] when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

11 When I was a child, [g] I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I * thought as a child: but when I be-

f 12. Is. xxiv 23. lx. 19, 20 2 Cor. v. 7, 8. Rev. xxi. 22, 23. xxii. 4, 5.
g iii. 1, 2 xiv. 20. Ec. xi. 10. Gal. iv 1.
* Or, *reasoned.*

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enemies, after Christ's example, and in obedience to his commands; and he now desires that they should all be happy, and God be glorified in their salvation. This love therefore includes all parties, nations, and characters, in its expansive exercise, though still capable of more particular attachments: it regards both the temporal and eternal interests of mankind; and the external comfort, as well as spiritual advantage of believers: and in subordination to the love of God, it seeks to promote the benefit of mankind, and the peace and prosperity of the Church, as its grand objects. This love is the unequivocal evidence of regeneration; and it is a better touchstone of men's professed faith in Christ, than even the love of God; because its effects may more easily be examined, and there is less danger of false affections in it. It was also that part of the Christian temper, in which the Corinthians were peculiarly defective: the apostle therefore selected this subject, to show them how low an estimate ought to be made of their religion. We must further observe that he described love as a man would gold, by enumerating its properties in the abstract. Wherever it subsisted, it had those properties, whether its quantity were small or great; and by this a man might estimate his own attainments in real religion. Some love might exist, where great remains of selfish passions obstructed its exercise; (as a little gold may be mixed with a large alloy of base metal;) but it would then become less evident, and the man's state more dubious. "Love suffereth long;" it influences a man, as far as it prevails, to endure the most provoking injuries and affronts for a long time together, without resentment or retaliation: it "is kind," even to the most injurious; persevering in endeavours to overcome evil with good, and delighting in showing kindness to all sorts of persons, by word and deed. "Love envieth not;" as far as it rules in the heart, it represses pride and selfishness, and causes men to rejoice in the comfort, advantage, and honour, even of those whom nature would regard as enemies or rivals. "Love vaunteth not itself;" it is a humble, unostentatious principle; it never prompts a man to boast, to push himself into notice, to prefer himself to others, to act with rashness and insolence, or in an overbearing dogmatical spirit. "It is not puffed up;" it never leads a person to be elated by endowments, offices, applause, or popularity; for where love prevails, these are only regarded and valued as means of good to others, communicated from God, to whom all the honour of them belongs. "Love "doth not behave itself unseemly;" it guides a man to a gentle, beneficent, courteous, compassionate, respectful conduct, suited to his employment, relative duties, age, and station: and thus it preserves him from rashness, and those improprieties, into which pride and selfishness betray others: for he who is influenced by love will keep the good of mankind continually before him as his object: and this will restrain him from those evil tempers and unbecoming actions, which would counteract his grand design. "Love seeketh not its own;" it never prompts men to seek their own ease, interest, credit, or indulgence, except in subordination to the welfare of others and the glory of God; and it does not allow them to seek any selfish end, in the use of their gifts and talents, which are conferred on them to profit others with. "Love is not easily "provoked;" it is not passionate and furious, any more than revengeful; it does not readily take offence even at many or great affronts, which pride and self-love would deem intolerable. "Love thinketh no evil;" it is unsuspecting, and not apt to impute men's conduct to bad motives without evident proof: it can therefore never prompt any one to invent or circulate slanders, to believe malicious reports, or even needlessly to expose the faults of others; but it will rather influence him to extenuate or conceal them. For "love rejoiceth not in iniquity;" it is not gratified, (as pride and malevolence are,) with the report of the vices and follies of others, though belonging to any party, or regarded as opposers; it rather influences a man to weep over it, and to desire that it should be found erroneous. "But love rejoiceth in the truth;" it excites joy in the heart, when the triumphs of the truth and the holy lives of such as profess it are mentioned; or when aspersed characters are vindicated by the truth being made known; or when persons of any sort act with truth, sincerity, and integrity, professing and adorning the truth of the Gospel. "Love beareth all things;" it *covers* all faults, as far as other duties will admit; it bears with the infirmities and mistakes of others with candour and kindness; and it submits to any inconvenience cheerfully, which this forbearance imposes. "Love believeth all things;" it disposes a person to believe the most favourably of all others, till the contrary be proved; to act as counsel for the accused; and even to credit a man's apologies for his faults, his professions of repentance, and his purposes of amendment. "Love hopeth all things;" it prompts a man to hope the best of another's character and intentions, that the case will fairly allow him; to hope for the conversion of the sinner, or the recovery of the back-slider; to proceed with hope in his attempts to do good to the most profligate obstinate, and ungrateful: and it allows no one to despair of others, to be wearied out by their perverseness, or to give over all endeavours for their good. In this desire and hope of finally succeeding, at least in some instances, "Love endureth all things;" it influences a man to bear any poverty, reproach, persecution, hardship, suffering, or even death, in seeking to do good to the bodies and souls of men, after the example of Christ, and in obedience to his commandments. It is obvious to every attentive reader, that in this beautiful description of the properties and effects of love, the apostle meant to show the Corinthians, that their conduct had in most particulars been an entire contrast to it. (*Notes, Gal.* v. 13—18. *Jam.* iii. 13—17.)

came a man, I put away childish things.

12 For now [h] we see through a glass, * darkly; but then [i] face to face: [k] now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

h 2 Cor. iii. 18 v. 7. Jam. i 23.
* Or, *in a riddle.* Judg xiv. 12—19 Ez. xvii. 2.
i Ez. xxxiii. 11. Num. xii. 8. Matt v 8. xviii. 10. Rom. viii. 18. 1 John iii. 2. Rev. xxii. 4.——k 9, 10. John x 15

13 And now [l] abideth [m] faith, [n] hope, [o] charity, these three; but [p] the greatest of these *is* charity.

l iii. 14. 1 Pet. i. 23. 1 John ii. 14. 24—27. iii 9.
m Luke viii. 13—15 xxii. 32. Gal. v. 6. Heb x 39. xi. 1—7. 1 John v. 1—5 9—13.——n Ps xlii. 11. xliii. 5. cxlvi. 5. Lam. iii 21—26. Rom v. 4, 5. viii. 24, 25. xv. 13 Col. i 5 27. 1 Thes v. 8 Heb vi. 11. 19. 1 Pet. i. 21 1 John iii. 3 ——o 1—8. viii. 1. 3. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. Gal. v. 6. 1 John ii. 10. iv 7—18 ——p 8. xiv. 1. xvi. 14. Mark xii. 29—31 Luke x. 27. Gal. v. 13—22. Phil. i. 9. Col. iii. 14. 1 Tim. i 5. 2 Tim. i. 7. 1 John iv. 7—9 2 John 4—6.

V. 8—12. The love which the apostle recommended, "never faileth:" it never loseth its value or excellency, it will never be changed for any other thing, nor will it ever fail out of that heart in which it hath taken root. On the other hand, even the gift of prophecy would fail: the Spirit of prophecy would soon be withdrawn from the Church; the instructions, given by the prophets from immediate revelation, would soon be superseded by more ordinary methods; and even the prophecies of the Scripture will all shortly be accomplished, and, having answered their end, will be of no further use. The gift of tongues was of no long continuance in the Church; and in heaven no acquaintance with human languages will be of any value. That philosophical knowledge, on which the Corinthians prided themselves, soon vanished as a dream: and even that kind and degree of religious knowledge, which is acquired on earth, will, as it were, be eclipsed by the perfect knowledge of heaven; as the light of the stars by the blaze of noon: or the knowledge, by which some were qualified to teach others the truth and will of God, would be of no further use. Here indeed the servants of God "knew in part, and so prophesied in part:" they had a small portion of his ways, works, and counsels, made known to them; but when the perfect discoveries of another world should be made, all this would be done away, as the useless taper in the day-time. This might be illustrated by the difference between the apprehensions of a child, and those of a man. The apostle could recollect, that when he was a child, he had talked in a childish and unsuitable manner about the affairs of men; and he had conceived of them, been affected by them, and reasoned about them, with much ignorance and misapprehension: but when he became a man, he not only put away his toys and childish pursuits, but his childish manner of speaking, thinking, and judging, as one ashamed of the impertinence and folly that had mixed with even the little knowledge which he had acquired. Thus, on earth, he could only conceive and speak as a child about divine things, when his present knowledge was compared with that of heaven. Though preserved from all error, yet he was aware, that he should find his views of them inadequate, unsuitable, and widely different from the real nature and glory of those sublime objects of contemplation. For he could here only see them "through a glass, "darkly;" as by the imperfect reflection of a mirror, or in the obscure description of a riddle. This view of them by faith, through the medium of revelation, is sufficient for the present state; but it is inadequate and obscure, compared with that view of them, which is obtained by those who "see face to face;" and who have an immediate, intuitive, and complete discovery of God, of Christ, and of heavenly things. So that the apostle's knowledge in part, of the truths and purposes of God, would be as nothing, when he came "to know, as he was "known;" and to perceive those objects with that clearness, fulness, and adequate conception of them, which corresponds to the perfect knowledge of God himself, as far as a finite mind can comprehend infinity.

V. 13. Not only was *love* more excellent and more enduring than all spiritual gifts, miraculous powers, and prophetical discoveries; but it even far exceeded in value all other Christian graces. After the ceasing of supernatural gifts in the Church, faith, hope, and love, abode, and will abide, to the end of the world, as the three principal graces, that distinguish Christians from other men, and in fact include all the others. Faith receives the testimony of God concerning invisible things, appropriates his instruction, and receives his salvation, by looking to and relying on the divine Redeemer, and the promises of God in him. Hope expects the promised blessings, as perfected in eternal life; and thus "it is the anchor of the soul," keeping it steadfast in obedience and patient waiting, amidst every kind of opposition and discouragement. And love to God, and to mankind for his sake, as before described, is the active principle of all those willing services, in which the Christian does good to his generation, by the will of God. These three abide, and must abide, as essential to godliness, under every dispensation and in every age, whatever other changes take place: but "the greatest of these "is love." Not that love can do the office of faith, in justifying the sinner, any more than the eye can perform the function of the ear: nor can this love be found in any man, who is not a partaker of faith and hope. But faith and hope are the means, or the intermediate acts of the mind, by which a proud, selfish, carnal, condemned criminal is brought to love a reconciled God, and to love men for his sake: they are as the scaffolding, without which the building cannot be erected; yet the building is more valuable than the scaffolding, and when that is completed, the other will be taken down as of no more use. For love is the very nature and image of God, the bond of perfection, the essence of holiness, and the fulfilling of the law. Faith and hope are only requisite for us, as sinners, in this imperfect state: faith will therefore soon be lost in vision, and hope in fruition; but perfect love will flourish for ever, the business, element, joy, and glory, of heaven itself; uniting God and all holy creatures in the most perfect harmony and felicity, without the least alloy of any contrary principle, through all the ages of eternity. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

Splendid abilities, extensive learning, admired eloquence, and exact knowledge in the mysteries of God, may be possessed by a proud and selfish man, who is as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal, in his most admired displays of

CHAP. XIV.

The apostle exhorts the Corinthians to follow after love; and shows that prophecy, as most conducive to edification, is to be preferred to speaking with tongues, 1—5. *Speaking in an unknown tongue, like indistinct musical sounds, is of no use to the hearers,* 6—11. *All gifts should be used in the most edifying manner,* 12—20. *Tongues are intended to convince unbelievers; but prophesying is more useful in the public assemblies, and to strangers who resort thither,* 21—25. *Rules for the orderly exercise of spiritual gifts in the Church,* 26—33. *Women are forbidden to speak there,* 34, 35. *A reproof of the self-sufficiency of some teachers,* 36—38. *Gifts must be exercised, and all things done "decently and in order,"* 39, 40.

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his conspicuous endowments. Indeed, the powers or eloquence of angels, and all imaginable gifts of miracles or prophecy, cannot demonstrate a man to be any better than Balaam or Judas: and even the most astonishing liberality, or patient fortitude under persecution, even to tortures and death, may spring from other principles than love, and in that case will avail nothing before our heart-searching Judge. How then are they deluded, who expect acceptance and reward for those good works, which are as scanty in their degree, as they are corrupt and selfish in their principle! And how are even Christians often fascinated to over-rate ostentatious eloquence, gifts, and abilities, and to undervalue honest, simple, and unadorned love, which seeks only to do them good! But where does this heavenly love reside, which the apostle so warmly panegyrizes? Is she returned to heaven, being wearied out with our contentions and selfishness on earth? Or does she dwell in some obscure retreat, at a distance from the disputes of the world, and of the Church? Certainly she is but seldom seen among us, has but few votaries and little influence, and is treated with strange neglect on earth. Alas! numbers, who might be supposed to be somewhat, if we only looked at their talents, knowledge, and zeal, appear to be nothing, or very little, if love be the touchstone of their characters. Indeed, this chapter may be considered as an answer to all the wrangling pamphlets of angry disputers about religious truth, of different names and sentiments. Many of these seem incapable of long-suffering or kindness to any but their own party; so that envy, boasting, railing, ridicule, slander, and acrimony, are the prominent features of the portrait which they exhibit to the view of the public. In the most unseemly manner they sound their own praises, vent their own resentments, expose, and triumph over their opponents, forget all decent regard to superiors, and turn religious investigation into a vain-glorious, selfish, if not scurrilous, contest for victory. It is evident, that many of this character are easily provoked and hardly pacified; that they think evil of others, and rejoice in detecting the faults and follies of those who differ from them. In short, the attentive observer will perceive, that every part of the apostle's definition of love forms a complete contrast to the conduct of many, who in different ages have had numerous admirers for their zeal and ability, in contending for the sentiments, or forms, of their own sect or party. But, alas! we need more love than we generally possess, to animadvert on such abuses, without being betrayed into a measure of imitation. Let us then rather inquire, whether this divine love inhabit and influence our hearts? Have we learned to suffer long and to be kind? Are we taught to repress envy, and to rejoice in the superior reputation and success of our brethren? Hath love instructed us "in honour to esteem others better than ourselves," and cured us of insolence, rashness, and ostentation? Hath this divine principle guided us into a becoming behaviour to our superiors, equals, inferiors, opponents, competitors, friends, relatives, and all orders of men in the Church or the community? Have we attained the habit of giving up our own interest or inclination, whenever the good of others requires it? Can we bear affronts without being easily provoked? Are we disposed to be unsuspecting; to mourn over the sins of others; to bear with their infirmities, dulness, and perverseness; to believe, hope, and endure all things, for their sakes? If some sparks of this heavenly flame have been kindled in our hearts, we know that there is much of a contrary nature to counteract its efficacy. Here then is a call for watchfulness, diligence, and prayer, that our "love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment:" and that our selfish nature may be more entirely subdued and mortified. Hence we shall also see still more our need of the cleansing blood of Christ; and shall learn to walk humbly before God, and to bear with others, as conscious that we need the patient forbearance both of the Lord and of our brethren.

V. 8—13.

If this love is planted in our hearts, (though as an exotic in an unfriendly soil and climate,) it will never fail, but will certainly grow up to maturity: and it will flourish abundantly, when prophecies shall have ceased, and when human science and eloquence shall have vanished away; and when even our highest attainments in divine knowledge in this present world, (which are indeed very small, compared with those of the apostle,) will appear like the lispings, the imaginations, and the reasonings of a little child. But if that feeble, indistinct view, which we obtain by faith in the mirror of the sacred word, be so delightful, as we have sometimes found it, with what raptures shall we see face to face, and know, "even as we are known!" Let us then put away the childish things, which amused us in an unconverted state; for so we now clearly see them to have been: let us learn to value things according to their intrinsic worth, and not, as children, admire all that glitters, whether it be gold or tinsel: let us cease from our childish pursuits about mere externals and non-essentials, that we may value and seek an increase of faith, hope, and love, from the Giver of all

[a] FOLLOW after [b] charity, [c] and desire spiritual *gifts*, but rather that ye may [d] prophesy.

2 For [e] he that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue, speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man * understandeth *him;* [f] howbeit in the Spirit he speaketh mysteries.

3 But he that prophesieth, speaketh unto men, *to* [g] edification, and [h] exhortation, and [i] comfort.

4 He that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue, [k] edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth, [l] edifieth the church.

5 I [m] would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: [n] for greater *is* he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, [o] except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.

6 Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, [p] what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by [q] revelation, or by [r] knowledge, or by [s] prophesying, or by [t] doctrine?

7 And even [u] things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, [x] except they give a distinction in the † sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?

8 For [y] if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?

9 So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words ‡ easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? [z] for ye shall speak into the air.

a Prov. xv. 9. xxi. 21. Is. li. 1. Rom. ix. 30. xiv. 19. 1 Tim. v. 10 vi. 11. Heb. xii 14. 1 Pet. iii 11—13. 3 John 11

b *See on,* xiii. 1—8. 13. 2 Tim. ii. 22 2 Pet i. 7.

c xii. 1. 31.

d 3—5. 24, 25. 37. 39. xiii. 2. 9. Num. xi. 25—29. Rom. xii 6. 1 Thes v. 20. 1 Tim iv. 14.

e 9—11. 16. 21, 22. Gen. xi. 7. xlii 23. Deut. xxviii. 49. 2 Kings xviii. 26. Acts ii. 4—11. x. 46 xix. 6.

* Gr. *heareth.* Acts xxii. 9.

f ii. 7. 10. xiii. 2. xv. 51. Ps. xlix. 3, 4. lxxviii. 2. Matt xiii. 11. Mark iv. 11. Rom. xvi. 25. Eph. iii. 3—9. vi. 19. Col. i. 26, 27. ii. 2. 1 Tim. iii. 9. 16. Rev. x. 7.——g 4. 12. 26. viii. 1. x. 23. Acts ix 31. Rom. xiv. 19. xv. 2. Eph. iv. 12—16. 29. 1 Thes. v. 11. 1 Tim i. 4. Jude 20.——h Luke iii. 18. Acts xiii. 15 xiv 22. xv. 32. Rom. xii. 8. 1 Thes. ii 3. iv. 1. v. 11. 14. 2 Thes. iii. 12. 1 Tim. iv. 13. vi 2. 2 Tim. iv. 2 Tit. i. 9. ii. 6. 9. 15. Heb iii. 13. x. 25. xiii. 22 1 Pet v. 12.——i 31. 2 Cor. i. 4. ii. 7. Eph. vi. 22. Col. iv. 8. 1 Thes ii. 11. iii. 2. iv. 18. v. 11—14.——k 14.——l 3. 18, 19.——m xii. 28—30. xiii. 4. Num. xi. 28, 29.——n i. 3.

o 12, 13 26—28. xii. 10. 20

p x. 33. xii 7 xiii. 3. 1 Sam. xii. 21. Jer xvi. 19 xxiii. 32. Matt xvi. 26 2 Tim ii. 14. Tit iii. 8 Heb. xiii. 9.

q 25—30 Matt. xi 25. xvi. 17 2 Cor xii. 1 7. Eph. i. 17. Phil. iii. 15.

r xii. 8. xiii 2 8, 9. Rom xv. 14. 2 Cor. xi. 6. Eph iii 4 2 Pet i. 5 iii. 18.

s *See on,* 1. xiii. 2.

t 26 Rom. xvi. 17. 2 Tim. iii 10 16. iv. 2. 2 John 9.

u xiii. 1.

x 8. Num x. 2—10. Matt xi. 17. Luke vii 32.

† Or, *tunes.*

y Num. x. 9. Josh vi. 4—20. Judg vii 16—18 Neh iv. 18—21 Job xxxix. 24, 25 Is. xxvii. 13 Am. iii 6. Eph vi. 11—19.

‡ Gr. *significant.*

z ix. 26.

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good gifts: and whilst we contend, that faith alone can justify the sinner by forming his relation to the Saviour, and that hope only can support the soul, amidst all the trials of life and death, let us remember, that Love is still greater than these useful and needful graces; being the evidence of our title to eternal life, and the meetness for and earnest of that holy and unspeakable felicity.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 1—5. Having shown the excellency of love, the apostle exhorted the Corinthians to follow after it, as the great object of their unremitting pursuit, in preference to all other things: and then they would do well earnestly to desire spiritual gifts, that they might be enabled to be useful to their brethren; for under the influence of love, they would certainly thus use them; especially they should value "the gift of prophesying." By this the apostle seems to have intended an immediate communication from the Spirit of God, concerning the meaning of the Holy Scriptures, or some point of doctrine or practice, in which the Church or individuals wanted instruction at the time. This was a gift bestowed on several, by which they became occasional, or extraordinary, teachers in the Church, and it seems to have generally been accompained by the power of predicting future events, when circumstances required it. The Corinthians, however, did not value it so much as the gift of tongues, or of miracles, because it was less suited to excite admiration; but the apostle instructed them, that it was greatly to be preferred by *them*, because more useful in their situation. For he who spake in a language which the hearers understood not, did not speak to men, but to God only; nor would others receive any benefit, though under the impulse of the Holy Spirit he spake the most sublime mysteries of the Gospel, in the most suitable words. Whereas, he that prophesied spake to men, to edify them in divine truth, to exhort them to holy practice, or to comfort them under their manifold trials. Indeed, he who spake in an unknown tongue might derive instruction and benefit from his own words, and his faith might be established by the exercise of this miraculous gift, in case he was not elated with pride, and influenced by ostentation. But he that prophesied would edify numbers, which would be far more desirable. As the apostle rejoiced in every thing conducive to their prosperity, he desired that they might all be endued with the gift of tongues; but still more, that they should all be capable of instructing others, by the gift of prophesying; for the prophet was certainly a more honourable and useful person, than he who spake with tongues; except the latter were also endued with the gift of interpreting his discourse into the language understood by his hearers, that so the Church might be edified by what he spake. This was not generally the case; for a man might be miraculously enabled to speak in one, two, or more languages which he had never learned; and yet, being left ignorant of others, he might be unable to explain his meaning to those, who neither understood the language in which he spake, nor that which was his native tongue. Or, to counterpoise this distinction, which tended so much to elate the possessors, they might be left incapable of giving utterance with propriety, perspicuity, or promptitude, suited to a public assembly, even in their native tongue, to those divine truths which they spake fluently in another language, under the influence of the Holy Spirit: and another man might be miraculously enabled to understand, and interpret into the language of the audience, what was thus spoken, who yet himself might be unable to speak fluently in the language which he interpreted. Even in ordinary cases, clearly understanding a language, and being able to speak fluently in it, are very distinct attainments. 'Why 'was the gift of tongues conferred? That the mysteries 'of God might be openly made known to more people and 'nations. Then, surely prophecy, to which the gift of 'tongues was intended to be subservient, must be of supe'rior excellency.' (*Beza.*)

10 There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them *is* without signification.

11 Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, [a] I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh *shall be* a barbarian unto me.

12 Even so ye, [b] forasmuch as ye are zealous of * spiritual *gifts*, [c] seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.

13 Wherefore let him that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue, [d] pray that he may interpret.

14 For if I pray in an *unknown* tongue, [e] my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.

15 [f] What is it then? [g] I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, [h] and I will sing with the understanding also.

16 Else when thou shalt [i] bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the [k] unlearned say, [l] Amen, at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?

17 For thou verily givest thanks well, [m] but the other is not edified.

18 I [n] thank my God, I speak with tongues more than you all:

19 Yet [o] in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that *by my voice* I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an *unknown* tongue.

a 21. Acts xxviii. 2. 4 Rom. i. 14. Col. iii. 11.
b 1 xii 7. 21. Tit. ii 14
* Gr. *spirits*. 32
c 3, 4. 26
d 27, 28 xii. 10. 30. Mark xi. 24. John xiv. 13, 14. Acts i. 14 iv. 29—31 viii. 15.
e 2. 15, 16 19
f x. 19 Rom iii. 5. viii. 31. Phil. i. 18
g 19. John iv. 23, 24 Rom. i. 9. Eph v. 17—20. vi. 18. Col. iii. 16. Jude 20.
h Ps. xlvii. 7. Rom. xii. 1, 2.
i 2. 14.
k 23. 24. Is. xxix. 11, 12. John vii. 15. Acts iv. 13.
l xi. 24 Num. v. 22 Deut. xxvii. 15, &c. 1 Kings i 36. 1 Chr. xvi 36. Ps. xli. 13. lxxii 19. lxxxix 52. cvi. 48. Jer xxviii. 6 Matt. vi. 13. xxviii. 20. Mark xvi 20. John xxi. 25. Rev. v. 14. xxii 20.
m 4 26.
n i 4—6. iv. 7.
o 4 21. 22.

V. 6—12. To convince the Corinthians, without needless offence, of what he had asserted, the apostle put the case, that, when he came next to Corinth, he should merely display his gift of speaking in a variety of languages; of what use in that case would his visit be to them? Surely of none; except he spake intelligibly, either by immediate revelation from God, or by some prophetical message suited to their case, or concerning some doctrine in which they wavered or were mistaken. Unless, in some of these ways, (which indeed it is difficult for us to distinguish with exactness,) he gave them clear instructions, all that he could say in unknown languages would be an unmeaning noise. For even lifeless things that are used to give sound, such as musical instruments, can give no direction to those who are to sing and dance to them, unless a proper distinction be observed in the sounds: and if the trumpet should be blown at random, without any distinction between that sound which calls the combatants to the field, and other sounds of different meaning, what soldier could understand when to prepare himself for the battle? If then, an intelligible distinction of sounds was necessary in the ordinary concerns of life, much more must they be so in those of religion. For, unless they uttered significant and intelligible words, how could the hearers understand what was spoken? They might as well speak in an empty room or an unfrequented desert, where their words would be lost in the air, and never reach any human ear. There were indeed as many languages or idioms in the world, as there were different regions; and each of these was significant to the persons accustomed to it. That circumstance therefore ought to be considered; otherwise, even in ordinary conversation, the speaker and hearer, who understand not each other, would appear reciprocally barbarians to each other, however expressive, polite, and copious the languages were in which they spake; and they would be more likely to despise each other, than to profit by the interview, or be satisfied with it. In the common concerns of life, therefore, it was thus requisite for men to understand each other; and surely the Corinthians, amidst their zeal, and emulous desire of spiritual gifts, ought to act consistently with common sense, and desire to excel in those things by which they might edify the Church; and not in such as could only procure them irrational admiration! 'At this day, among the papists, they are used *in* '*their sermons*, always to quote the sacred Scriptures in 'Latin, without adding a translation in the vulgar tongue; 'nor do they use any other method, in the singing and 'prayers." (*Beza.*) 'If you that have the gift of strange 'languages do not speak that which the auditors may un'derstand; (for to that end sure were those languages giv'en) that you might speak to every one in his own language, (*Acts* ii. 6;) how shall any one be better for your language?" (*Hammond.*)

V. 13—19. If any of them must needs speak in an unknown tongue among their brethren, let them pray to be endued also with the gift of interpreting what was spoken, or what others delivered in a foreign language, that their religious exercises might not be a mere ostentatious display of their powers, without meaning or use. Supposing the apostle should come and pray with the congregation in an unknown tongue, his spirit or heart might indeed be very devoutly engaged in the worship of God, while exercising this gift of the Holy Spirit; but, as others could not understand him, so his own understanding would be unfruitful, having no just and proper exercise, and producing no benefit to his fellow-worshippers. What would then be the proper inference from this observation? Truly, he would pray from the fulness of his spiritual affections, and in the sober exercise of his understanding also, by using such words as might edify others and enable them to join with him. In like manner, when he sang the praises of God, he would endeavour to have his spiritual affections engaged as much as possible; yet he would also consider, as a rational man, what language would be best understood by the congregation. But if any of them, neglecting this dictate of common sense, should celebrate the praises of God, and return thanks for his mercies, in the most spiritual and fervent manner, but in an unknown tongue, how could he, who occupied the place of a private believer, who had neither learning, nor

20 Brethren, [p] be not children in understanding: howbeit [q] in malice be ye children, but in understanding be [*] men.

21 In [r] the law it is written, [s] With *men of* other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.

22 Wherefore tongues are [t] for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying *serveth* not for them that believe not, [u] but for them which believe.

p iii. 1, 2. xiii. 11. Ps cxix 99 Is. xi 3. Rom. xvi. 19. Eph. iv. 14. Phil i. 9 Heb. v. 12, 13.
q Ps. cxxxi 1, 2. Matt xi 25. xviii 3 xix. 14. Mark x 15 1 Pet ii 2
* Gr *perfect*, or, *of a ripe age*. ii. 6. Phil iii. 15.
r John x 34. Rom. iii. 19
s Deut. xxviii 43 Is. xxviii 11. Jer. v. 15.
t Mark xvi. 17. Acts ii. 6—12. 32—36.
u 3.

23 If therefore [x] the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in *those that are* unlearned, or unbelievers, [y] will they not say that ye are mad?

24 But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or *one* unlearned, [z] he is convinced of all, he is judged of all:

25 And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so [a] falling down on *his* face, he will worship God, and report that [b] God is in you of a truth.

x xi. 18.
y Hos ix. 7. John x. 20. Acts ii. 13. xxvi. 24.
z ii. 15. John i. 47—49. iv. 29. Acts ii. 37 Heb. iv. 12, 13.
a Gen. xliv. 14. Deut. ix. 18. Ps. lxxii 11. Is lx. 14. Luke v. 8. viii 28 Rev. v. 8 xix 4.
b Is xlv. 14. Zech. viii. 23.

the gift of tongues, give his assent to the thanksgiving, by saying, *Amen*, as was customary among them; (*Marg. Ref.*) seeing he had not understood any thing which was spoken? The one might give thanks in a very proper manner; but the other could derive no benefit from it. Many indeed of the Corinthians supposed themselves to excel in this particular gift, and were pleased to make a show of it: but the apostle thanked God, that, as commissioned to preach to the Gentiles, of whatever nation, he spake with tongues more than they all, and was enabled to preach in more languages; the whole praise of which he gave to the Lord. Yet he had rather utter five words, or the shortest instructive sentence, among believers in the public assembly, in a rational manner, so that others might understand him and be edified by what he said, than irrationally to speak ten thousand words, or the most copious discourse, in an unknown tongue, which could be of no use to them. Had the apostle lived about the Æra of the reformation, and written expressly against the Church of Rome, he could not more emphatically have exposed the absurdity and wickedness of worshipping God, and performing all public services in Latin, of which the common people understand not one word. No wonder the rulers of that Church lock up the scriptures also in an unknown tongue; seeing they must otherwise bear too evident a testimony against them. *With the understanding.* (15.) That is, say most commentators, so as to be understood. This indeed is implied, and principally intended; yet examples of such a use of the words cannot easily be adduced. But might not the apostle mean, that they who spoke publicly in a language not understood by the auditors, however fervent their affections, or excellent their gifts might be, seemed to act like men without understanding, or who made no use of their understanding; seeing no man, however irrational and enthusiastical, could act more evidently against the plain dictates of sober reason and sound judgment? Does not the apostle's argument about prayer imply, that if any one prayed or gave thanks *extempore*, in a language understood by the congregation, the people might, if nothing else prevented, cordially say Amen to his words? And does not this remark sufficiently answer *many common objections*, and arguments, against *extempore* prayer? It, however, by no means decides, whether that, or a liturgy, be most conducive to general edification, in the present state of the Church.

V. 20—25. These intimations of the ignorance and childishness of the Corinthians, who were evidently in no small degree disposed to self-wisdom, are very remarkable. As they professed to have much knowledge, let them not be "children in understanding;" for it was really as trifling and vain to make a parade of the gift of tongues, merely to astonish those who could not understand them, as any of the competitions and amusements of children could be. Let them indeed be as infants in respect of malice, and every evil disposition; being of a gentle forgiving disposition, without resentment or rancour: but let them be men in understanding, as those that were matured in judgment and experience, and capable of acting with propriety and wisdom in their whole conduct. In the law, (or in the Old Testament,) God had foretold, that he would speak to Israel by men of other lips, and yet even then they would not hear him. (*Marg. Ref.*) This seems primarily to have related to the languages of those foreign nations, by whom God intended to execute vengeance on Israel: but it might also denote, that he would instruct them by persons endued with the gift of tongues, to convince them of the truth. So that this gift, when exercised among such as did not understand what was spoken, was to be considered rather as a rebuke than a favour; but in its proper use, it was intended for a sign to unbelievers, in order to their conversion, whereas, prophesying was more immediately intended for the edification of believers. Yet the gift of tongues might be so perverted, as even to prove exceedingly injurious to unbelievers, and this ought to be taken into the account. If, therefore, the whole Church of Corinth should be assembled in one place, and all who were able should speak with tongues, several at once, and others in succession, whilst the rest understood not what was spoken; and if any person, uninstructed in Christianity, or disposed to reject it, should come in to make his observations, would not such irrational and confused proceedings confirm his prejudices, and cause him to conclude that they were a company of madmen, or frantic enthusiasts? But if they all prophesied, and one teacher after another spake by the Spirit of God, in a pertinent, instructive, and convincing manner, on some point of doctrine or practice, the stranger who

26 How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, [c] every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. [d] Let all things be done unto edifying.

27 If any man speak in an *unknown* tongue, *let it be* by two, or at the most *by* three, and *that* by course; and let one interpret.

28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.

29 Let the prophets speak two or three, and [e] let the other judge.

30 If *any thing* be [f] revealed to another that sitteth by, [g] let the first hold his peace.

c See on, 6. xii. 8—10.
d 4 5 12. Rom. xiv. 19 2 Cor. xii. 19 xiii. 10. Eph iv. 12 16. 29. 1 Thes. v. 11.
e xii. 10 1 Thes v. 20, 21. 1 John iv. 1—3.
f 6 26.
g Job xxxii. 15—20. xxxiii 31—33. 1 Thes. v. 19, 20.

31 For ye may all prophesy one by one, that [h] all may learn, and [i] all may be comforted.

32 And [k] the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

33 For God is not *the Author* of * confusion, [l] but of peace, as [m] in all churches of the saints.

34 Let your [n] women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but [o] *they are commanded* to be under obedience, [p] as also saith the law.

35 And if they will learn any thing, [q] let them ask their husbands at home: for it is [r] a shame for women to speak in the church.

h 3. 19. 35. Prov. i 5 ix. 9. Eph. iv 11, 12.
i Rom. i. 12. 1 Cor i. 4. vii. 6, 7. Eph. vi. 22. 1 Thes. iv. 18. v 11 14.
k 29, 30 1 Sam. x. 10—13 xix 19—24. 2 Kings ii 3. 5. Job xxxii 8—11. Jer xx 9. Acts iv 19, 20
* Gr *tumult, or, unquietness*
l vii. 15. Luke ii. 14 Rom xv. 33 Gal. v. 22. 2 Thes iii. 16. Heb. xiii. 20. Jam iii 17, 18.
m iv 17 vii. 17. xi. 16.
n xi. 5. 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12.
o 35. xi. 3 7—10. Eph. v 22—24. 33. Col. iii. 18. Tit. ii. 5. 1 Pet. iii. 1. 6.
p 21. Gen. iii, 16. Num. xxx. 3—8. 11—13. Esth. i. 17—20.
q Eph. v. 25—27. 1 Pet. iii. 7.——r 34. xi. 6. 14. Eph. v 12.

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occasionally came among them, would hear something from every one to convince his understanding, to awaken his conscience, and to move his affections; he would find his secret objections answered, his secret thoughts divulged, his secret sins reproved, and the real state of his heart and soul made known to him, though before they were unperceived. And this might be expected, by the divine blessing, to produce a full persuasion of the truth and excellency of the Gospel: so that it would often happen, that the curious or ignorant despiser would be suddenly changed into a humble worshipper, and that under his deep conviction, he would even prostrate himself in adoration of the living God; acknowledging that the glorious Lord was evidently present in the midst of the assembled Christians, and evidently spake by them for the instruction of the hearers. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 26—33. How then ought their public meetings to be ordered and conducted? When they came together, all, who were endued with gifts, were ready eagerly to seize the opportunity of exercising them: so that one would begin to sing a psalm or spiritual song, another to discourse on some doctrine, another to speak in an unknown tongue, another to declare some special revelation that had been made to him, or another to interpret what had been spoken. Thus several would speak at the same time, in different parts of the assembly; and while every one was more desirous to be heard and admired, than to hear and be edified, the whole scene became confused, and the great end of their coming together was overlooked.—As a general rule by which such abuses might be remedied, they should always take care, that all things were done with a view to their common edification. If then any of them chose to speak in an unknown tongue, let no more than two, or at most three, one after another, exercise this gift, at one meeting, and let some one interpret his discourse. But if none present were enabled to do this, let him, who was about to speak in an unknown tongue, be silent; and be content, on proper occasions, to speak to himself and to God in meditation and prayer; without obtruding his unintelligible words upon the congregation, who ought to be more profitably employed. Let the prophets also speak by two or three at the same meeting, in due order; and let those prophets especially, who were silent, exercise their judgment upon what was spoken, to determine whether it accorded with the Scripture, as false prophets might creep in among them. In case any thing should be immediately revealed to one who sat by, which required present attention, let the first, on a proper intimation given, keep silence till that had been considered: or, as some render it, let the other wait till the first had done speaking. For they needed not be eager to speak first; seeing by properly waiting they might all prophesy, (who had that gift,) and all be edified. Nor could it be urged, that the divine impulse upon their minds constrained them to speak immediately, as the frantic heathen priests and priestesses did; for the spirits of the prophets, (their minds when most powerfully influenced by the Holy Spirit,) were subject to government, and might be restrained, directed, and regulated by reason and judgment, as at other times. That gracious God, whose Spirit spake by them, was by no means the Author of confusion and disorder, such as must ensue from the vehement utterance of many speakers at once, vying with each other who should attract most attention; but of peace, harmony, mutual love, and good order: as it was evident in the conduct of all the churches of the saints, in this and other particulars.

V. 34, 35. (xi. 3—16.) To reconcile these verses with the Scripture referred to, it seems most natural to suppose, that some of the Corinthian women were used to speak publicly, when not under any immediate or extraordinary impulse of the Holy Spirit; and perhaps they interrupted the other speakers by inquiries or objections, according to the disputatious spirit that prevailed. The apostle therefore laid it down as a general rule, (to which the foregoing case was the only exception,) that women must not be allowed to speak in the public congregation, or to assume the office of teachers or disputants: for this by no means consisted with the obedience to their husbands which the law of God inculcated. But if they met with

36 What? [s] came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?

37 If [t] any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, [u] let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord

s Is. ii. 3. Mic. iv. 1, 2. Zech xiv 8. Acts xiii. 1—3 xv. 35, 36. xvi 9, 10. xvii. 1 10, 11 15. xviii 1. &c 2 Cor. x. 13—16 1 Thes. i. 8.——t viii 2 xiii 1—3 Num. xvi 3, 4 16. Rom xii. 3 2 Cor x. 7 12. xi. 4, 12 15. Gal. vi 3.——u vii. 25. 40. Luke x. 16. 1 Thes iv. 1—8 2 Pet. iii. 2 1 John iv. 6 Jude 17.

38 But [x] if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.

39 Wherefore, brethren, [y] covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.

40 Let [z] all things be done decently, and in order.

x Hos. iv. 17. Matt vii 6. xv. 14. 1 Tim vi. 3—5. 2 Tim. iv. 3 4. Rev xxii. 11, 12.

y 1. 3. 5. 24, 25. xii. 31. 1 Thes. v. 20.

z 26—33 xi. 34. Rom. xiii. 13. *Marg.* Col ii. 5 Tit. i. 5.

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any thing in the public instructions, which they could not understand or assent to, let them wait till they went home, and then ask their husbands about it, who were supposed able and willing to inform them, and who were the most proper persons for them to confer with. For it was inconsistent with modesty and propriety, and would be scandalous among their neighbours, for women to make a practice of discoursing in the public assemblies.

V. 36—40. The abuses here reproved were peculiar to the Church at Corinth, yet they deemed themselves a model for others to imitate! Was then theirs the mother-church, from whom the preachers of the Gospel had first come forth? Or had the word of God reached them alone? As it was evident neither of these was the case, and as many churches had been planted before them, why did they presume to set themselves up above, or against, the wholesome regulations observed elsewhere? Indeed, some of their ambitious teachers might be strenuous in supporting the innovations which had been introduced, professing that he was a prophet, or a spiritual man, 'that is, one 'well qualified, by religious instruction, to understand 'and judge about spiritual things, as opposed to the carnal 'man, and the babe in Christ.' (iii. 1.) (*Beza.*) And if he really were so, let him show it, by acknowledging these things to be the commandments of Christ, by his apostle. But if any man was, or pretended to be, ignorant of Paul's apostolical authority, and of the obligation of these instructions, let him continue ignorant, for he would not enter into any further debate with him. Upon the whole, therefore, the apostle exhorted them to desire to prophesy, in preference to all other spiritual gifts, yet not to forbid speaking with tongues, but let all things relative to their public assemblies be regulated with a strict regard to decorum, propriety, and regularity, as this must tend most to their own edification, and the credit of the Gospel among unbelievers, as well as the most honourable and acceptable to God. To adduce this text as a direct argument about any particular external ceremonies used in divine worship, (which always appear decent and orderly to those who invent and impose them, and the contrary to those who dissent from them,) is doubtless wresting it from its proper meaning.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

All our pursuits should spring from *love*, as the grand motive; and this we ought to follow without wearying, though it seem to flee from us. Every endowment or possession is valuable in proportion to its usefulness, and all public ordinances should be conducted as may most tend to the edification, exhortation, and consolation of believers, and the conversion of sinners. Even fervent spiritual affection must be governed by the sober exercise of the understanding, or else, with the best intentions, men will run into great extravagancies, and disgrace the truth which they mean to promote. What shall I profit? Or, in what respect shall I be profited? are proper inquiries, when we are considering in what manner to conduct our meeting together for religious exercises. Ministers especially should not only study to exercise their gifts with acceptance and reputation, but inquire, in the first place, what advantage their hearers may derive from their subjects, and their manner of treating them. Alas! for want of this, many a good speaker, in delivering an eloquent and admired discourse, is even more unmeaning than "things without life giving sound;" and if they who play on musical instruments made no more exact distinction in their sounds, than many preachers do in their doctrine and exhortation, they would be unfit even to direct the motions of dancers, much more to call the soldier to arm for the battle.

V. 12—25.

Whilst we reasonably exclaim against prayers and worship in an unknown tongue, and thank God for emancipating us from so absurd an imposition, we should inquire, whether some, who use the language of their country, do not affect such elegant phrases, such sonorous words, and such learned discussions, that they render themselves as unintelligible to the common people, as if they preached in Latin or Greek? This, alas! is sometimes in a measure the case with preachers whose doctrine is worthy of attention; for, as to many public teachers, obscurity is their best qualification. If we use language in any respect above the capacities of our most illiterate and weakest hearers, to please a few who are more learned and polite, how shall they, who most need instruction, know what is spoken? Indeed, it might as well be spoken to the air. But if we speak in plain, simple, and perspicuous language, which even children may understand, (and this does not imply coarseness and vulgarity,) we may be sure that the more intelligent part of our audience will be edified, if disposed to receive instruction. And surely a minister of Christ should more desire to "excel for the edifying of the "Church," than in order to obtain the character of a polite, eloquent, or learned speaker! Whatever judgment others may form, all who are actuated by the love and zeal of the apostle, will choose to speak five words so as to be understood, rather than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue, and will waive the display of their natural or acquired abilities, from the same motive that the apostle did his gift of divers tongues. Whether we pour out our prayers, sing the praises of God, or thank him for his mercies, we should be careful to unite spiritual affec-

CHAP. XV.

The apostle states the gospel, which he had preached at Corinth, and shows how fully the resurrection of Christ had been demonstrated, 1—11. *He proves that the resurrection of the dead is inseparable from that of Christ; so that the denial of it is subversive of Christianity, and of all the hopes of Christians,* 12—19: *but Christ, the First-fruits, being risen, all others shall arise in due order, till death the last enemy being subdued, the kingdom shall be delivered up to the Father,* 20—28; *otherwise it would be in vain for any to risk their lives, as the apostle did,* 29—32. *He warns and reproves the Corinthians, refutes objections, and illustrates his doctrine,* 33—41; *shows the manner of the resurrection; and the change which will be wrought both in the dead, and those who shall then be found living,* 42—53. *As death will at length be thus swallowed up in victory; he triumphs in hope over death and the grave, through Christ,* 54—57; *and concludes with an animated exhortation to steady and persevering diligence in the work of the Lord,* 58.

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tions with sober judgment, and they who lead in social worship should use such language as may affect and instruct the meanest fellow-worshipper, and enable him to add his cordial Amen to what is spoken. We should, indeed, be as children, in respect of malice and revenge; and a child-like docility, simplicity, dependence, and submission, become us; but childish deviations from the maxims of good sense and sober reason are unbecoming the disciples of Christ, who should endeavour to attain a ripeness in wisdom and understanding, and to "walk wisely "towards them that are without." For though religious ordinances ought to be peculiarly directed to the edification of believers, yet provision should also be made for those unbelievers, who may come among us, to make their remarks; nor should any thing be admitted, which may reasonably excite their disgust, or needlessly confirm their prejudices. They are ready enough to conclude that we are enthusiastic or mad, without our giving them any ground for the charge; and the more willing we are to bear *unmerited* contempt and reproach, the more careful should we be not to deserve them. This hath not been sufficiently attended to, and many things have been said and done, without warrant from Scripture, by good men, which have sent away occasional hearers riveted in their prejudices against the truth, and disposed to ridicule it in every company. But when the word of God is soberly spoken, with an address both to the understanding and the affections, and with a close application to the conscience, occasional hearers are often unexpectedly impressed, being judged, convinced, and arraigned, by what they hear. The very secrets of their hearts seem to be disclosed by the experimental address of the preacher, and they are induced to join in that worship which they before despised, and to confess that God is of a truth among those persons, whom perhaps they came prepared to deride.

V. 26—40.

In all things edification should be aimed at; ambition, emulation, and self-preference, should be steadily repressed; men should be "swift to hear and slow to speak," more ready to receive than *forward* to give instruction, and willing, (unless the case require the contrary,) to speak to themselves and to God, leaving others to edify the congregation to better advantage. When professors of evangelical doctrine, who imagine themselves qualified and called to be teachers, are so full of their subject, that they cannot refrain from speaking, however unadvised or irregular their conduct may be, it is evident that they are more influenced by self-sufficiency and ambition, than by humble zeal and love. For the Spirit of God moves the will and affections, in a manner consistent with the exercise of sober reason and discretion. "Even the spirits of "the prophets were subject to the prophets," and doubtless this must be at least equally the case with inferior teachers. For God is the Author of peace and good order, not of confusion; and he never teaches men to neglect their relative duties, to act unbecoming their age and station, or inconsistent with decency and regularity. Indeed, restrictions of this kind are not regarded by many, who deem themselves immediately influenced by the Spirit of God, and more spiritual and zealous than their prudent brethren; yet it behooves them to show that they are so, by acknowledging such regulations to be the commandments of Christ, and excellently suited to render the worship and conduct of his people respectable before men, and honourable to him. Whereas deviations from them often lead to those things which are indeed shameful, and suited to prejudice men's minds against the Gospel, as if it dissolved relative obligations, put an end to all regular subordination, and taught even women to act inconsistently with that modesty, which is their peculiar ornament and honour. But if men will remain ignorant of such things, after proper instruction and warning, it is not adviseable to be always debating with them; we must leave them, and take heed to ourselves. However valuable these miraculous gifts were in the primitive Church, we cannot well read this epistle without cheerfully acquiescing in the will of God, as to his withholding them from us. Man's heart is so prone to pride, ostentation, and folly, that even endowments of this kind were made occasions of grievous sins and offences! Our vain-glory is sufficiently excited by inferior and ordinary gifts or abilities, and this militates greatly against our usefulness and peace. Let us then be contented with our present means and methods of instruction; let us endeavour to do all things decently and in order; and most desire that grace which sanctifies and humbles the soul, and so prepares it for heavenly felicity.

MOREOVER, brethren, [a] I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, [b] which also ye have received, and wherein [c] ye stand;

2 By which also [d] ye are saved, if ye * keep in memory † what I preached unto you, [e] unless ye have believed in vain.

3 For [f] I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received, how that [g] Christ died for our sins [h] according to the Scriptures;

4 And [i] that he was buried, and that [k] he rose again the third day [l] according to the Scriptures:

5 And [m] that he was seen of [n] Cephas, [o] then of the twelve:

6 After that, [p] he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some [q] are fallen asleep.

7 After that, he was seen of James; [r] then of all the apostles.

8 And last of all [s] he was seen of me also, as of ‡ one born out of due time.

9 For I am [t] the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle; [u] because I persecuted the Church of God.

10 But [x] by the grace of God I am what I am: [y] and his grace which *was bestowed* upon me, was not in vain; [z] but I laboured more abundantly than they all: [a] yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

11 Therefore, [b] whether *it were* I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.

[a] 3—11. i. 23, 24 ii 2—7 Acts xviii. 4, 5 Gal. i. 6—12

[b] Mark iv. 16—20 John xii. 48 Acts ii. 41. xi 1. 1 Thes. i. 6. ii. 13. iv. 1. 2 Thes. iii 6.

[c] Rom v. 2 2 Cor i. 24. 1 Pet. v. 12

[d] i 18. 21. Acts ii. 47 *Gr.* Rom i. 16. 2 Cor. ii 15. Eph. ii. 8. 2 Tim. i 9

* Or, *hold fast.* 11, 12. Prov. iii 1 iv 13. vi. 20—23 xxiii 23. Col. i. 23. 2 Thes ii. 15. Heb. ii. 1 iii. 14 iv 14. x 23.

† Heb *by what speech I preached*

[e] 14. Ps. cvi 12, 13. Luke viii 13. John viii. 31, 32. Acts viii. 13 2 Cor vi. 1. Gal. iii. 4. Jam. ii 14 17. 26 ——[f] iv 1, 2. xi. 2 23 Ez iii. 17. Matt. xx. 18, 19 Mark xvi 15, 16. Luke xxiv 46, 47 Gal. i. 12 ——[g] Matt. xxvi. 28. Rom iii. 25 iv 25 2 Cor. v. 21 Gal i. 4. iii. 13 Eph i. 7. v. 2. Heb x. 11, 12 1 Pet ii 24. iii 18. 1 John ii 2. Rev. i. 5.——[h] Gen. iii. 15 Ps. xxii. lxix. Is. liii Dan. ix 24—26. Zech. xiii. 7. *See on,* Luke xxiv 26, 27 46 Acts iii. 18. xxvi 22, 23 1 Pet. i. 11 ——[i] Is. liii. 9 Matt. xxvii. 57—60. Mark xv 43—46 Luke xxiii. 50—53 John xix. 38—42 Acts xiii 29. Rom. vi 4. Col. ii. 12.———[k] 16—21. Matt xx 19 xxvii. 63, 64. xxviii 1—6 Mark ix. 31. x. 33, 34. xvi. 2—7 Luke ix. 22 xviii. 32, 33 xxiv. 5—7. John ii 19—21 xx 1—9. Acts i. 3. ii. 23, 24. 32 xiii. 30. xvii. 31 Heb. xiii 20.———[l] Ps xvi. 10, 11. Is. liii. 10—12 Hos. vi. 2. Jon. i. 17. Matt. xii. 40 Acts ii. 25—33. xiii 30—37 xxvi 22, 23 ——[m] Luke xxiv 34. [n] i. 12. iii 22. ix. 5. John i. 42.———[o] Mark xvi. 14 Luke xxiv. 36, &c. John xx. 19—26. Acts i. 2—14. x. 41.

[p] Matt. xxviii. 10 16, 17. Mark xvi. 7.

[q] 18. Acts vii 60. xiii 36 1 Thes. iv. 13. 15. 2 Pet. iii 4

[r] Luke xxiv. 50, Acts i. 2—12.

[s] ix. 1. Acts ix. 3—5 xviii 9. xxii. 14 18. xxvi. 16 2 Cor xii 1—6.

‡ Or, *an abortive.*

[t] 2 Cor. xi. 5. xii. 11. Eph iii 8

[u] Acts viii 3. ix. 1, &c. xxii. 4, 5. xxvi 9—11. Gal i 13. 23. 1 Tim. i 13, 14.

[x] iv. 7. Rom. xi. 1. 5 6 Eph. ii. 7, 8. iii. 7, 8. 1 Tim i. 15, 16.

[y] 2. 2 Cor. vi. 1.

[z] Rom xv. 17—20 2 Cor. x. 12—16. xi 28—30. xii 11

[a] Matt. x 20. 2 Cor. iii. 5. Gal. ii. 8. Phil. ii. 13 iv. 13. Col i 28, 29.

[b] 3, 4 ii. 2.

NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 1—11. The apostle here entered on another subject. The Corinthians were tinctured with the Sadducean spirit of Jewish skeptics; or rather with the philosophizing temper of the Grecians, who derided the doctrine of the resurrection, and denied the possibility of it. Some asserted that virtue was its own reward, and that the expectation of a future recompense was a mean unworthy motive. So that, certain persons at Corinth began to teach, that there would be no resurrection; allegorizing or explaining away what had been revealed or declared to them on that subject; though it does not appear that they denied the immortality of the soul. In order to stop the progress of so pernicious an error, the apostle began by stating the substance of the doctrine that he had taught them, which they had received by faith, as a divine testimony, in which he supposed them still to be steadfast, and by which they would certainly be saved, (being already brought into a safe state,) in case they remembered and cleaved to what he had delivered to them: this they would do, unless they had believed with a vain, empty, and inefficient faith, in which case they might be left to embrace tenets subversive of the whole doctrine of Christ. In the first place, and as a matter of the greatest importance, he had delivered to them, even as he had received it of the Lord Jesus, that he, the Messiah, the Son of God, had died a spotless sacrifice of infinite value for the sins of mankind, as "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world," in order, that "all who believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life:" and this agreed with the types, prophecies, and promises of the Scriptures. That, being really dead, Pilate had delivered his body to Joseph of Arimathea to be buried; and that on the third day he arose again, as it had been foretold. (*Marg. Ref.*) To demonstrate his resurrection, on which the whole of his religion rested, he first appeared to Peter; then in the evening of that day to those of the twelve apostles who were assembled; and on the evening of the succeeding first day of the week, when Thomas was present and confessed him as his "Lord and God:" that afterwards he appeared to above five hundred disciples at once, doubtless in Galilee, where he was most known, where many of his disciples lived, and where he appointed to meet the apostles. Most of these had been still preserved to be living witnesses of that great event; though some had fallen asleep, having died in faith and hope, and so departed to be present with their Lord. Afterwards James was favoured with a visit from his risen Saviour: probably, this was James the son of Alpheus who wrote the epistle, but we have no other account of this appearance of Christ. Then he was seen of all the apostles, before and at his ascension: and last of all he had graciously manifested himself to Paul also, in such a manner, that he could not but assuredly know him to be Jesus who had been crucified. In this, the Lord had acted with peculiar condescension and mercy; because he was so vile and worthless, that he was more properly to be deemed *an untimely birth*, or an *abortion*, than in any way entitled to such distinguished favour. 'Suetonius says, that there were, in the time of Augustus, an enormous number of senators, and most of them most unworthy of that dignity, having, after the death of Cæsar, by favour and bribery gotten to be elected. These the multitude proverbially styled *abortives.* St. Paul, like them, was none of the regular number of the twelve, first taken in, in Christ's life-time, no way worthy to be an apostle; and yet by Christ's grace, and special favour, called and admitted to this dignity.' (*Hammond.*) In this respect he considered himself as the least of the apostles, and unworthy to be numbered among them, seeing he had so wickedly and cruelly persecuted the Church of God; (though in gifts and authority he was *not*

12 ¶ Now [c] if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, [d] how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

13 But [e] if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:

14 And if Christ be not risen, [f] then *is* our preaching vain, and your faith *is* also vain.

15 Yea, and we are found [g] false witnesses of God; because [h] we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: [i] whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

16 For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:

17 And if Christ be not raised, [k] your faith *is* vain; [l] ye are yet in your sins.

18 Then they also which are [m] fallen asleep in Christ, are perished.

19 If in [n] this life only we have [o] hope in Christ, we are [p] of all men most miserable.

c 3, 4.
[illegible] 2 Tim.
ii. 8.
e [illegible] John xi. 25.
[illegible] Acts [illegible]
6. Rom. iv. 24,
25. viii. 11. 34.
2 Cor. iv. 10—
14. Col. iii. 1—
4. 1 Thes. iv.
14. 2 Tim. iv.
1. Heb. ii. 14.
xiii. 20. 1 Pet.
i. 3. Rev. i. 18.
f 2. 17. Ps. lxxxix.
48. Is. xlix. 4.
[illegible] 8.
Matt. xv. 9.
Gal. ii. 2. Jam.
i. 26. ii. 20.
g Ex. xxiii. 3.
Job xiii. 7—10.
Rom. iii. 7, 8.
h Acts ii. 24. 32.
iv. 10. 33. x. 39—42. xiii. 30—33. xx. 21.——i 13. 20.

k 2. 14.
l Ex. xxxiii. 16.
John viii. 21—
24. Acts v. 31.
xiii. 38, 39.
Rom. v. 10. viii.
33, 34. Heb. vii.
23—28. ix. 22—
28. x. 4—12.
1 Pet. i. 3. 21.
m 6. 1 Thes. iv.
13, 14. Rev. xiv.
13.
n Ps. xvii. 14. Ec.
vi. 12. ix. 9.
Luke viii. 14.
xxi. 34. 1 Cor.
vi. 3, 4. 2 Tim.
ii. 4.
o Eph. i. 12, 13.
1 Thes. i. 3.
2 Tim. i. 12.
1 Pet. i. 21.——p iv. 9—13. Matt. x. 21—25. xxiv. 9. John xvi. 2. 33. Acts xiv. 22. 2 Tim. iii. 12. Rev. xiv. 13.

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a whit behind the chiefest of them.) However, by the rich mercy and powerful grace of God, he was at length brought to be a Christian and an apostle, and to be employed in many important services: nor was this distinguishing favour shown him in vain, seeing he had been constrained by the love of Christ and of souls to labour more abundantly than any of the other apostles. Yet this was not to be ascribed to him, or to any thing in his natural disposition more towardly than others, but wholly to the grace of God that was with him, which both wrought the willing mind, and gave him the ability thus to abound in the work of the Lord. As therefore all the apostles had been witnesses of Christ's resurrection, so both they and he had every where preached the same doctrines. These were then to be considered as the grand peculiarities of Christianity, which could not be denied, without virtually attempting to subvert the whole system.—Several other appearances of Christ after his resurrection have been considered in the evangelists; but this account mentions circumstances not before recorded, and it illustrates that important subject. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12—18. All the apostles preached the resurrection of Christ as an undoubted fact, a fundamental doctrine, and the great demonstration of the truth of the Gospel: how then was it that some Corinthians ventured to declare that no resurrection of the dead was to be expected? Probably they argued against the possibility or credibility of such an event; and then endeavoured to put a figurative construction on the testimony of apostles or prophets concerning it. This was, in reality, a denial of Christ's resurrection; for that authenticated fact demonstrated the possibility of the dead being raised: it confirmed all that he had taught about that doctrine, and it was an earnest of the resurrection of all believers; so that to invalidate the resurrection of Jesus, would subvert Christianity itself. For this was the grand proof that he was the Messiah: it evinced the acceptance of his atonement; and it made way for his ascension, intercession, and mediatorial kingdom. The whole, therefore, of the doctrine taught by the apostles, was so closely connected with the resurrection of Christ, that, if that could be disproved, their preaching would be evinced to be useless and delusory, and the faith of their hearers groundless and unprofitable. Yea, they would be convicted of bearing false witness in this sacred cause, as if God had needed such base frauds to support religion in the world! which in some respects was bearing false witness against him. And, notwithstanding all the miracles wrought by them, their self-denying labours, holy lives and patient sufferings unto death, it would be proved that they combined together to deceive mankind with a most egregious falsehood! For the general proposition, "that "there is no resurrection," includes in it that particular one, "that Christ is not risen;" and the resurrection of others can only need a continuation of that same omnipotent exertion which raised him from the grave. But if Christ was not risen, their faith was vain, and "they "were yet in their sins," as no repentance or reformation could possibly take away their guilt, and nothing could prove that Christ's atonement had been accepted, except his resurrection from the dead. Nay, further, they who had died in the faith, and fallen asleep in Jesus, whether by a natural death or as martyrs, had certainly perished in their sins if Christ was not risen; for whatever might be urged on other grounds for the immortality of the soul, there could be no other way of forgiveness, acceptance, and eternal life, than through the merit of his sacrifice, the belief of which could not consist with the denial of his resurrection. As the persons spoken of had actually repented, renounced sin, and walked in newness of life, they could not have perished in their sins, except through the want of a sacrifice sufficient to expiate their guilt: and thus the apostle's argument concerning our Lord's resurrection, demonstrates that he and the primitive Church universally regarded the doctrine of the real Atonement of Christ's death as essential to Christianity. 'If 'Christ be not risen for our justification, we are yet 'under the guilt of sin; and if so, both body and soul 'must perish after death, and then the hope of Christians 'must terminate with this life.' (*Whitby.*)

V. 19. If the consolations derived from the hope and earnests of another life were to be thus torn from Christians, and they had no other benefit from Christ than what related to this present life, they would be of all men most miserable. Some explain this wholly of the apostles, as exposed to peculiar hardships and sufferings, and as peculiarly guilty in propagating an imposture, if indeed Christ was not risen; but there seems no proof that this restriction was intended. It does not follow that Christians would in fact be more unhappy than other men, if there should be no future reward; for even then their hopes of it, and that consolation which is thence derived, would counterbalance their peculiar trials, self-denials, and hardships; but if this hope and consolation were taken from them, they would indeed be more miserable than other

20 ¶ But [q] now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become [r] the first-fruits of them that slept.

21 For since [s] by man *came* death, [t] by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead.

22 For as [u] in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

23 But [x] every man in his own order: Christ the First-fruits; afterward [y] they that are Christ's at his coming.

24 Then [z] *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up [a] the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power.

25 For [b] he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

26 The [c] last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death.

27 For [d] he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, All things are put under *him*, *it is* manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.

28 And when [e] all things shall be subdued unto him, [f] then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be [g] all in all.

[q] See on, 4—8
[r] 23. Acts xxvi. 23. Rom. viii. 11. Col. i. 18. 1 Pet. i. 3. Rev. i. 5.
[s] 22. Rom. v. 12—17.
[t] John xi. 25, 26. Rom. vi. 23.
[u] 45—49. Gen. ii. 17. iii. 6. 19. John v. 21—29. Rom. v. 12—21.
[x] 20. Is. xxvi. 10. 1 Thes. iv. 15—17.
[y] iii. 23. 2 Cor. x. 7. Gal. iii. 29. v. 24.
[z] Dan. xii. 4. 9. 13. Matt. x. 22. xxiv. 39, 40. xxiv. 13. 1 Pet. iv. 7.
[a] Is. ix. 7. Dan. vii. 14. 27. Matt. xi. 27. xxviii. 18. Luke x. 22. John iii. 35. xiii. 3. 1 Tim. vi. 15.
[b] Ps. cx. 1. Matt. xxii. 44. Mark xii. 36. Luke xx. 42, 43. Acts ii. 34, 35. Eph. i. 22. Heb. i. 13. x. 12, 13.
[c] 55. Is. xxv. 8. Hos. xiii. 14. Luke xx. 36. 2 Tim. i. 10. Heb. ii. 14. Rev. xx. 14. xxi. 4.
[d] Ps. viii. 6, 7. Matt. xi. 27. xxviii. 18. John iii. 35. xiii. 3. Eph. i. 20, 22. Phil. ii. 9—11. Heb. i. 13. ii. 8, 9. x. 12, 13. 1 Pet. iii. 22. Rev. i. 18.
[e] Ps. ii. 8, 9. xviii. 39. 47. xxi. 8, 9. Dan. ii. 34, 35. 40—45. Matt. xiii. 41—43. Phil. iii. 21. Rev. xix. 11—21. xx. 2—4. 10—15.
[f] iii. 23. xi. 3. John xiv. 28.
[g] xii. 6. Eph. i. 23. Col. iii. 11.

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men, having lost their relish for those vain pleasures which alone could be hoped for, experiencing, earnest desires, which must certainly be disappointed, and enduring many peculiar evils, without any peculiar support and consolation. The fact, however, is, that Christians have not only the hope of a future felicity, (which even if groundless must afford great consolation whilst it prevails,) but also the earnests, the beginnings, and first-fruits of it, in those holy affections towards God, and that joy in him, which a stranger intermeddleth not with, and therefore they are so far from being of all men most miserable, that they of all men enjoy the most solid comfort, amidst their difficulties and trials, and even in the seasons of the sharpest persecutions. Many of the Corinthians were not aware what dangerous inferences were fairly deducible from the tenets to which they had listened, and their false teachers would doubtless disavow them; yet it was proper thus to expose them, that they might be put upon their guard, and not patronize opinions pregnant with such mischief to the souls of men, and so destructive of the amimating hopes and comforts of all believers.

V. 20—28. The apostle, having established the fact of Christ's resurrection, from that fact shows the certainty of our resurrection, and then, from the important questions in the thirty-fifth verse, he takes occasion to descant on the glorious change that shall take place in the bodies of the saints, and finally he tramples on death by the consideration of a resurrection and glorious immortality.—This is the plan, or method, and the coherence of the parts, in this noble chapter. In opposition to the errors above noticed, the apostle *testified* with authority, as fully instructed by immediate revelation, that Christ was risen from the dead, and was become the first-fruits of the whole harvest of those that *slept* in death, even of all believers who had died from the beginning, and of all who should die to the end of the world. He was the First who arose to die no more, and the most illustrious of all, who ever should arise; he arose as a public Person, as the Surety, the Representative, and the Fore-runner of his saints; his resurrection was a pledge and assurance of theirs, and as the first-fruits presented to God, to sanctify and secure his blessing upon the whole crop. For, as by man sin and death entered into the world, so by Man, by One in human nature, came the resurrection of the dead; and, as in consequence of their relation to Adam, all men are born mortal, and at length die, even so, in and by Christ, shall all be made alive. All men, through his undertaking, being placed under a dispensation of mercy, shall be raised from the dead, that their future state may be accordingly determined; yet none will be finally benefited, but they who are one with him by faith, and the participation of his life-giving Spirit; and of these the apostle particularly treats in this chapter. This resurrection must be effected in an orderly manner, according to the appointment of God; Christ himself hath been the First-fruits: hereafter, at his coming, his redeemed people will be raised before others, and at last the wicked will arise also. Then the end of this present state of things will arrive, and the solemnities of the final judgment being concluded, Christ will deliver up the mediatorial kingdom to God, even to the Father from whom he received it; having previously put down all authority and power, which have been placed in opposition to his cause and kingdom. For he must reign till all enemies be subjected to him, for thus it had been predicted, and the Scripture cannot be broken. Of these enemies, death will be the last that will be put under the Redeemer's feet, when he hath finally delivered all his people from this universal conqueror, and entirely abolished him. For when it is said that JEHOVAH hath put all things under the feet of Christ, it is evidently meant of *all creatures*, and with an exception of the great Creator, who put all things under him; so that, when all things shall be subdued to the incarnate Son, and when the end of his mediatorial authority shall be thus completely answered, then will the Son himself, as Man and Mediator, be subject under Him, who hath put all things under him; all the power and authority will be acknowledged to have been of God, and all the honour will be referred to him; his absolute kingdom shall then supersede the Mediatorial kingdom of Christ, that God may be acknowledged and glorified, as "all in all," the first great Cause, and the last End, in every thing, and the Object of universal adoration and obedience. The distinction between the absolute, universal, and everlasting kingdom of God, the h 16. 32. Matt. xx 22.

29 Else [h] what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?

Governor of all, and the mediatorial kingdom of Christ, as instituted for the benefit of fallen man, is every where implied in Scripture. The Father, as the Head of the absolute kingdom, ceased not to reign when the Son was advanced to the mediatorial throne, as that authority was only intended to endure for a time, in order to accomplish certain important ends, to the glory of God in man's salvation. After the day of judgment, this kingdom will be terminated; Christ, having executed his commission, will cease to reign over all worlds as mediator, having publicly delivered up the kingdom to God in the person of the Father, yet he will, in human nature, retain a peculiar authority over his redeemed people; and, as One with the Father, he will, with him and the Holy Spirit, reign One "God over all, blessed for evermore;" nor will he any more cease to reign, *in this sense*, when he hath given up the mediatorial kingdom, than the Father ceased to reign when he appointed the Son to that kingdom. For in this passage, as in some others, the Person of the Father is mentioned, as filling the throne, and appointing the Mediator, in order to distinguish that absolute authority of God from the delegated authority of the Son in human nature. 'He saith not that "the Father," 'mentioned in 'the twenty-fourth verse, but that "God may be all in "all;" 'and so he seems to lead us to that interpretation 'of the Godhead, which comprehends Father, Son, and 'Holy Ghost. That the Godhead may govern all things 'immediately by himself, without the intervention of a 'Mediator between him and us, to exact our obedience 'in his name, and to convey to us his favours and rewards. '—So as now Christ, God-man, is "all in all," (*Col.* iii. 11.) 'because the Father hath put all things into his 'hand, does all things, and governs all things, by him; 'when this œconomy ceases, the Godhead will be "all in "all," 'as governing and influencing all things by him'self immediately.' "That God may be all in all," 'by a full communication of himself to, and an inti'mate union with, all his saints.' 'As the priesthood of 'Christ must needs cease, when the subject of it ceaseth, 'and he hath none to intercede for, so must his kingly of'fice cease, when all his friends have that eternal life con'ferred upon them, for which this power was given to 'him, and all his enemies are become his footstool.'—'The Godhead could alone enable him to execute his 'kingly office, yet this power was conferred on him, "because he was the Son of man." 'He intercedeth still 'in heaven, by virtue of his blood; all favours are granted 'to the Church through him, and "God will judge the "world by the Man Christ Jesus." 'While he conti'nued on earth, and acted only as a Prophet sent from God, 'he always owned that he could "do nothing of himself, "but as the Father gave him commandment, so he did, "and so he spake." 'But being exalted to be Lord of all 'things, he acted as a Lord in all things, which relate to 'his kingly office over his Church. The exercise of this 'authority he shall then lay down, when "all things are "subdued to him;" 'no other kingdom or dominion be'ing to be exercised in the celestial state, but what is es'sential to the Godhead. And though he shall ever so 'far reign, as to be still at the right hand of God, in ho'nour, dignity, and beatitude, and though the effects of 'his kingly power shall continue for ever, yet the exer'cise of that power shall then cease, and he, as Man, 'shall be subject to the Father.' 'As Christ before was "all in all," 'in reference to his Church, and "from his "fulness they did all receive," so now the Godhead may 'be all in all, and fill all things immediately by himself.' (*Whitby*.) No doubt Christ, as Man, and in his mediatorial kingdom, always was most perfectly subject to the Godhead, referring all to his honour, and exercising all his authority, "to the glory of God the Father;" but when the grand designs of that kingdom shall be illustriously completed, in the view of all holy creatures in the universe, and the kingdom delivered up, this shall appear in the most conspicuous manner, and so as far to exceed all our conceptions, and the glory of the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, will be displayed and adored, in the highest possible degree.

V. 29. The apostle, having shown the order and event of the general resurrection, proceeds to evince still further the importance of a firm belief of it. The expression, "baptized for the dead," has given occasion to a variety of ingenious conjectures, and learned discussions. Some argue that it only means 'baptized in the name of one 'who certainly died,' and who, "if the dead rise not," 'still remains among the dead;' but the word rendered *dead* is *plural*, and all the labour bestowed to remove that difficulty appears to be altogether in vain. Others suppose that the apostle refers to a practice, which it seems at one time prevailed in the Church, of baptizing a living person in the stead, and for the supposed benefit, of one who had died unbaptized. But who can imagine, that so absurd and gross a superstition was customary when the apostle wrote? Or that he should sanction it? Beza, rather triumphantly, concludes that he has discovered and fixed the true interpretation; and that the apostle meant the *washing* of the dead bodies among the Jews, and Christians, before burial, (*Acts* ix. 37;) which he thinks was a profession that they expected a resurrection. But this use of the word *baptize*, in such a connexion, could hardly be expected; and the words will not bear that sense by any fair interpretation. Hammond contends, that it means the profession of faith, concerning the resurrection of the dead, which was required of persons at their baptism, which represented, as he thinks, the burial and resurrection of Christ. Why did they profess this, if they did not believe it? But this is far from satisfactory: for the peculiar circumstances of some persons, when they were baptized, seem evidently intended. 'What this bap'tizing for the dead was, I confess I know not, but it 'seems by the following verses, to be something wherein 'they exposed themselves to the danger of death' (*Locke*.) The following interpretation, however, suggested by Dr. Doddridge, who received it from Sir Richard Ellis, appears the true one. The apostle refers to the case of those who presented themselves for baptism, immediately after the

30 And [i] why stand we in jeopardy every hour?

31 I [k] protest by * your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, [l] I die daily.

32 If † after the manner of men I have fought with [m] beasts at [n] Ephesus, [o] what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? [p] let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die.

33 [q] Be not deceived; [r] evil communications corrupt good manners.

34 [s] Awake to righteousness, and [t] sin not; for [u] some have not the knowledge of God: [x] I speak *this* to your shame.

i 31. Rom. viii. 36—39. 2 Cor. iv. 7—12 vi. 9. xi. 23—27. Gal v 11.
k Gen. xliii. 3. 1 Sam. viii 9 Jer. xi 7 Zech. iii. 6.
* Some read, *our.*
2 Cor i. 12. ii 14 1 Thes ii. 19. iii. 9.
l iv. 9—13. Acts xx. 23. Rom. viii. 36. 2 Cor. iv. 10, 11. xi 23.
† Or, to speak *after the,* &c. Rom. vi. 19.——m 2 Pet. ii. 12 Jude 10 ——n Acts xix 1. 23, &c. 2 Cor. i. 8—10 ——o Job xxxv. 3. Ps. lxxiii. 13—15. Mal. iii 14, 15. Luke ix. 25.
p Ec. ii. 24. xi. 9. Is. xxii. 13 lvi. 12. Luke xii. 19, 20.
q vi. 9. Matt xxiv. 4. 11. 24. Gal. vi 7 Eph. v. 6. 2 Thes. ii. 10 Rev. xii. 9 xiii 6—14.
r v. 6. Prov. ix. 6. xiii. 20. 2 Tim. ii. 16—18. Heb. xii. 15 2 Pet. ii. 2. 18—20.——s Joel i. 5 Jon. i 6 Rom xiii. 11 Eph v. 14 ——t Ps. iv 4. cxix. 11. John v 14. viii 11.——u viii. 7 *See on,* Rom i. 28. 1 Thes. iv. 5.——x vi. 5 Heb v 11, 12.

martyrdom of their brethren, or at their funerals; as if fresh soldiers should enlist and press forward to the assault, to supply the places of those who had fallen in battle. Thus they professed their faith in Christ, and ventured the rage of their enemies, at the very time when others had been put to death for the Gospel. But what advantage could they propose to themselves from such a conduct, if there were no resurrection? Or what wisdom could there be in so doing? For in this case, Christianity itself would lose the great evidence of its truth; even the immortality of the soul might be called in question; believers were yet in their sins; and they, who had died as martyrs, had lost their souls, as well as their lives! This might show the Corinthians how greatly their sentiment tended to discourage men from professing the Gospel, in times of persecution, and to make them afraid and ashamed to own the cause of Christ. If this were the case, why did Christians in general, or the apostles and evangelists in particular, live in continual and urgent danger of suffering and death, by their open profession of the Gospel and their zeal in promoting it? They could have no sufficient encouragement for so doing, if the dead arose not.

V. 30—32. The apostle could protest in the most solemn manner, "by *their* rejoicing," or his rejoicing with them, and on their account, as converted by his ministry; (several copies read it "*our* rejoicing;") that he "died daily;" he was every day exposed to the peril of martyrdom; he expected that violent death continually, and his manifold hardships and sufferings rendered his life a kind of lingering execution. To all this he had nothing to oppose, but the joyful hope and blessed earnests of future felicity, through his crucified and risen Lord; and the pleasure of bringing others to share the same salvation, which, *upon the principles* that he was confuting, must prove a mere delusion. What profit then could he derive from his late perils at Ephesus, if the dead should not arise? he had there, "after the manner of men, fought "with wild beasts." It is not probable that the apostle literally fought with wild beasts in the public shows; such an event could scarcely have been passed over unnoticed by Luke in the Acts of the Apostles; as a Roman citizen, it cannot be supposed that he would have been exposed to such an indignity, and the expression, "after "the manner of men," favours the figurative interpretation. But the irrational fury of his enraged enemies, with the extreme danger to which he was exposed, might very properly be represented as a contest with savage beasts of prey. Many expositors have supposed that the apostle referred to the tumult at Ephesus, excited by Demetrius and his workmen; but he afterwards expresses his purpose of continuing at Ephesus till Pentecost; (xvi. 8.) whereas in the history it is said, that "after the uproar "ceased, he departed to go into Macedonia." (*Acts* xx, 1.) Indeed his whole plan seems to have been deranged, in good measure, by that tumult. (*Notes*, xvi. 9, 10. 2 *Cor.* i. 8—14.) Had he, in this short and figurative expression, alluded to that event, in writing to the Corinthians, it must have been as supposing them previously acquainted with it. It is evident, that he wrote from Ephesus, and that he intended to remain there for some time. The epistle must therefore have been written *before that tumult*, and some other of his perils and hardships at Ephesus must be meant. He had great success and many adversaries in that city; and it is plain, that but a small part of his sufferings have been particularly recorded. (*Note*, 2 *Cor.* xi. 21—31.) 'If this sense,' (the literal interpretation,) 'be not liked, you may interpret "after "the manner of men," '*according to the intention of men*, 'it being the intention of the men of Asia, to deal so 'with him. Note also, that cruel and bloody-minded 'men are often represented under this metaphor of beasts. 'So Ignatius, when he was carried from Syria to Rome 'under a band of soldiers,' (who, saith he, are the worse for the kindness I show them,) 'From Syria to Rome I 'fight with beasts. And Heraclitus says, The Ephesians 'were turned into beasts, because they slew one another.' (*Whitby.*)

V. 33, 34. The apostle's conduct in steadfastly persevering to profess and preach the Gospel, abundantly demonstrated that he most firmly believed a future resurrection, with which all his hopes and comforts were inseparably connected. Whereas, the epicurean maxim, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," let us indulge every sense and appetite without restraint, and shrink from all hardship as much as possible, for death will soon terminate our pleasures, and nothing further is to be expected, would be the natural inference from a denial of that doctrine, when carried to its unavoidable consequences. Let none then be deceived by the specious reasonings and pretences of their false teachers; for even a heathen poet, (*Menander,*) could teach them, that "evil "communications," or the familiar converse of those who inculcated false and pernicious principles, would "corrupt their good manners," and tend to self-indulgence, an undue regard to present ease, interest, or reputation, and a disposition to neglect their duty, conceal their sentiments, and avoid suffering for Christ's sake. Indeed, they had already produced these effects in many instances, and were diffusing their baleful influence. The apostle must therefore call upon them to "awake righteously," (in a righteous manner,) and as became righteous persons, from the lethargy into which these delusions had thrown

35 But some *man* will say, [y] How are the dead raised up? and [z] with what body do they come?

36 *Thou* [a] fool, [b] that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:

37 And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain; it may chance of wheat, or of some other *grain:*

38 But [c] God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.

39 [d] All flesh *is* not the same flesh: but *there is* one *kind of* flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, *and* another of birds.

40 *There are* also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial *is* one, and the *glory* of the terrestrial *is* another.

41 *There is* [e] one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for *one* star differeth from *another* star in glory.

42 So also [f] *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown [g] in corruption; [h] it is raised in incorruption:

43 It is sown [i] in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown [k] in weakness; it is raised [l] in power:

44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

45 And so it is written, [m] The first

y Job xi. 12. xxii. 13. Ps lxxiii. 11. Ec. xi 5. Ez xxxvii. 3. 11. John iii. 4. 9. ix. 10.
z 38—53 Matt. xxii 29, 30 Phil. iii 21
a Luke xii 20. xxiv 25 Rom i. 22. Eph. v. 15.
b John xii. 24.
c iii. 7. Ps. civ. 14 Is. lxi 11. Mark iv. 26—29.
d Gen. i 20—26.
e Gen i. 14—16. Deut iv. 19. Job xxxi. 26, 27. Ps. viii. 3. xix. 4—6 cxlviii. 3—5. Is. xxiv. 23
f 50—54. Dan. xii. 3 Matt xiii 43. Phil. iii 20, 21.
g Gen. iii. 19 Job xvii. 14 Ps xvi. 10. xlix. 9. 14. Is. xxxviii. 17. Acts ii. 27 31. xiii. 34 — 37. Rom. i. 23 viii. 21.
h 52 — 54. Luke xx. 35, 36. 1 Pet. i. 4.
i Phil. iii. 20, 21.
k Job xiv 10. *Marg* Ps. cii. 23. 2 Cor. xiii. 4.
l vi 14. Matt. xxii. 29, 30. Mark xii. 24, 25. 2 Cor. xiii. 4. Phil iii. 10.
m 47—49. Gen ii. 7. Rom v. 12—14. Rev. xvi. 3.

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them; for, whilst they were elated with an opinion of their superior knowledge, it was evident that some among them had not the humbling, sanctifying, and saving knowledge of God; and their communications corrupted the good manners of the rest. This must be spoken to their shame, and it behooved them to be humbled for it, and ashamed of it, as far better things might have been expected from them, considering the opportunities which they had enjoyed, and the profession which they had made. It is evident, that the apostle constantly aimed to bring the Corinthians to a more humble opinion of themselves, and gradually to draw them off from their false teachers.

V. 35—38. The philosophizing skeptics, concerning the resurrection, were ready, (as the apostle well knew,) to inquire in what manner the dead could be raised, after their bodies had been turned to dust, mixed with other substances, and even become a part of their bodies? And, if this were possible, with what bodies, or what sort of bodies, would they come forth from the graves? With such as they had on earth? or with others of a different form and constitution? Such an inquirer the apostle addressed as a foolish and ignorant man, who pretended to limit omnipotency, and to deny the possibility of an event, because he could not solve all difficulties about it, and comprehend in what manner it could take place. Even the ordinary productions of the earth exhibited a process, which might *illustrate* the subject; for the seed sown in the ground does not vegetate, except it corrupt and die. Some modern infidels have maintained, against the apostle, that the seed does not die in vegetation; because the *germen* lives, and expands itself, and only the extraneous matter corrupts. But in fact, the seed, as such, doth die; it ceases to be a grain of corn, though a part of it springs, as it were, into new life, by a process which we can no more fully comprehend, than we can the manner of the resurrection. Even a "prophet of their own," Lucretius, the epicurean atheist, says,—'Whatever change 'transfers a body into a new class of beings, may be 'justly called the death of the original substance. For 'what is changed from what it was, that dies.' (*Creech.*) The body sown is not the same which will exist, when it hath sprung up and produced the full corn in the ear, but a bare grain of wheat, barley, or other corn. This, (after corrupting in the earth,) by the wonderful power of God, springs up and produces an increase, and he gives that increase a body, as it pleaseth him. Yet, whatever else is changed, he always gives every seed its own body, and so preserves a complete distinction between the different kinds of vegetable productions. (*Note, John* xii. 24.) Thus the bodies of believers, after corrupting and turning to dust, will be raised in a new and more glorious form; not in every respect the same that they were, but one far superior and more excellent. This will be done in the infinite wisdom, according to the sovereign will, and by the almighty power of God, but in a manner inexplicable to us. The identity of the same particles of matter, as necessary to the resurrection of the same body, is no where mentioned in Scripture; and this chapter seems to militate against such an opinion. God hath many other ways of preserving personal identity; exactly the same particles do not constitute our bodies for two hours together in any part of our lives; yet we are the same persons, both in body and soul, from childhood to old age. So that there is no need to clog the doctrine with this opinion, which furnishes infidels with their most specious objections against it. Many of the philosophers, and afterwards of the heretics, considered the body as the prison and sepulchre of the soul; from which it would at death be delivered. Such men indeed could not but dislike the doctrine of the resurrection, and be disposed to dispute against it; yet the passage does not seem to refer to objectors of this kind.

V. 39—44. The reference is here made to the variety, as well as the wonderful nature, of the works of God, in order to raise our conceptions, so as to silence all thoughts of the difficulties which seem to stand in the way. The flesh of different animals, as well as the form of vegetables, is differently constituted, produced, and supported; yet we cannot comprehend the manner in which the Creator hath made and preserves this difference; though it is evidently intended to fit them for their several kinds of life, their diverse elements, nutriment, and uses. Cannot he man Adam, was made a living soul, the last Adam *was made* [n] a quickening Spirit.

46 Howbeit, that *was* not first which is spiritual, but [o] that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.

47 The [p] first man *is* of the earth, earthy: the second man *is* [q] the Lord from heaven.

48 As *is* the earthy, [r] such *are* they also that are earthy: [s] and as *is* the heavenly, such *are* they also that are heavenly.

49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, [t] we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

[n] John i. 4. iv 10. 4. v. 21. 25—29. vi 33. 39. 40. 57. 63 68. x. 10. 28. xi. 25, 26 xiv. 6 19 xvii. 2, 3. Acts iii. 15. Rom v. 17 21 viii. 2. 10, 11. Phil. iii. 21. Col iii 4 1 John i. 1—3. v. 11, 12. Rev xxi. 6. xxii. 1 17

[o] Rom. vi. 6 Eph. iv. 22—24. Col iii. 9, 10.——[p] 45. Gen. ii. 7. iii. 19. John iii. 31. 2 Cor. v. 1,

[q] Is. ix. 6 Jer. xxiii 6 Matt. i. 23. Luke i. 16, 17. ii. 11. John iii 12, 13. 31. vi. 33. Acts x. 36. Eph. iv. 9—11. 1 Tim. iii. 16.

[r] 21, 22 Gen. v. 3 Job xiv. 4. John iii. 6. Rom. v. 12—21.

[s] Phil iii. 20. 21.

[t] Matt. xiii. 43. Rom. viii. 29. 2 Cor iii. 18 iv. 10, 11. 1 John iii. 2.

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then raise our bodies suited to the state intended for them, consistently with our personal identity, and in a manner inexplicable to us? The same varied wisdom and power of God hath formed celestial, as well as terrestrial bodies, but the celestial appear far more splendid than the terrestrial: yet even among the former there are different degrees of glory, as they are in themselves, or as they appear to us. The sun is far more glorious than the moon; yet the reflected light of the moon far exceeds that of the remote stars, and some of them shine more bright than others. Thus also will it be in the resurrection of the dead; the bodies of the righteous will appear as much more glorious than they now do, as the heavenly luminaries excel a clod of the earth, yet will they shine with different degrees of splendour, as the sun, moon, and stars do. The body, as born of dying Adam's race, and during its mortal state, and as laid in the grave, "is sown in "corruption," it tends to corruption, and after death it is speedily wasted and decayed: but at the resurrection it will be raised in incorruption, without any seeds of mortality, disease, or decay, in its constitution, but fitted for a state of perfect health, vigour, and activity, to all eternity. Here, during life, at death, and in the grave, the body is sown in dishonour; it lives as a condemned criminal; various sufferings and diseases are the forerunners of the execution which takes place at death, with much ignominy and disgrace: and the wasting state of a dead corpse is very dishonourable in itself, though the death and burial of Christ has sanctified the grave to all believers, and his resurrection hath assured us that the body shall be raised in glory. But the triumph over death and the grave will be honourable; the body will be rendered most beautiful and glorious, it will be made fit for that heavenly felicity, and those employments in which angels are associated, and it will resemble the glorious body of the Lord Jesus himself, the First-born from the dead. "It is also sown "in weakness;" our manifold diseases, and death in which they terminate, are peculiar evidences of human imbecility; and the state of the body in the ground, devoured by worms, a loathsome object and turning to the dust, shows most affectingly how little all men's power and abilities can do for them. But the body of a believer will not only be raised by almighty power; it will also be endued with a power of which we have no conception, and be rendered capable of such motions, and of producing such effects, as utterly surpass whatever we have heard, seen, or perhaps imagined. In short, the body is here sown a *natural*, or an *animal*, body; it resembles the bodies of animals, in its wants, appetites, pains, and diseases, and after death it turns to dust, as they do; but hereafter it will be raised a spiritual body, capable of the spiritual work, worship, and happiness of heaven; entirely refined from all its sensual dross and low desires; needing no more food, rest, sleep, or recreation; no longer capable of relishing animal pleasures; and no more a clog to the soul, but a helper to it, in all holy exercises. For there is a natural body suited to our state on earth, and a spiritual body suited to the heavenly state; nor can these be in every respect the same. (*Note, Luke* xx. 34—36.)

V. 45—49. In the history of the creation it was written, that "the first man, Adam, was made a living "soul:" and his natural or animal life had been communicated to all his posterity, but without the spiritual life originally connected with it; so that, ever since the fall, the very mind of man had been carnal, as well as his body mortal. (*Note, Gen.* ii. 7.) But "the last Adam," the latter Surety, or Covenant-head, of any of the human race, "was a quickening Spirit:" the Author and Source of spiritual and eternal life to all his people, by the supply of his holy Spirit. Nor does this quickening energy relate only to their souls; for he will also "quicken their mortal "bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in them;" and this is here principally intended. But the natural and carnal state, in both cases, preceded the spiritual: we are born in sin, bearing the image of the first Adam; and are afterwards born again to bear the image of the second Adam; the soul continuing *numerically* and *identically* the same, though newly created. In like manner, we first have a natural and mortal body like that of Adam, and at length we shall have an incorruptible and spiritual body like that of Christ: yet it will be in one sense *the same body*, equally ours, though in another sense it will be changed. The first man was formed of the dust of the earth, and was earthy in his nature and original: but the second Man, to whom all believers are united and conformed, "is the "Lord from heaven," the Lord of glory, Jehovah, God in human nature. As long as we are conformed to the earthy Adam, which, in respect of our bodies, will be till the resurrection, we are earthy; our bodies, during life, are gross, animal, and diseased; and, after death, they turn to the dust whence they were taken. But when we shall be conformed to the heavenly Adam, our bodies will become heavenly, and suited to that spiritual and immortal felicity, to which we shall be admitted. Even the apostle and all Christians had borne the image of the earthy Adam; but they were assured, by the promise of God, that they should at length bear the image of the heavenly Adam; not only in their souls, but in their bodies also, which would be raised very different in their appearance and capacities from what they were when on earth; and thus all

50 Now [u] this I say, brethren, [x] that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

51 Behold, [y] I shew you a mystery; [z] We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be [a] changed,

52 In [b] a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the [c] last trump: [d] for the trumpet shall sound, [e] and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must [f] put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and [g] this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, [h] Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 [i] O death, where *is* thy [k] sting? O [*] grave, where [l] *is* thy victory?

56 The [m] sting of death *is* sin; and [n] the strength of sin *is* the law;

57 But [o] thanks *be* to God, which [p] giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 [q] Therefore, my beloved brethren, [r] be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always [s] abounding in [t] the work of the Lord, forasmuch as [u] ye know that your labour [x] is not in vain [y] in the Lord.

u i. 12. vii. 29 2 Cor ix. 6. Gal. iii. 17. v 16. Eph. iv. 17. Col. ii 4.
x vi. 13. Matt xvi 17. John iii. 3–6. 2 Cor v. 1.
y ii. 7. iv. 1. xiii. . Eph. i 9. ii. 3 v. 32.
z 6. 18. 20. 1 Thes. iv. 14–17.
a Phil. iii. 21.
b Ex. xxiii. 5. Num xvi. 21. 45. Ps. lxxiii. 19.
c Ex. xix. 16 xx. 18. Num. x. 4 Is. xviii. 3 xxvii. 13 Ez. xxxiii 3. 6 Zech. ix. 14. Rev. viii. 2. 13 ix. 13, 14.
d Matt. xxiv 31. John v. 25. 1 Thes. iv. 16
e *See on*, 42. 50.
f Rom. xiii 12–14. 2 Cor. v 2–4. Gal. iii. 27. Eph. iv. 24.
g Rom. ii 7. vi 12. viii. 11. 2 Cor. iv 11 2 Tim. i. 10
h Is. xxv. 8 Luke xx 36 Heb. ii. 14, 15 Rev. xx. 14. xxi. 4.
i Hos xiii. 14.
k Acts ix 5 Rev. ix 10 *Gr.*
* Or, *hell.* Luke xvi. 23. Acts ii. 27. Rev. xx. 13, 14 *Gr*
l Job xviii. 13, 14 Ps. xlix. 8–15. lxxxix. 48 Ec. ii 15 16. iii 19 viii. 8. ix. 5, 6 Rom v. 14.
m Gen. iii 17–19 Ps. xc 3–11. Prov. xiv. 32 John viii 21. 24 Rom v. 15 17 vi 23. Heb ix. 27
n Rom iii. 19, 20 iv. 15. v 13 20 vii. 5–13. Gal iii. 10–13
o Acts xxvii. 35 Rom. vii. 25. 2 Cor i. 11. ii. 14. ix. 15 Eph. v. 20.——p 54. 2 Kings v 1. *Marg* 1 Chr. xxii. 11. Ps xcviii. 1. Prov xxi. 31 *Marg* John xvi 33. Rom. vii 37. 1 John v. 4, 5. Rev xii. 11 xv 2, 3.——q 2 Cor vii 1 2 Pet i. 4–9.——r Ruth i. 18 Ps. lv 22. lxxviii. 8. 37. cxii. 6. Col i. 23. ii. 5. 1 Thes. iii. 3. Heb iii. 14. 2 Pet. iii 17, 18.——s Phil. i 9. iv 17. Col. ii. 7. 1 Thes iii 12. iv. 1. 2 Thes. i. 3 ——t xvi 10. John vi 28, 29. Phil. ii. 30. 1 Thes. i 3. Tit ii. 14. Heb. xiii. 21.——u iii. 8 2 Chr xv. 7 Ps xix. 11. Gal vi. 9. Heb. vi. 10.——x Ps. lxxiii 13 Gal. iv. 11. Phil. ii. 16. 1 Thes. iii. 5 ——y Matt. x. 40–42. xxv. 31–40 Phil. i. 11. Heb. xiii. 15, 16.

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philosophical objections were shown to have their foundation in ignorance of the Scriptures, and of the power of God. (*Note, Matt.* xxii. 29, 30.)

V. 50—54. A similar change must also be made in the bodies of those who shall be found alive at the day of judgment: for flesh and blood, the human body in its present form and gross manner of subsistence, and with its present animal wants, propensities, and infirmities, cannot inherit the kingdom of God, or partake of its pure and refined pleasures: nor can corruption, or the body as mortal and corruptible, inherit incorruption, or the incorruptible and unchangeable felicity of heaven. The apostle therefore declared to the Corinthians a mystery, which could not be known except by immediate revelation, or understood except by faith receiving that revelation. Speaking of the whole multitude of believers to the end of time, as constituting one family, to which he and the Corinthians belonged, he might say, "*We* shall not all sleep," or die, "but we shall all be changed." But he elsewhere speaks of himself, as one of those who should be "*raised up* by "Jesus," (2 *Cor.* iv. 14.) So that there can be no ground for the supposition, which many have formed from his language, that he expected to live till the coming of Christ, which he judged to be very near: and the notion of others, that he alluded to the *first* resurrection previous to the millennium, is inconsistent with the language of the passage: for they, who have died, (or shall die before the millennium,) as truly "sleep in Jesus," though they should arise immediately, as they do who shall remain in the state of the dead till the general resurrection. The apostle therefore only meant to speak of himself as belonging to that one family, of whom most would die and be raised again, and all must one way or other be changed. This change will be effected in a moment, instantaneously, as the eye twinkles, by the almighty power of Christ, when the last trumpet shall sound, as the summons to all men to meet their Judge. (*Marg. Ref.*) Then the voice of Christ will be heard by all the dead, and they will be raised again to life in their own order; and then the bodies of living believers will be changed from natural to spiritual, from corruptible to incorruptible, from mortal to immortal; even as a man's form is changed by putting on new raiment. When this change hath taken place, in respect of all believers; then the saying of the prophet will finally be accomplished. (*Notes, Is.* xxv. 6—8.) Death and all his power shall be annihilated, and swallowed up for ever, in the complete victory obtained over him by Christ and his people; and sin, with all its consequences, shall ever after be wholly confined to the place "prepared for the devil and his angels." The apostle showed the Corinthians a mystery, by informing them of the event that would take place; yet, in respect to the *manner* in which it would be effected, it still remained mysterious and incomprehensible. Thus the mysteries of the Trinity, and of the incarnation of "the Lord from "heaven," are revealed to us, as certainly true, but the *manner* of them still remains inexplicable.

V. 55—58. With the glorious prospect before the eyes of his faith and hope, the apostle, in the most beautiful and animated apostrophe, addressed death and the grave, or the unseen world, as real persons, the universal and most terrible conquerors and oppressors of the human race. He demanded of death, where was now his sting, or his destructive dart or spear, with which he had caused such anguish and terror, and wrought such wide-spread desolations. And of the grave, what was now become of his victory, by which he seemed to have shut up in his dark dungeon, as vanquished foes, all the generations of men that had lived on earth. Indeed, the sin of man was the sting and destructive weapon of death, which both enabled him to kill the body, and had made that fatal stroke tremendous: and the holy law, pronouncing the sentence of condemnation against every transgressor, gave sin its power to bring death upon mankind, and to embitter its agonies with the dread of future punishment. This was the natural and universal state of man; and all must have thus lived, died, and perished miserably, had not God provided deliverance for them. But Christians might now

CHAP. XVI.

The apostle directs the Corinthians, in what way to make collections for the Christians at Jerusalem, 1—4; *states his intentions about visiting them,* 5—9; *commends Timothy, who was coming to them,* 10, 11; *shows that Apollos declines visiting them at present,* 12; *ex-*

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return thanks to him with joyful hearts, for having given them the victory over these dreadful foes by Jesus Christ, through his vicarious sufferings and glorious resurrection; and for bringing them to this faith and hope in him. They might therefore at present triumph over the fear of death, in confidence of a glorious resurrection for their bodies, as well as of immediate and eternal happiness for their souls; and they would all at length most certainly triumph in the full possession of those blessings, and in a complete victory over these enemies. He therefore exhorted his beloved brethren, to continue steadfast in the profession and faith of the Gospel, and immoveable in their adherence to the truth and will of God, amidst all dangers and temptations: and especially to continue steadfast and unmoveable in the belief of the resurrection, notwithstanding the artifices of false teachers. At the same time, let them abound in all those good works, which the commandment and honour of their Lord required, from love to his name, his cause, and his people: seeing that they had the fullest assurances, that their labour "in the "Lord," or from such motives as his Gospel suggested, and especially from love to the Lord Jesus, and zeal for his honour, would by no means be in vain, either unrewarded or unsuccessful; but that the whole of it would terminate in his glory, the good of mankind, and their own everlasting advantage. Every part of this animated discourse shows, that the resurrection of *true believers* is exclusively intended: for the things spoken will not be fulfilled, either in respect of the dead, or of those who may live when Christ shall come to judgment, in any others, by whatever name, form, or creed, they are distinguished.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

When the faithful minister sees his beloved people drawn aside to embrace dangerous errors; his chief comfort under the trial must arise from being able to appeal to them, that the doctrine which he preached was Scriptural; and from a full satisfaction, that they who had received it and stand fast in it will be certainly saved: and that none of them can perish, if they keep in remembrance the instructions he gave them; unless they deceived themselves with a vain, a dead, and inefficient faith. In order that we may possess this comfort, we must be careful to deliver the truths of God's word pure, as we have received them; and in that order and proportion in which they stand in the Scriptures: and he who attends to these sacred oracles, will know assuredly, that the death of Christ for our sins, and his resurrection for our justification, are essential and fundamental truths, which must, in all places and on all occasions, be explicitly and strenuously insisted on. Apostles and prophets concur in bearing testimony to them, even more than to many other truths: and, blessed be God, the demonstration of our Lord's resurrection is equal to the weight, which is to be supported by that important fact. (*Notes, John* xx.) The most eminent Christians are always the most humble: they continually reflect on the aggravated sins of their unconverted state; especially if they were long or greatly set in opposition to the Gospel. The more evidently God hath pardoned them, the less disposed will they be to excuse themselves. They feel their unworthiness of the distinctions conferred on them; they are disposed in honour to prefer others to themselves: and, though they cannot but be conscious of what the Lord hath done for and by them; yet, taking their whole conduct and obligations together, they readily conclude, that none are so unfruitful and unprofitable as they. In reality, it is a great thing for a man with propriety, humility, and truth, to say, "By the grace of "God, I am what I am:" the declaration only becomes those who are walking under the influence of holy principles; and is utterly unsuitable to the character of the loose, or formal, professor. But if we really fear and love the Lord, and walk in his ways, we must ascribe all the glory to his grace and mercy: if much have been forgiven us, we should pray to be enabled to love much: if our conversion have been remarkable, we should earnestly desire, that the grace bestowed on us may not be in vain: if we have set out late in life to serve the Lord; we should aim to redeem the time that hath been lost, by labouring more abundantly than our brethren: and, while we charge all our sins and follies upon ourselves, we must remember to ascribe all the good which we do to the grace of God that is with us.

V. 12—19.

How subtilly doth Satan bring in false doctrines, by men of abilities, learning, or eloquence; in a covert and plausible manner, that the simple may suspect no danger! Such teachers, with apparent modesty, question whether we have rightly understood the sacred writers; and whether the doctrine, that they oppose, be contained in them. They inquire, whether a more rational interpretation may not be given to such and such texts? Whether the more obvious meaning do not involve absurdity, or even impossibility? Whether any but the weak and illiterate can credit such mysteries? And whether we had not better adopt a figurative sense, or admit some other reading, or even suppose the sacred writer to be mistaken; than assent to so *incomprehensible*, and therefore *irrational* a doctrine? If indeed they could prove the mysteries which they oppose to be *contrary to fact, to intuition, or to demonstration*, their principles might be admitted: but when they apply them to doctrines, which are merely *above* reason, and contrary to their *supposed probabilities* and *vain reasonings;* they are perfectly inadmissible and irrational, unless man be wiser than his Maker. But the dupes of such specious pretences are seldom aware, whither these *rational* improvements of the creed and of the Scriptures tend: they do not perceive, that according to them man's presumptuous reason sits in *horts them to vigilance, steadfastness, and love,* 13, 14; *recommends the household of Stephanas to their special regard,* 15, 16; *expresses his satisfaction at the coming of certain persons from Corinth,* 17, 18; *and, after salutations from the Churches, concludes in the most solemn and affectionate manner,* 19—24.

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judgment on the infinite wisdom of God; man's weakness is made the standard of omnipotence; and man's vain conjecture the measure of divine revelation! Indeed, this is perfectly consistent with those œconomical and political sentiments, contended by the same *oracles of an enlightened age;* by which children are set to judge, whether their parents are fit to be honoured and obeyed, or not: servants are called on to determine the same concerning their masters: and, in short, not only is all subordination virtually destroyed, but in every relation the inferior is constituted the judge of his superiors, without any appeal from his arrogant tribunal! In like manner, the principles before cited, when fairly examined, are found to involve consequences, subversive of those truths which are professedly venerated; to invalidate the testimony of Scripture, and to tend to universal skepticism: they prove, (if they prove any thing,) that the preaching of the apostles and the faith of primitive believers were vain; and that the martyrs for the Gospel were false witnesses against God, by testifying truths and facts, which remote posterity has found out to be false or needless! This is especially the case, in respect of those doctrines that relate to the Person, undertaking, and atonement of Christ, and the way of acceptance by faith in him. If Christ had not risen, his sacrifice could not have been depended on, because there could be no proof that it was accepted; and consequently believers must still have been in their sins; they who slept in this faith must have perished; the preachers of the Gospel must either have been deceivers, or deceived; and the disciples, having only hope in Christ as to this present world, must have been of all men most miserable! To what, then, must the tenets lead, of those, who indeed profess to believe that Christ is risen, yet deny, explain away, or overlook, that great doctrine, which he especially rose again to establish and demonstrate?

V. 20—28.

We have full proof, that Christ both died for our sins, and rose again from the dead for our justification, and as the First-fruits of our resurrection; that, as death entered by man, so might life eternal be introduced by One in our nature. We certainly know that all *in Adam* die; and it is equally sure that all *in Christ* shall arise to immortal glory. Undoubtedly, the suffering, dying, risen, and ascended Saviour will soon appear, to raise the dead and judge the world: may we be found among "those, "that are Christ's at his coming!" It should be with us a matter of serious inquiry, whether we are his true disciples or not? For soon the end will come; the mediatorial kingdom will be delivered up to God, even the Father; and all who shall then be found enemies will be put under Christ's feet, and be punished with everlasting destruction. Would we then triumph in that solemn and important season, we must now submit to his rule, accept of his salvation, and live to the glory of God through him. Then shall we at length rejoice in all his victories, and participate his glories; we shall exult, with immense satisfaction, in the blessed accomplishment of the Redeemer's undertaking; and as being with him, our Head in human nature, put under the absolute dominion of our reconciled Father, "that God may be all in all," that he may receive the whole glory of our salvation, and that we may for ever serve him and enjoy his favour, without sin or death, and without needing repentance, forgiveness, a sacrifice, or a Mediator any more, to all eternity.

V. 29—32.

Should we lose sight of the animating prospect, in the preceding verses set before us, should any one prevail to argue us out of these our expectations, how must our zeal, diligence, and boldness, be enervated, and our rejoicing damped! Who then would step forward to succeed those illustrious soldiers of Christ, who have nobly bled in the cause of truth? Who would confess him in this evil world? Why should we stand in jeopardy continually? Why should we venture the rage of men, more savage than lions and tigers, more venomous than serpents, and more subtle than foxes? Such principles would soon induce us to depart from our constancy, and make us exclaim, "What advantageth it us, if the dead rise not?" or even tempt us to say, "Let us eat and drink, for to-"morrow we die." Let us not then suffer ourselves to be deceived by corrupt reasoners; but let us separate from them, and venture our all, on the single testimony of the word of "God, who cannot lie." Let us fear associating with skeptical, profligate, or ungodly men; for "evil "communications corrupt good manners;" let us warn our children, our juniors, our hearers, to shun them as a pestilence; let us awake to righteousness, and not sin; let us not hearken to those who know not God, in what science else they may excel; being assured that this ignorance will be found shameful, in proportion to the abilities, opportunities, confidence, or profession, of those in whom it is found.

V. 33—41.

If any are still disposed to start objections, or make presumptuous inquiries, when truths are scripturally proposed, let them remember the appellation, which the apostle, or rather the Holy Spirit, gives to such wise men of this world. For they may thence learn, that man's wisdom consists in becoming a little child, and simply believing his Maker. The works of creation and providence read us daily lectures of humility, as well as teach us to admire the variety of the great Creator's wisdom and goodness. Till we can fully comprehend the whole process, by which a bare grain, corrupting in the earth, produces many ears of corn at the harvest, and till we can satisfactorily answer all questions, and solve all difficulties about it, let us learn to be the *pupils*, and not assume

NOW [a] concerning the collection for [b] the saints, as I have given order to [c] the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.

2 Upon [d] the first *day* of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, [e] as *God* hath prospered him, [f] that there be no gatherings when I come.

3 And [g] when I come, [h] whomsoever ye shall approve by *your* letters, them will I send to bring your * liberality unto Jerusalem.

a Acts xi 28—30. xxiv. 17. Rom. xv. 25, 26 2 Cor. viii. 9 Gal. ii. 10.
b Acts ix. 41. Rom xii. 13. 2 Cor ix. 12—16. Philem 5—7. Heb vi. 10. 1 John iii. 17
c Acts xvi 6. xviii 23. Gal. i 2.
d Luke xxiv. 1. John xx. 19. 26. Acts xx. 7. Rev. i. 10
e Gen xxvi 12. xxx. 27. 30. xxxii. 10. xxxiii. 11. Deut. viii. 18 xv. 11—14, 2 Chr. xxxi. 10. Mark xii. 41—44. xiv. 8. Luke xvi. 10. 2 Cor. viii. 1—3 12—15.
f 2 Cor. viii. 11. ix. 3—5.
g iv. 19—21. xi. 34
h Acts vi 1—6. 2 Cor. viii. 19—24
* Gr. *gift.*

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to be the *counsellors* of the most High: and let us hold fast the sure hope of a glorious resurrection; without perplexing ourselves about the manner, in which infinite wisdom and almighty power can effect it.

V. 42--58.

They who shall be accounted worthy to obtain felicity in the heavenly state will excel in glory all present splendours, far more than the celestial bodies transcend the terrestrial: and yet they shall exceed one another in glory, as one star differeth from another; while Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, shall infinitely outshine them all. This degraded, corruptible, sinful, and dying body, shall be raised incorruptible, immortal, and glorious; it shall become vigorous, active, and beautiful, beyond conception; this animal body shall be raised spiritual. Here our very souls are carnal, there our very bodies will be spiritual. And our "second Adam, the Lord from heaven," will give new and immortal life, as "a quickening Spirit," both to our souls and bodies; that in both, according to our measure, we may bear his image and glorify his name. As flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven, let us then not "sow to the flesh, of which we can only "reap corruption:" and as they who shall be exempted from death must be changed, let this reconcile our minds to that change, which death will begin, and the resurrection complete in our bodies; when death shall be swallowed up in victory. Let us then seek the full assurance of faith and hope, that in the midst of pain, and in the prospect of dissolution, we may triumphantly exclaim, "O death, where "is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" That we may hail the sharpest pangs of dying, and think without emotion on the darkness, the corruption, and the horrors of the tomb, assured, that there our bodies will sleep at ease; that in the mean time our souls will be present with our beloved Redeemer; and that our bodies will shortly arise, to share that unspeakable felicity. But "sin is the "sting of death," and who can disarm that "king of ter"rors?" For "the law is the strength of sin;" and who can answer its demands, endure its curse, or expiate his own transgressions? Hence the terror and the anguish; hence the wretched cleave to life; save when infidelity, despair, and rebellion, induce madness and suicide! Hence, death is justly terrible to the unbelieving and impenitent; hence, the needless alarms of the weak and trembling believer. Thanks be to God, that there is deliverance and victory for us in Christ Jesus! May he give us faith and hope, and increase our faith and hope, that we may not only be safe, but joyful and triumphant! And, having these assurances, let "us be steadfast, unmoveable, always "abounding in the work of the Lord, as knowing that our "labour is not in vain in the Lord."

NOTES.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1, 2. The Corinthians seem to have been previously acquainted with the apostle's intention of raising a contribution from the Gentile Churches, for the poor Christians in Judea; and, as they were more wealthy than most of their brethren, he did not intimate a doubt of their liberality in that good work: but he deemed it proper to point out to them the method, which he had given orders for in the Churches of Galatia, whence he had lately come. On the first day of the week, let every man treasure up a proportion of his gains, according as God had prospered him during the preceding week: thus a larger sum would gradually be provided, than could at once have been collected. Some are of opinion, that the sums thus set apart were brought to the treasury of the Church at the same time: but the words do not seem to admit of that interpretation; and if each separately laid by the sum which he purposed to give, the whole would be brought together, at once, when necessary, without any trouble in soliciting contributions. *Laying it up as a treasure.* 'For 'these are the true riches, laid up in heaven, intrusted to 'God, to be compensated with the amplest interest, both 'in this world and the next, though not of their own va'lue, but of his mere liberality.' (*Beza.*) Worldly men would, at certain times, increase their treasure, by adding their clear gains to it; let Christians imitate them, by laying up on the Lord's day for their poor and distressed brethren, according as God had prospered them, and count this *their* treasure. If this was kept apart by each person till wanted, so that none knew what others gave, ostentation and corrupt emulation would be far more effectually excluded, than if each brought his contribution to the common stock every week, and so a public account was taken of it. It was especially needful, that this precaution should be taken at Corinth, where these evils exceedingly prevailed: and it is evident that the apostle intended, as much as possible, to leave every one, in this respect, to determine for himself, before God, what he ought to do; that none might give more than he could properly spare, or than he was from proper motives inclined to, either to acquire applause, or to escape censure and contempt. (*Notes, 2 Cor.* viii. 1—15.) The argument from this passage, for the observance of the first day of the week as the Lord's day, the Christian sabbath, is very conclusive: for, unless that were the custom in apostolical Churches, why should the first day of the week be mentioned in this connexion? 'On Sunday,' says Justin Martyr, 'all Christians, in the 'city or country, meet together, because that is the day of 'our Lord's resurrection: and then we read the writings 'of the prophets and apostles. This being done, the presi'dent makes an oration to the assembly, exhorting them to 'imitate and do the things which they have heard; then 'we all join in prayer, and after that we celebrate the 'sacrament.' (*Whitby.*)

4 And [i] if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me.

5 Now I will come unto you, [k] when I shall pass through Macedonia: for I do pass through Macedonia:

6 And it may be that I will abide, yea, [l] and winter with you, [m] that ye may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go.

7 For I will not see you now by the way; but I trust to tarry a while with you, [n] if the Lord permit.

8 But I will tarry [o] at Ephesus until [p] Pentecost.

9 For [q] a great [r] door and effectual is opened unto me, [s] and *there are* many adversaries.

10 Now [t] if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you [u] without fear: [x] for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also *do.*

11 Let [y] no man therefore despise him; [z] but conduct him forth in peace, that he may come unto me: for I look for him with the brethren.

12 As touching [a] *our* brother Apollos, I greatly desired him to come unto you with the brethren: but his will was not at all to come at this time; but he will come [b] when he shall have convenient time.

i Rom xv. 25 Cor. viii. 4. 19.
k Acts xix. 21. xx. 1—3. 2 Cor. i. 16, 17.
l Acts xxvii. 12. xxviii. 11. Tit. iii 12.
m Acts xv 3 xvii. 15. xx. 38. xxi. 5 Rom. xv 24. 3 John 6. 7.
n iv. 19. Prov. xix. 21. Jer x. 23. Acts xviii. 21. Rom. i. 10. Jam. iv. 15.
o xv. 32.
p Ex. xxiii. 16. Lev xxiii 15—21. Acts ii 1
q Acts xix. 8.&c.
r Acts xiv. 27 2 Cor. ii. 12. Col. iv 3. Rev. iii. 7, 8.
s xv. 32 Acts xix. 9, 10. 2 Cor. i. 8—10.
t iv. 17. Acts xix. 22.
u ii. 1 Tim iv. 12.
x xv. 58. Rom. xvi. 21. 2 Cor. vi. 1. Phil. ii. 19—22. 1 Thes. iii. 2
y 10. Luke x. 16. 1 Thes. iv. 8. 1 Tim. iv. 12. Tit. ii. 15.
z 6. Acts xv. 33.
a i. 12. iii. 5. Acts xviii. 24—28. xix. 1. Tit. iii. 13.
b Ec. iii. 1. Mark vi. 21. Acts xxiv. 25.

V. 3, 4. Every thing having been previously arranged, the apostle, when he arrived at Corinth, would send with the bounty of the Corinthians such persons as they approved, and would recommend by their letters. Or rather, joining the words, "by letters," with the latter clause, whomsoever they approved, the apostle would send with a letter from him to the apostles and elders at Jerusalem: or if it was thought more satisfactory to all concerned, he would himself accompany the messengers.

V. 5—9. The apostle was meditating to make a progress through Macedonia when he wrote this epistle: and he seems to have given some intimations, that he would go to Corinth in his way to Macedonia, as well as on his return, though it is not here mentioned. (2 *Cor.* i. 15.) He had, however, formed his determination of coming; and he assured the Corinthians that he would make some stay among them, if the Lord would give him leave: for he did not think it sufficient merely to call on them as a traveller in his journey, when so many things required his presence among them. His plan therefore was, to tarry at Ephesus till the feast of Pentecost; the rest of the summer he meant to employ in his progress through Macedonia, and then perhaps to spend the winter with them; expecting that afterwards they would help him forward in his journey, whithersoever he purposed to go. He might intend to sail from Ephesus to Corinth first; then after a short stay, to go into Macedonia, and afterwards return to winter there. But he deemed it incumbent on him to continue some time longer at Ephesus, as great opportunities of service were afforded him, great success attended his labours, and many adversaries were excited to oppose him, to terrify or dissuade men from embracing the Gospel, or to discourage and mislead the new converts. His presence therefore was peculiarly necessary, though his dangers and hardships were proportionably increased. It is evident, from the concluding salutation, that the apostle wrote this epistle from Ephesus, though the spurious addition at the close dates it from Philippi. It is probable that the tumult made at Ephesus by Demetrius hastened the apostle's departure; and his plan seems in other respects to have been circumstantially deranged. ***Pentecost.*** 'It therefore was the following Pentecost, that he hastened to be at Jerusalem.' (*Whitby.*)

V. 10, 11. Timothy had been sent before the apostle into Macedonia, with directions to visit Corinth, (iv. 17. *Acts* xix. 22:) but such was the disposition of many in that city, that it was necessary to charge them not to behave improperly to him when he came. For the apostle was apprehensive, that their party-quarrels and opposition to his authority would induce them to show such dislike and contempt of Timothy, as to make him afraid of executing his commission among them. He therefore assured them, that Timothy was faithful and skilful in the work of the Lord, even as he was: let none of them therefore despise him, because of his youth, or his supposed deficiency in "the wisdom of words and excellency of speech:" let them encourage and countenance him, in bearing testimony against the abuses which had taken place among them: let them not take offence at his faithfulness, or permit him to go away, as one who had incurred their displeasure: but let them conduct him forth in peace and love, on his journey towards Ephesus, where the apostle expected him, with the brethren that accompanied him; or both he and the brethren at Ephesus expected him, as one whom they greatly loved. Probably, Timothy returned to Ephesus before Paul was driven thence. 'We infer that Timothy 'was not sent with the epistle; for had he been the bearer 'of the letter, would St. Paul in that letter have said, "if "Timothy come?" 'If he was with the apostle when he 'wrote the letter, could he say, "I look for him with the "brethren?" 'Timothy was sent forth upon his journey 'before the letter was written; but he might not reach 'Corinth till after the letter arrived there.' (*Acts* xix. xxi.) (*Paley.*) ***With the brethren.*** Either those who had accompanied Timothy into Macedonia, or some whom the apostle expected from Corinth.

V. 12. It seems that a party at Corinth professed themselves attached to Apollos, in order to cover their opposition to the apostle: yet he greatly desired that eminent minister to go among them, with Timothy and Erastus, or with Stephanas and his friends, when they returned to Corinth, being of opinion that his presence would tend to allay their disputes, having the most entire confidence in his wisdom and humility. But, perhaps, Apollos feared lest his presence should have a contrary effect; or he might be fully employed in another place; or perhaps he thought it right to express his decided disapprobation of the conduct of the Corinthians, by absenting himself till they came

13 [c] Watch ye, [d] stand fast in the faith, [e] quit you like men, [f] be strong.

14 Let [g] all your things be done with charity.

15 I beseech you, brethren, (ye know [h] the house of Stephanas, that it is [i] the first-fruits of Achaia, and *that* they have addicted themselves [k] to the ministry of the saints.)

16 That [l] ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that [m] helpeth with *us*, and [n] laboureth.

17 I am glad of the coming of [o] Stephanas, and Fortunatus, and Achaicus; [p] for that which was lacking on your part they have supplied.

c Matt xxiv. 42—44. xxv. 13. xxvi 41. Mark xiii. 33—37. xiv. 37, 38. Luke xii. 35—40. xxi 36 Eph. vi. 18. Col. iv. 2. 1 Thes. v. 6. 2 Tim. iv. 5. 1 Pet iv. 7. v. 8. Rev. iii 2, 3. xvi. 15.
d xv. 2. 58. 2Cor i. 24. Gal v. 1. Phil. i. 27. iv. 1. Col. i. 23. iv. 12. 1 Thes. iii. 8. 2 Thes. ii. 15.
e ix. 25—27. 1 Sam. iv. 9. 2 Sam. x. 12. 1 Chr. xix 13. Eph vi. 13—17. 1 Tim. vi. 12. 2 Tim. ii. 3—5. iv 7. Heb. xi. 32—34.
f Josh. i. 6, 7. 9. 18. 1 Kings ii. 2. 1Chr. xxviii. 10. Ps. xxvii. 14. Is. xxxv. 4. Dan. x. 19. xi 32. Hag. ii. 4. Zech viii 9. 13. Eph. vi. 10. Phil iv. 13. Col i. 11, 12. 2 Tim. ii. 1.
g viii. 1. xii. 31. xiii. xiv. 1. John xiii. 34, 35. xv 17. Rom. xiii. 8—10. xiv. 15. 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10. 14. Gal. v 13, 14. 22 Phil. ii 1—3 1 Thes. iii. 6. 12. iv. 9, 10 2 Thes. i. 3, 1 Tim i, 5 Heb. xiii. 1. 1 Pet. iv. 8. 2 Pet i 7.——h 17. i. 16.——i Rom. xvi. 5. Rev. xiv. 4.——k Acts ix. 36—41. Rom. xii. 13. xv. 25. xvi. 2. 2 Cor viii. 4. ix. 1. 12—15 1 Tim. v. 10. Philem. 7. Heb. vi. 10 1 Pet. iv. 10.——l Eph. v 21. Heb xiii 17. 1 Pet. v. 4.——m xii. 28. 1 Chr. xii. 18. Rom xvi. 3. 9 Phil. iv. 3. 3 John 8.——n iii. 9. Rom. xvi. 6 12. 1 Thes. i. 3 ii 9 v. 12. 1 Tim. v. 17. Heb vi. 10. Rev. ii. 3.——o 15
p Phil. ii. 30. 1 Thes. iii. 6. Philem. 13.

18 For [q] they have refreshed my spirit and yours: [r] therefore acknowledge ye them that are such.

19 The [s] churches of Asia salute you. [t] Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with [u] the church that is in their house.

20 All [x] the brethren greet you. [y] Greet ye one another with an holy kiss.

21 The salutation of *me* Paul with mine own hand.

22 If any man [a] love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be [b] Anathema Maran-atha.

23 The [c] grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you.

24 My [d] love *be* with you all in Christ Jesus. [e] Amen.

q Prov. xxv. 13. 25 Rom xv 32. 2 Cor. vii. 6, 7. 13. Phil. ii 28. Col iv 8 1Thes. iii. 6, 7. 3John 4.
r 1 Thes. v. 12. Heb xiii. 7. 3 John 11, 12.
s Acts xix 10. 1 Pet. i. 1. Rev. i. 11.
t Acts xviii. 2. 18. 26 Rom xvi. 3, 4. 2 Tim. iv. 19. *Prisca*
u Rom. xvi. 5. Col. iv. 15. Philem. 2.
x Rom xvi 16. 21. 23. 2 Cor. xiii. 13 Phil. iv. 22 Philem 23, 24. Heb. xii. 24.
y 2 Cor. xiii. 12. 1 Thes. v. 26. 1 Pet. v. 14
z Gal. vi. 11 Col. iv. 18. 2 Thes. iii. 17.
a Cant. i. 3, 4. 7. iii. 1—3 v. 16. Is. v 1. Matt x. 37 xxv. 40 45. John viii. 42. xiv. 15 21. 23. xv. 25. xvi 14. xxi. 15—17 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. viii. 8, 9 Gal v. 6. Eph. vi 24. Heb. vi. 10. 1 Pet. i 8. ii. 7. 1 John iv: 19 v. 1.——b xii 3. Matt. xxv. 41 46. 2 Thes i 8, 9. Jude 14, 15. Acts xxiii 14. Rom. ix. 3. Gal. i, 8, 9. *Gr.*——c *See on*, Rom xvi. 20. 24 ——d iv. 14. 15 2 Cor. xi 11 xii. 15. Phil. i 8. Rev. iii. 19.—— ——e *See on*, xiv. 16. Matt. vi. 13. xxviii 20

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to a better temper. However, he was not at all willing to go to Corinth at that time, though he intended to visit them when he could with more conveniency. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13, 14. The apostle, about to conclude his epistle, called on the Corinthians, instead of presuming on their gifts and privileges, to be upon their guard against temptations, and vigilant in avoiding the snares of the great deceiver and his servants: he exhorted them to stand fast in the faith, as they were in great danger, and already began to waver: he reminded them to be valiant and prudent, as it became men, in their conflict with their common enemies; and not to behave like children in disputing with one another, and envying one another: he directed them to be strong in the grace of Christ for their work and warfare, instead of amusing themselves with curious speculations: and above all, he warned them to manage all their concerns according to the dictates of that love, which he had so fully explained and recommended to them, (*Notes*, xiii.)

V. 15—18. Stephanas seems to have been with the apostle at Ephesus, when he wrote this; but his household remained at Corinth. The several persons belonging to his family were qualified for usefulness, and ought to have possessed great influence in that Church; as they were the oldest converts to Christianity in all Achaia; and as they had habitually employed themselves in every service, by which they could minister to the good of their brethren. The apostle therefore besought the Christians at Corinth, to submit themselves to the counsel, influence, or ministry of this family; and of others, who concurred with him, in his endeavours to promote the peace and purity of the Church, or laboured diligently in that good cause. The coming of Stephanas and his companions, (who had probably brought an epistle to him from some of the Church at Corinth,) had given him pleasure, because they had further explained all things concerning the state of the Church; and their representation of the proper disposition of many of them, together with their pious conversation, had refreshed his spirit, as they doubtless had frequently refreshed theirs: he therefore admonished them to acknowledge such persons as those, for the servants of Christ and examples for them to follow; in preference to those teachers, who undermined or opposed his apostolical authority. Fortunatus is mentioned by Clemens Romanus, long after, as the bearer of this epistle to the Corinthians.

V. 19, 20. (*Notes*, *Rom.* xvi. 1—16. 21—23.)—Aquila and Priscilla were at Ephesus, when this epistle was written; but they had returned to Rome, before the apostle wrote to the Christians in that city.

V. 21—24. An amanuensis had written the rest of the epistle, but the apostle thought proper to add what follows with his own hand; and to unite a most solemn warning, with his affectionate salutations; that it might make the deeper impression. Whatever gifts, knowledge, eloquence, or eminence, any man possessed; if he did not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be *anathema maran-atha*. If he had not a cordial affection and love to the person, salvation, precepts, cause, glory, and people of Christ, he was and would be accursed, until, and when, the Lord should come, though not an open enemy to him and his cause. If his conduct proved this, let him be separated from the Church, as an accursed thing devoted to destruction: and in case he did not afterwards believe, repent, and believe with that "faith which worketh by love;" Christ himself would execute this awful sentence when he came to judge the world. But in case it could not be proved, or was not suspected by men, yet it was known to the Lord: and he who had not genuine love to the Saviour, certainly abode under the wrath of God, and would at last sink into utter destruction as a sacrifice to his justice. For he must be an enemy to the holy perfections and righteous government of God, an unhumbled impenitent sinner, and an unbeliever under the covenant of works and the curse of the law, he must be destitute of all true holiness, incapable of spiritually performing any good work, and unfit for the employment and pleasures of heaven, who, under the profession of Christianity, did not love the Lord Jesus

Christ, or who apostatized from that profession. The word *Anathema* is Hebrew, and signifies, in Scripture, *an accursed thing devoted to destruction: Maran-atha* is Syriac, and signifies, *the Lord cometh.* Some Jewish usages are supposed to be referred to; but the above is the undoubted meaning of the passage. (*Marg. Ref.*) The apostle, however, did not write this awful warning, (for which he saw too much occasion in the conduct of the Corinthian teachers,) from resentment or harshness of disposition: he therefore expressed his earnest desire that the grace and favour of the Lord Jesus might be with them, and rest on them: and he concluded by such an assurance of his cordial love to them all in Christ, and for his sake, as is not found in any other epistle. To this he annexed his Amen, as assuring them of his sincerity in it, notwithstanding the rebukes which he had given them, and the improper treatment which he had received from them.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

It is incumbent on ministers to exhort their people to liberal charity, especially towards their brethren in Christ; and to direct them in the best way of collecting and applying their contributions; and all Christians ought to be ready for such good works, in proportion as the Lord prospers them in their secular concerns. When a little is weekly appropriated to such purposes, it is parted with more conveniently, and less reluctantly, than when greater sums are required at once. For it is considered as a part of the weekly expense, and so spared in other things: but, without some arrangement of this kind, the fund for charity is often previously spent on superfluities, and the sum required cannot well be afforded. Such weekly collections, therefore, as are made by several laudable societies in London and many other places, in which even poor people and mechanics, by the constant payment of trivial contributions, raise annually large sums for the relief of the sick and destitute, cannot too warmly be recommended. Much real good is done by them: the Gospel is adorned and recommended, an excellent example is exhibited, and the rich are excited to a proportionable liberality. May such societies be established in all the churches of Christ! These charitable works well consist with the design of the Christian sabbath: but when the funds are raised, prudent, pious, disinterested, and humane persons should be chosen to apply them: nor ought any man to deem such a service foreign to his place, except he be necessarily engaged in still more important services. All our purposes should be formed in submission to the will of God; and our conduct should be regulated by the dispensations of his providence, in connexion with the precepts of his word. Ministers ought not readily to leave those places, in which great and effectual doors are open to them, even though there be many adversaries: nay, this circumstance may often render it more incumbent on them to continue in their post, though dangerous and difficult, that they may establish and encourage the weak or wavering. It is wonderful that they, who attend on the work of the Lord in the most faithful manner, should have cause for fear among professors of the Gospel; or be in danger of being despised and disquieted by them. Yet, the prevalence of party, the influence of corrupt teachers, or the infection of lax principles, frequently produces this effect; especially, when they who are required to reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all authority, are young, diffident, or deficient in external accomplishments. But senior ministers should use their influence to repress this spirit, that their faithful young brethren may be secured from contempt, enabled to do their work in peace, and receive due kindness from those among whom they labour. The zealous servants of Christ will commonly be harmonious among themselves, even when their injudicious hearers place them in competition with each other; they will concur in opposing such evils, though they may have different opinions about the best method of remedying them; and therefore they will leave others to follow their own judgment, even when different from their own.

V. 12—24.

Exhortations to vigilance, constancy in duty, steadfastness in the faith, and mutual love, can never be unseasonable. They who have addicted themselves to the labour of love, in ministering to the saints, are most worthy of respect and imitation; and not they, who are fluent in speech, and forward to assume the lead in public concerns. We should also willingly submit to those who are experienced and mature in the faith of Christ; or who labour to promote that cause, for which the apostles spent and laid down their lives. Faithful and pious persons may supply what is lacking in each other; and their conversation will refresh the spirits of such as are like-minded. Christians, though divided by seas and mountains, and though they disapprove of some things in each others creed or practice, will yet cordially wish well to and pray for one another. But they, who "love not the Lord Jesus," can be Christians only in name: and they must certainly abide under an awful curse, which the Lord, when he cometh, will execute. Our obligations to the divine Saviour, and our reasons for loving him, are infinite: yet many who are called by his name, who profess his truth, nay, who preach his Gospel, are strangers to this holy affection, and only seek their own advantage, credit, ease, or pleasure, in their religious performances. They may conceal this fatal defect from the most discerning of their fellow-servants; but the Lord, when he cometh, will surely detect it. Let us then call ourselves to account in this matter, and not be satisfied with any religion, which does not include the love of Christ, earnest desires of his salvation, gratitude for his mercies, zeal for his glory, and obedience to his commandments. Let us inquire, whether we do indeed count all things worthless, compared with Christ and his righteousness? Whether we be willing to give up worldly objects, when they come in competition with him? Whether we love his image in his people, and be willing to deny ourselves, that we may communicate to their wants? Whether we love his ordinances, as means of communion with him? Whether we rejoice to hear him glorified, and grieve to see him dishonoured? Whether we allow ourselves in any known sin, or the neglect of any known duty? By these inquiries, impartially answered, we may form a good judgment of the state of our souls. But while we warn those around us not to deceive themselves, we should beware of the appearance of anger and resentment. We should desire that the grace of Christ may be with those whom we thus caution, and we ought to assure those of our cordial love in Christ, whom we see it needful to reprove and warn in the most plain and solemn manner.

THE

SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

CORINTHIANS.

This epistle seems to have been written about a year after the foregoing, while the apostle was on his progress through Macedonia. Having heard by Titus, that his first epistle had produced very good effects on many of the Corinthians, he wrote this also, in order to prepare the way more completely for his visit to them; and it is probable, sent it immediately by Titus, and others who accompanied him. In it he justified himself from the charge of levity or carnal policy, in delaying his journey to Corinth; and assigned those reasons, for this part of his conduct, which could not have been disclosed with propriety, till the effect of his former epistle had appeared. He also gave directions respecting the restoration of the incestuous person, who had been excommunicated. He then expatiated on his conduct in the Christian ministry; intermixing many exhortations with the avowal of his motives and fervent affections in his sacred work. With great address and earnestness he recommended to them the collections for the poor Christians at Jerusalem, and showed the manifold advantages of such services. At length he more directly, yet evidently with great reluctance, contrasted his own gifts, labours, sufferings, and conduct, with the pretences of their false teachers; and showed himself not a whit inferior to any of the apostles. And he then concluded with various admonitions and affectionate good wishes. These epistles may appear to some readers less interesting than several others, because they mainly refer to the peculiar circumstances of the Corinthian Church; but in fact they are the more instructive on that very account: as directions and admonitions, suited to many of the more ordinary incidents of life, are communicated by them; which could not have been so advantageously adduced, in a more general discourse on the great doctrines and duties of Christianity.

The most remarkable circumstance in this epistle, is the confidence of the apostle in the goodness of his cause, and in the power of God to bear him out in it. Opposed, as he then was, by a powerful and sagacious party, whose authority, reputation, and interest were deeply concerned, and who were ready to seize on every thing, which could discredit St. Paul; it is wonderful to hear him so firmly insist on his apostolical authority; and so unreservedly appeal to the miraculous powers, which he had exercised, and conferred, at Corinth. So far from shrinking from the contest, as afraid of some discovery being made, unfavourable to the common cause; he, with great modesty and meekness indeed, but with equal boldness and decision, expressly declares that his opposers and despisers were the ministers of Satan; and menaces them with miraculous judgments, when as many of their deluded hearers had been brought to repentance, and re-established in the faith, as proper means could in a reasonable time effect. It is inconceivable that a stronger internal testimony, not only of integrity, but of divine inspiration, can exist. Had there been any thing of imposture among the Christians, it was next to impossible but such a conduct must have occasioned the disclosure of it.

CHAP. I.

The apostle salutes the Corinthians, 1, 2; *and blesses God for consolations and deliverance in extreme danger, lately vouchsafed to him; for the benefit and comfort of others also, as well as an earnest to him of future deliverances,* 3—11. *He rejoices in the testimony of his conscience; and expresses his confidence of their attachment to him, which had induced him to purpose a journey to them,* 12—16. *His delay of his journey to Corinth did not arise from fickleness,* 17, 18. *He states the stability of the promises of God through Christ, and the security of believers,* 19—22; *and declares that he had postponed his visit from lenity towards the Corinthians,* 23, 24.

[a] PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and [b] Timothy *our* brother, unto [c] the church of God which is at Corinth, with [d] all the saints which are in all [e] Achaia:

a See on, Rom. i. 1—5. 1 Cor. i. 1.
b Acts xvi. 1. Rom. xvi. 21. 1 Cor. xvi. 10. Phil. i. 1 ii. 19—22. Col. i. 1. 1 Thes i. 1. 2 Thes. i 1. Heb. xiii. 23.
c Acts xviii. 1, &c. 1 Cor. i. 2.
d 1 Cor. vi. 11. Eph. i. 1.
e ix. 2. xi. 10. Acts xviii. 12. Rom. xv. 26. xvi. 5. 1 Cor. xvi. 15. 1 Thes. i. 7, 8.

2 [f] Grace *be* to you, and peace from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 [g] Blessed *be* God, even [h] the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, [i] the Father of mercies, and [k] the God of all comfort;

4 Who [l] comforteth us in all our tribulation, [m] that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

5 For [n] as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, [o] so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

6 And [p] whether we be afflicted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation, which is * effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation.

7 And [q] our hope of you *is* steadfast, knowing, that [r] as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so *shall ye be* also of the consolation.

f See on, Rom. i. 7. 2 Sam. xv. 20. 1 Chr. xii. 18 Dan. iv. 1. Gal. vi 16. Eph. vi. 23.
g Gen. xiv. 20. 1 Chr. xxix. 10. Neh. ix. 5. Job i 21. Ps. xviii. 46. lxxii. 19. Dan. iv. 34. Eph. i 3. 1 Pet. i. 3.
h xi. 31. John v. 22, 23 x. 30. xx. 17. Rom. xv. 6. Eph i. 3. 17. Phil. ii. 11. 2 John 4. 9.
i Ps lxxxvi. 5. 15. Dan ix. 9. Mic. vii. 18.
k Rom. xv. 5.
l vii. 6, 7. Ps. lxxxvi. 17. Is. xii 1 xlix. 10. li 3. 12 lii. 9. lxvi. 12, 13. John xiv. 16. 18. 26 2 Thes. ii. 16, 17.
m 5, 6. Ps. xxxii. 5, 6. xxxiv. 2—6. lxvi. 16 Is. xl. 1. lxvi. 14. Phil. i. 14. 1 Thes. iv. 18. v. 11. Heb xii 12.
n iv. 10, 11. xi. 23—30. 1 Cor. iv. 10—13. Phil. i. 20. iii. 10 Col. i. 24.
o Luke ii. 25. Phil ii. 1. 2 Thes ii. 16, 17.
p 4. iv. 15—18. 1 Cor. iii. 21—23. 2 Tim. ii. 10.

* Or *wrought*. iv. 17. v. 5. Rom. v. 3—5. viii. 28. Phil. i. 19. Heb. xii. 10, 11.——q 14. vii. 9. xii 20, 21. Phil. i. 6, 7. 1 Thes. i. 3, 4.——r Matt. v. 11, 12. Luke xxii. 28—30. Rom. viii. 17, 18. 1 Cor. x. 13 2 Thes. i. 4—7. 2 Tim. ii. 12. Jam. i. 2—4. 12.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1—7. (*Notes, Rom.* i. 1—8. 1 *Cor.* i. 1—3.) The apostle joined his beloved Timothy with himself in this second epistle to the Corinthians, that he might establish his reputation and influence among them: hence we learn that Timothy was come to him from Ephesus, before he wrote it. 'He calls Timothy his *brother*, probably that he might not be despised for his youth.' (*Whitby.*) He addressed the epistle, not only to the Church of Corinth, but also to all the saints in Achaia; meaning all professed Christians, who were to be considered as saints in the judgment of charity. After the usual salutation, he abruptly broke forth in thanks and praises to God, as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, (and consequently of all believers in him,) as the Father of mercies, the Source and Author of every kind of mercy to sinful men, abounding in mercy and delighting in it; and as the God of all comfort, the inexhaustible and everlasting Spring of peace, joy and consolation, to all who trusted in him. 'It is observable that eleven of St. Paul's epistles begin with exclamations of joy, praise, and thanksgiving. As soon as he thought of a Christian Church, planted in one place or another, there seems to have been a flow of most lively affection accompanying the idea, in which all sensibility of his temporal affections, or theirs, were swallowed up, and the fulness of his heart must vent itself in such cheerful, exalted, and devout language.' (*Doddridge.*) Good tidings from the churches which had been planted by him always animated the apostle, and his heart was now full of satisfaction in what he had heard from Corinth by Titus. He therefore blessed God for comforting him and his companions in labour, amidst all their troubles and persecutions, that they might be able to encourage others who were in trouble, by suggesting the same topics which God had made use of for their comfort. They could also assure their brethren of the sufficiency of divine consolations; seeing, in their own case, they had experienced, that, as sufferings for Christ's sake, and such as he endured, abounded in them, so their consolations also abounded in proportion, by the grace of Christ and the joy of his salvation. When, therefore, they were afflicted, they considered these painful trials as allotted them in order to qualify them for their work, in promoting the consolation and salvation of their hearers. These blessings were efficaciously communicated to the souls of believers, by means of sufferings similar to those of the apostle; and the example of constancy, patience and fortitude, which he and his brethren exhibited, tended to embolden their Brethren for sufferings, and to animate them in persevering under them; and their experimental and sympathizing exhortations and instructions led them to behave properly under their trials, and to derive benefit from them. On the other hand, when the apostle and his helpers were comforted, their consolations were intended for the encouragement of their people also, as tending to illustrate the faithfulness of God to his promises, and his gracious readiness to support those who suffered for his sake, and by showing them how comfort might be found. These considerations both reconciled them to sufferings, and rendered consolations doubly welcome. The apostle's hope concerning the Corinthians was rendered steadfast by what he had heard, notwithstanding all that had been reprehensible; as it was evident they shared in his sorrow and uneasiness, and were willing to

8 For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant [s] of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, [t] insomuch that we despaired even of life:

9 But we had the * sentence of death in ourselves, [u] that we should not trust in ourselves, but [x] in God, which raiseth the dead;

10 Who [y] delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver *us;*

11 Ye also [z] helping together by prayer for us, [a] that for the gift *bestowed* upon us by the means of many persons, thanks may be given by many on our behalf.

12 For [b] our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in [c] simplicity and [d] godly sincerity, [e] not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.

13 For we write none other things unto you, [f] than what ye read or acknowledge; and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end;

14 As also ye have acknowledged us [g] in part, [h] that we are your rejoicing, [i] even as ye also *are* ours, [k] in the day of the Lord Jesus.

s iv. 7—12. Acts xix 23—35. 1 Cor. xv. 32 xvi. 9.
t iv. 8. 1 Sam. xx. 3. xxvii. 1.
* Or, *answer.*
u iii. 5. iv. 7. xii. 7—10. Job xl. 14. Ps. xxii. 29. xliv. 5—7 Prov. xxviii. 26. Jer ix. 23, 24. xvii. 5—7. Ez. xxxii 13. Luke xviii. 9.
x iv. 13, 14 Ez. xxxvii. 1—14. Rom. iv 17—25. Heb. xi. 19.
y 1 Sam. vii. 12. xvii. 37. Job v. 17—22. Ps. xxxiv 19, 20. Is. xlvi. 3, 4. Acts xxvi. 21, 22 2 Tim. iv. 17. 2 Pet. ii. 9.
z ix. 14 Is. xxxvii. 4. lxii. 6, 7 Acts xii. 5. Rom. xv 30—32. Eph vi. 18, 19. Phil. i. 19. Col. iv. 3. 1 Thes. v. 25. 2 Thes. iii. 1 Philem. 22. Heb. xiii 13. Jam. v. 16 ——a iv. 15 ix. 11, 12.
b Job xiii. 15 xxiii. 10—12 xxvii. 5, 6. xxxi. 1—40. Ps. vii. 3—5. xliv. 17—21. Is xxxviii. 3 Acts xxiv. 16. Rom. ix. 1. 1 Cor. iv 4. Gal vi. 4 1 Tim i. 5 19, 20 Heb. xiii. 18. 1 Pet. iii. 16 21. 1 John iii. 19—22.
c xi. 3 Rom xvi. 18, 19
d ii 17 viii 8. Josh xxiv. 14. 1 Cor v. 8. Eph. vi. 14. Phil i. 10. 16. Tit ii. 7.
e 17. iv. 2. x 2—5. xii. 15—19. 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5. 13. xv. 10 Jam. iii. 13—18. iv 6.
f iv. 2. v. 11 xiii. 6 Philem. 6
g ii. 5 Rom xi. 25. 1 Cor. xi 18
h v. 12. 1 Cor iii. 21—23 Phil. i. 26. *Gr.*——i ix 2 1 Cor xv. 31. Phil ii. 16. *Gr.* iv. 1. 1 Thes. ii. 19, 20.——k 1 Cor. i. 8. Phil. i. 6. 10 1 Thes. iii. 13. v. 23.

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partake of his sufferings for Christ's sake; and therefore he was assured that they would partake also of his consolation in Christ. *Even the Father,* &c. This style seems to be adopted under the New Testament, to distinguish the one living and true God from all other objects of worship, (without excepting the Supreme Being of deists and infidels;) as that of "the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob," had been under the Old Testament, to distinguish **Jehovah** from Baal or Jupiter, or other imagined deities. None was the true God, but the God of Abraham, &c.; none is the true God, but the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8—11. Some think that the apostle here referred to his sufferings in Asia, (*Acts* xiv.) but this was so long before, that he would scarcely have thus mentioned it on that occasion. As he seems to have written this Epistle from Philippi, or at least when he was in Macedonia, as Ephesus was the chief city of Asia, according to the sense in which the apostle *always* uses that word, and as he had just before been driven away by Demetrius, and the tumult excited by him, it is probable that he referred to the furious persecutions attending on that transaction.—'It may be said, perhaps, that it does not appear from the history, that any danger threatened St. Paul's life in the uproar at Ephesus, so imminent as that from which in the epistle he represents himself to have been delivered. This matter, it is true, is not stated by the historian in form; but the personal danger of the apostle, we cannot doubt, must have been extreme, when the whole city was filled with confusion; when the populace had seized his companions; when, in the distraction of his mind, he insisted on coming forth amongst them; when the Christians who were about him would not suffer him; when his friends, certain of the chief of Asia, sent to him, desiring that he would not adventure himself into the tumult; when, lastly, he was obliged to quit immediately the place and the country; and "when the tumult was ceased to depart into Macedonia."—'Nothing could be more expressive of the circumstances in which the history describes him to have been, at the time when the epistle purports to have been written,' (than the verses under consideration.) 'It is the calm recollection of a mind emerged from the confusion of instant danger. It is that devotion and solemnity of thought which follows a recent deliverance.—There is just enough of particularity in the passage, to show that it is to be referred to the tumult at Ephesus.' (*Paley.*) The apostle, however, had been weighed down with distress, which was beyond measure grievous, from the concurrence of outward dangers and hardships, with inward disquietude about the state of the churches; so that they were insupportable by any strength which he had previously possessed, and he was by them led to despair of being any longer preserved in life, to execute his plans of future usefulness. He even considered himself as a condemned person having the sentence of death in himself, in that he judged his doom inevitable. Nor, indeed, had he any method of escape by his own contrivance or efforts, or any confidence in himself; but he was brought to trust only in God, who by his almighty power raiseth the dead, and was therefore able to rescue him. Accordingly, he had delivered him from so imminent a peril of death, when it seemed to have taken hold of him, and he still continued to deliver him from the rage of his enemies: he therefore was encouraged to trust that he would yet deliver him, and preserve his life for future usefulness. This he expected, in answer to the prayers of the Corinthians, who, he doubted not had thus assisted him, and would continue to do so; that his life and term of usefulness being preserved by means of the prayers of many persons, numbers might also unite in blessing God on his account, and for the benefit derived through his ministry. In all this he spoke in the plural number, as joining his fellow-labourers with him; but he doubtless meant it with special reference to his own case.

V. 12—14. Many of the Corinthians had been prejudiced against the apostle, and some still insinuated several things to his disadvantage; but amid this discouragement, and all his other trials, he possessed a constant source of joy and exultation in the testimony of his own conscience. For though, as a sinner, he could only rejoice and glory in Christ Jesus, yet, as a believer, he might rejoice and glory in his inward consciousness of being truly what he professed and appeared to be; and especially in that he

15 And [l] in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, [m] that ye might have a second * benefit;

16 And to pass by you into Macedonia; [n] and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judea.

17 When I therefore was thus minded, did I use [o] lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose [p] according to the flesh, that with me there should be [q] yea, yea, and nay, nay?

l 1 Cor. iv. 19. xi. 34.
m Rom. i. 11. xv. 29. Phil. i. 25, 26.
* Or, grace. vi. 1.
n Acts xix. 21, 22. 1 Cor. xvi. 5—7.
o Judg. ix. 4. Jer. xxiii. 32. Zeph. iii. 4.
p 12. x. 2, 3. John viii. 15. Gal. i. 16. ii. 2. 1 Thes. ii. 18.
q 18—20. Matt. v. 37. Jam. v. 12.

18 But [r] *as* God *is* true, our † word toward you was not yea and nay.

19 For [s] the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, [t] *even* by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, [u] was not yea and nay, but in him was yea.

20 For [x] all the promises of God in him *are* yea, and in him [y] Amen, [z] unto the glory of God by us.

r 23. xi. 31. John vii. 26. viii. 26. 1 John v. 20. Rev. iii. 7. 14.
† Or, *preaching*.
s Ps. ii. 7. Matt. iii. 17. xvi. 16, 17. xvii. 5. xxvi. 63, 64. xxvii. 40. 54. Mark i. 1. Luke i. 35. John i. 34. 49. iii. 16. 35, 36. vi. 69. xix. 7. xx. 28. 31. Acts viii. 37. ix. 20. Rom. i. 3, 4. 2 Pet. i. 17. 1 John i. 3. v. 9—13. 20. 2 John 9. Rev. ii. 18.——t Acts xviii. 5. *Silas*.——u Ex. iii. 14. Matt. xxiv. 35. John viii. 58. Heb. i. 12, 13. xiii. 8. Rev. i. 8. 11. 17.——x Gen. iii. 15. xxii. 18. xlix. 10. Ps. lxxii. 17. Is. vii. 14. ix. 5, 6. Luke i. 68—74. John i. 17. xiv. 6. Acts iii. 25, 26. xiii. 32—39. Rom. vi. 23. xv. 8, 9. Gal. iii. 16—18. 22. Heb. vi. 12—19. vii. 6. ix. 10—15. xi. 13. 39, 40. 1 John ii. 24, 25. v. 11, 12.——y Is. lxv. 16. *Heb.* John iii. 5. *Gr.* Rev. iii. 14.——z iv. 6. 15. Ps. cii. 16. Matt. vi. 13. Luke ii. 14. Rom. xi. 36. xv. 7. Eph. i. 6. 12—14. ii. 7. iii. 8—10. Col. i. 27. 2 Thes. i. 10. 1 Pet. i. 12. Rev. vii. 12.

had been enabled to exercise his sacred ministry with simplicity and singleness of heart, aiming only to glorify God, by doing good to men; and in that godly sincerity, that unadulterated integrity, which sprang from the fear and love of God, and approved itself to him. For he had not been warped by carnal wisdom, from any concealed aim at his own interest, reputation, or authority, to use duplicity or dissimulation, but had acted under the influence of divine grace, in forming and executing such designs as were best suited to promote the conversion of sinners, and the prosperity of the Church, without regarding the reproaches and sufferings to which he was exposed on that account. This had been his habitual conduct in every part of the world, ever since he had been called to profess and preach the Gospel; but he had more abundantly manifested this disinterested self-denying spirit, this simplicity, "and godly sincerity," in his whole behaviour towards the Corinthians, though they had been the first to suspect and accuse him of the contrary. He, however, now wrote no other things on this subject, than what they read in the former epistle, or than appeared to be the obvious meaning of his words; that is, he wrote to them in candour and artless simplicity, not covering his designs by specious and ambiguous language; nay, he wrote nothing but what most of them acknowledged to be true, and he trusted would acknowledge to the end. They had indeed acknowledged him *in part*, (or *part of them*,) to have been the instrument of their conversion, and avowed that they rejoiced and gloried in their relation to him, and in his attention to them; and this was no more than corresponded to his rejoicing, or glorying, in them, and on their account, which he trusted would be continued even unto the day of Christ, when he should come to judge the world.

V. 15, 16. Confiding in the testimony of his conscience, and in the affections of the Corinthians in general, the apostle had purposed to visit them before that time, in the firm persuasion, that, according to his earnest desires, they would derive a second benefit from him, for their establishment and consolation by grace. This shows he had been only once at Corinth at this time, (*Note*, xii. 14, 15.) He had intended to pass by Corinth in his way to Macedonia, and to call as he went, and then afterwards to return and make a longer stay. This must have been his plan, for Corinth was out of his way into Macedonia; nor could it be supposed that he would come near that city, except in order to visit the Christians there. (*Note*, 1 *Cor.* xvi. 7.) Probably he had given some other intimation of his purpose to the Corinthians, than that which is contained in the former epistle. He, however, saw reason to alter his design, and to go into Macedonia by Troas.

V. 17—20. The apostle's opponents at Corinth seem to have urged his deviation from his first purpose, though made on the best grounds, and for the most benevolent purposes, as a proof that he was an inconstant and unstable man, who altered his conduct and doctrine as circumstances required, and as suited his present conveniency. But would they believe such accusations against him? Would they ascribe his conduct to levity? Or would they conclude that his purposes were formed and changed from worldly policy, so that he affirmed or denied, taught or retracted, as best suited his interest or ambition? Some of them might indeed suspect him of this, and make it an argument against his doctrine; but, as God was true and faithful, to whom he made his appeal, his word, or preaching to them, was not proposed in this fickle and wavering manner; he had never contradicted what he had once taught them, nor said *nay* in any point, after he had said *yea* respecting it, but he had steadily persisted in one uniform testimony; so that the doctrine preached by him, Silas, and Timothy, had been like its great Author, "the "Son of God, Jesus the Messiah," who is "the same "yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Thus they had proposed his salvation to the Corinthians, with the most entire consistency and unwavering steadfastness. They had not said first *yea*, and then *nay*, in these matters, but had constantly declared that all salvation was to be found *in him* alone, and that the covenant of grace and all its engagements were fully confirmed *in him* to all, who are found one with him by faith. In these doctrines they had been most explicit and decided, though in various matters of less importance they had used a prudent self-denying accommodation, and had been careful not to instruct the people in the deeper mysteries of Christianity, before they were able to bear them. (*Notes*, 1 *Cor.* iii. 9.) In this uniform and constant testimony the apostle persisted, because he knew that all the promises of God to his people, throughout the Scripture, were made in and by Jesus Christ, and that all centered in him, the great Surety of the new covenant, by which they are made to sinners; and that, by giving his Son to be the Saviour of sinners, God had verified his ancient predictions, proved the divine original of the Scriptures, and given an assurance of fulfilling his largest promises to all believers. Thus he had, as it were, 21 Now he which [a] stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath [b] anointed us, *is* God;

22 Who hath also [c] sealed us, and given the [d] earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

23 Moreover, [e] I call God for a record upon my soul, [f] that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth.

24 Not for [g] that we have dominion over your faith, but [h] are helpers of your joy: [i] for by faith ye stand.

a v. 5. Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24. lxxxvii. 5. lxxxix. 4. Is. ix. 7. xlix. 8. lxii. 7. Rom. xvi. 25. Col. ii. 7. 1 Thes. iii. 13. 2 Thes. ii. 17. iii. 3. 1 Pet. v. 10.
b Ps. xlv. 7. Is. lix. 21. lxi. 1. John iii. 34. Acts x. 38. Rom. viii. 9. 1 John ii. 20, 27. Rev. i. 6.——c John vi. 27. Rom. iv. 11. Eph. i. 13. iv. 30. 2 Tim. ii. 19. Rev. ii. 17. vii. 3. ix. 4.——d v. 5. Rom. viii. 23. Eph. i. 14.
e Is. Rom. i. 9. Gal. i. 20. Phil. i. 8. 1 Thes. ii. 5. 10.
f ii. 3. x. 2. 6—11. xii. 20. xiii. 2. 10. 1 Cor. iv. 21. v. 5. 1 Tim. i. 20.
g Matt. xxiii. 8—10. xxiv. 49. 1 Cor. iii. 5. 2 Tim. ii. 24—26. 1 Pet. v. 3.——h ii. 1—3. Rom. i. 12. Phil. i. 25, 26.
i v. 7. Rom. v. 2. xi. 20. 1 Cor. xv. 1. Eph. vi. 14—16. 1 Pet. v. 8, 9.

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set his irrevocable Amen to the promises which he had before given; he had confirmed them by the surest evidence that could be imagined; he had, as it were, pledged his own glory for the performance of them; his truth and perfections would be dishonoured, if they should fail of accomplishment, while the performance of them would every way redound to the glory of God, in the salvation of all believers, by means of the preaching of the apostles and other ministers. 'There is a yea which is as a nay, and 'a nay which is as yea; but the just man's yea is yea, 'and his nay is nay. When a man gives a bill of divorce 'to his wife, we try him three times, whether his nay 'be nay, and his yea, yea.' (*Jewish writers in Whitby.*) (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 21, 22. The apostle's established belief of these truths, his reliance on these promises, and constancy in his ministry, were not the result of human wisdom or outward teaching, but were effected by the power of God, who had brought the Corinthians also to a firm faith in Christ, and to fellowship with him. God had anointed them by his teaching and sanctifying grace, and so removed their natural blindness and prejudice against the truth. He had also sealed them, both to mark them for his own, and to secure them to himself, by enstamping the divine image upon their souls, through the new-creating power of his Spirit, whose graces and holy consolations were the earnest, and pledge, and foretaste, in their hearts, of the heavenly inheritance to which they were called. From these causes the apostle derived his constancy and confidence in preaching the Gospel, and believers were influenced by them to hold fast their faith without wavering. Some indeed interpret "the anointing," of miraculous powers, and "the seal," of the sacraments; but as the apostle includes the Corinthians with him in these things, so it is more consistent with the tenour of Scripture to explain the anointing, of such divine communications as belong to Christians in general, and of which none else partake. (*Marg. Ref.*) Sacraments are but outward seals of the covenant, and neither distinguish believers from others, nor secure all who partake of them, and miraculous powers have been exercised by very wicked men; but the renewal of the divine image on the soul in sanctification, and the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit, form a seal and earnest of a far more distinguishing and permanent nature. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 23, 24. Having thus vindicated his conduct and doctrine from the charge of inconsistency, the apostle, in the most solemn manner, called God to witness the truth of what he was about to assert; he desired that he would testify for or against him, as he saw the case to be, and he could expect nothing but awful judgments *on his soul*, if he spake falsely after such an appeal. With this introduction he declared, that he had postponed his visit to Corinth, in order to spare them those censures and miraculous judgments, which he feared would have been unavoidable, if he had gone thither immediately on leaving Ephesus. He had not then received any information what effect his former epistle had produced; he was aware that time would be required to bring their affairs into some better state, and he thought it more adviseable to wait a little longer, that he might at length come, not "with a "rod, but in love and in the spirit of meekness." He did not mean by this to claim an absolute authority in dictating to them, as of himself, what they should believe, or even to insist, in a dogmatical manner, on their receiving every particular which he taught them by the command of Christ. He had not thus usurped dominion, or lorded it over them, "in respect of the faith," as the clause may be rendered; but had before acted, and was still disposed to act, with gentleness and forbearance, as a helper of their joy and consolation in Christ, by his instructions, admonitions, and counsels. Yet he deemed it necessary, as the servant and representative of Christ, to act with authority, and even sharpness, against such as perverted the Gospel, and corrupted its doctrines; for "by "faith," they stood accepted with God, and were enabled to stand steadfast amidst trials and temptations. Those persons, therefore, who perverted the *faith* by false doctrines and corrupt practices, were about to take from them that support by which they stood, to cause them to fall into various evils, to *mar their joy*, and to do them immense mischief, if not opposed. As helpers of their joy, therefore, the apostle and his friends must take a decided part against these enemies to their holiness and comfort.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

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The Church of God is his peculiar residence, in which he displays his glory and communicates his grace; all therefore who belong to it should be saints, devoted and conformed unto him. Many persons, however, of a different character, will intrude among them; but "grace "and peace from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus "Christ," will be given to the saints alone. We sinners, who have believed in Christ, should ever be ready to bless and praise our God, even amidst sharp sufferings. He is "the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort;" nor can we expect too much from his infinite compassion and love, or too highly celebrate the praises of what he hath already done for us. We must expect tribulations; they are needful, profitable, and unavoidable; and they who have been most honoured by the Lord Jesus have also been most conformed to him in sufferings; but he pro-

CHAP. II.

The apostle shows his purpose, of not coming to Corinth in heaviness; and the grief with which he had written his former epistle, 1—4. *He directs the Corinthians to forgive and restore the incestuous person, as he had forgiven him in Christ's name,* 5—11. *His uneasiness, at not finding Titus at Troas, had induced him to go directly into Macedonia,* 12, 13. *He blesses God for the joy and triumph, which had attended his faithful preaching of the gospel in every place,* 14—17.

portions his consolations to the troubles of such, as simply trust and serve him; and he thus renders them capable of comforting others, by the comfort with which they are comforted of God. The afflictions and consolations of ministers, especially, are often intended for the sake of others, as well as themselves; that, by their example, experience, counsels, and exhortations, they may promote the consolation and salvation of the people. For these blessings are commonly brought home to men's hearts by means of trials and afflictions; and the minister, who is a stranger to sufferings and divine consolations, can seldom duly sympathize with the mourners, counsel the tempted, encourage the dejected, or even bear with the infirmities of the weak. This should reconcile us to our sorrows, and teach us to seek benefit from them: and it should animate us to more earnest prayer for proportionable grace and consolation, that we may exhibit an edifying example under trials; for assuredly we shall rejoice in heaven on account of the sharpest of those afflictions, which have been rendered subservient to our salvation, and that of any of our Lord's beloved people. We may have a steadfast hope of such professed Christians, as sympathize with the afflicted servants of Christ, and are willing to suffer for his sake; being confident, that, as they partake of the sufferings, they shall also share the consolations of his Gospel. The Lord sometimes permits his children to be pressed out of measure, even above strength, and to be driven almost to despair of deliverance; that, having the sentence of death in themselves, they may learn more simply to trust in his almighty power and all-sufficient grace.—This often occurs in the concerns of their own souls: inward temptations and conflicts, connected with outward difficulties, fill them with desponding fears and anxieties; they are made to feel, that infinite mercy and omnipotent grace alone can preserve them from the most terrible downfals, or even from final ruin: thus they are driven from all self-confidence, and learn to cast themselves wholly on God: and when he hath repeatedly rescued them "from so great a death," they admire his truth, power, and love, and are encouraged to hope that he will yet deliver them, and make them victorious over all their enemies. In such scenes of conflict and terror, especially, we feel that we need the prayers of our brethren: and we should thence learn to pray for all, who are tried and tempted; as well as to unite in thanksgivings with such as have received gracious deliverances. Thus all our trials and mercies, being mixed with prayers and praises, will terminate in the glory of God, and in our own and each others spiritual advantage. And even the most afflicted Christian, who is fully assured of eternal felicity, ought to desire and value life, as long as God is pleased to make him useful to the souls of men, and an instrument of promoting his glory.

V. 12—16.

If we would have comfort amidst troubles, reproaches, suspicions, and slanders, we must seek for the rejoicing in the testimony of our conscience. If indeed we are upright in our professed repentance, and faith in Christ and his atoning blood, and careful to serve the Lord in simplicity and godly sincerity, according to our places in his church and in the community; and if we have our conversation in the world, not by fleshly wisdom, but by "the grace of "God;" we may greatly exult in these evidences of our acceptance in Christ, and our adoption into the family of God; and may take this comfort as an abundant counterpoise to every calumny, and even as a sure anticipation of the favourable sentence of our Judge in the great day of account. Yet we need not wonder, if we be suspected by those persons to whom, and for those actions in which, we have behaved most conscientiously. Sometimes simplicity and godly sincerity may require that line of conduct, which to superficial or prejudiced observers may have a contrary appearance: and on some occasions a man may be deemed inconstant because he will not go the whole length of a party, and coincide with them in their follies, mistakes, and sins. We should, however, leave our characters in the Lord's hands; only using proper means to clear them, when the credit of the Gospel, or our usefulness, calls for it. Ministers, and the people who have profited by their labours, should now rejoice in each other, as they may expect to do at the last day. Whatever interferes with this reciprocal joy and affection should be guarded against; and believers should be careful not to grieve, by neglect and unkindness, those faithful friends, to whom, under God, they owe their eternal salvation, and who are concerned for their best welfare, with all the tenderness of affectionate parents. And ministers should desire to visit their beloved people, from whom they have been separated, not only for the comfort of their company, but that the people may have still further benefit from them.

V. 17—24.

It is very unjust and uncandid to ascribe every alteration in a man's purpose or conduct to lightness, instability, duplicity, or carnal policy; especially when his general character bears another stamp, and there may be good reasons for the change that hath taken place. If we are thus unjustly censured or suspected, we must make our appeal to God: yet it behooves us to be steady and constant in our conduct and profession, as far as we can, that we may "avoid the appearance of evil." This is peculiarly incumbent on the preachers of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, the AMEN, the true and faithful Witness; in whom all the promises of God are given and confirmed

BUT [a] I determined this with myself,
[b] that I would not come again to
you in heaviness.
2 For [c] if I make you sorry, who is
he then that maketh me glad, but the
same which is made sorry by me?
3 And [d] I wrote this same unto you,
[e] lest, when I came, I should have sorrow
from them of whom [f] I ought to rejoice:
[g] having confidence in you all, that my
joy is *the joy* of you all.
4 For [h] out of much affliction and
anguish of heart I wrote unto you with
many tears; [i] not that ye should be
grieved, but that ye might know the love
which I have more abundantly unto you.
5 But if [k] any have caused grief, he
hath not [l] grieved me, but in part: that
I may not overcharge you all.
6 Sufficient to such a man *is* this
* punishment, [m] which *was inflicted* of
many.
7 So that contrariwise, [n] ye *ought* rather
to forgive *him*, and comfort *him*, lest
perhaps such an one should be [o] swallowed
up with [p] over much sorrow.

a i 15—17. Acts xi 29. xv. 2. 37. 1 Cor. ii 2. v. 3. Tit. iii. 12.
b 4. i. 23. vii. 5—8. xii. 20, 21. xiii. 10 1 Cor. iv. 21.
c i. 14 xi. 29. Rom xii. 15. 1 Cor. xii. 26.
d 1 Cor. iv. 21. v. 1, &c.
e xii 21. xiii 1, 2.
f xii. 11
g i. 15. vii. 16. viii. 22 Gal. v. 10. Philem. 21
h Lev. xix. 17, 18. Ps cxix 136. Prov. xxvii. 5, 6. Jer. xiii. 15—17 Luke xix. 41—44. Rom. ix. 2, 3. Phil. iii. 18, 19.
i vii. 8, 9 12. xii. 15.
k Prov. xvii. 25. 1 Cor. v. 1—5. 12, 13
l Gal. iv 12
* Or, *censure*
m xii. 10 1 Cor v. 4, 5. 1 Tim. v. 20.
n Gal. vi. 1, 2. Eph iv 32 Col. iii. 13. 2 Thes. iii. 6 14 15 Heb. xii 12-15.
o v. 4 2 Sam. xx. 19, 20 Ps. xxi. 9. lvi. 1, 2 lvii. 3. cxxiv. 3. Prov. i. 12. Is. xxviii 7 1 Cor. xv 54
p vii 10 Prov. xvii. 22 Phil ii. 27. 1 Thes iv. 13.

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in the most steadfast and unchangeable manner, "to the "glory of God by us." What he hath already done leaves no room for us to doubt of the exact performance of every promise to all believers: his word, covenant, and dispensations, are so ordered as to give encouragement to the weakest faith. We may not only say, "Hath he "spoken, and will he not do it?" Hath he interposed with an oath, and will he now fail those, who "flee for "refuge to lay hold on this hope set before them?" But "he hath not spared his own Son; and will he not with "him freely give us all things?" Yet unbelief excludes men from the blessing; and many believers come short of comfort, because they are distrustful and of little faith. If then we have been established in Christ with these ancient believers, it is God that hath done this great thing for us: the sacred unction of his grace, the seal and earnest of his Spirit, and those holy tempers and gracious fruits, which attend our confidence and consolations, secure us from delusion in so important a matter, and distinguish genuine experience from all the joys of hypocrites, enthusiasts, and apostates. We should never call God to witness, except on important occasions and in the most solemn manner, when other ways of ascertaining the truth, and avouching our integrity, are insufficient, and momentous concerns are at stake; yet the example of the apostle, under the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit, fully proves, that solemn oaths in some cases are both lawful and expedient. The record of God will be on our souls, either to justify or condemn us: he "will "not hold those guiltless, who take his name in vain;" and we ought so to act, that in all ordinary cases our yea yea, nay nay, may be sufficient to ensure credit to our testimony. If the apostle did not exercise dominion over the faith of Christians, we should by no means call men master or father, or implicitly submit to their decisions and assertions; nor should we ever attempt to lord it in this manner over any part of God's heritage. We ought to remember, that ministers are the helpers of the joy of believers; and we should seek the increasing comfort of our brethren with prudent and persevering tenderness and affection. Yet as Christians stand by faith only, and all their joys must flow from the vigorous, uninterrupted and authorized exercise of that leading principle; so every thing that tends to weaken, mislead, and subvert the faith of professed Christians, must be watched against and opposed. Sometimes therefore genuine love, and a wise desire of helping the joy of believers, will dictate sharp rebukes and decided censures of those, who would deceive and corrupt them. It is, however, best to use more lenient measures, as far as there is a prospect of success; and to avoid even the appearance of severity, if it can be done consistently with prudence and faithfulness.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1—4. The apostle had determined in himself that he would not, if it could be avoided, make his intended visit to the Corinthians, till he could go with comfort to himself and them. He expected that he should prevail with them, by his epistles, to exclude such as remained refractory, and should also recover those who had been drawn aside: and then he might be able to go among them without that heaviness and distress of mind, which he must have felt, if he had been constrained to re-establish his authority by censures and punishments. When he had before visited Corinth, he had received and communicated joy; and he was not willing to come the second time in a sorrowful manner. Even his steady friends must have shared the sorrow, if he had been forced to exercise severity: and so his journey must have been distressing to them and to him. He had therefore written before, and he now wrote again, in order that the prevailing abuses might be redressed: lest he should receive sorrow from the very persons, in whose holy and comfortable walking he ought to have had rejoicing: and he was confident that they would approve of this plan, as he would not doubt but his joy was the joy of them all. No doubt the apostle knew, that this rule admitted of exceptions: but it was kind and prudent in him to express his favourable opinion of the Corinthians in general; and to represent the disaffected party to be so small, as not to bear any proportion to his friends and adherents. He had indeed written the former epistle, especially those parts of it which contained rebukes, in great affliction, and constrained by the anguish of his heart, at hearing distressing things concerning them; and he had wept abundantly at the painful necessity imposed on him: yet he had not intended by it to cause them needless grief; but rather to convince them of his more abundant love to them, by performing this most self-denying and distressing act of Christian friendship, even contrary to their inclinations, and at the hazard of incurring their displeasure.

8 Wherefore I beseech you, [q] that ye
would confirm *your* love toward him.
9 For to this end also did I write,
[r] that I might know the proof of you,
[s] whether ye be obedient in all things.
10 To [t] whom ye forgive any thing, I
forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to
whom I forgave *it*, for your sakes *forgave*
I it, in the * person of Christ;
11 Lest [u] Satan should get an advantage
of us: for we are not ignorant of his
devices.
12 ¶ Furthermore, [x] when I came to
Troas to *preach* Christ's gospel, [y] and a
door was opened unto me of the Lord,
13 I had [z] no rest in my spirit, because
I found not [a] Titus my brother:

q Gal v. 13. vi. 1, 2 10. Jude 22, 23.
r vii. 12—15. viii. 24 Ex. xvi. 4 Deut viii 2 16 xiii. 3 Phil ii 22
s vii. 15 x. 6. Phil ii 12. 2 Thes iii 14 Philem. 21
t v. 20. Matt. xviii. 18. John xx. 23 1 Cor. v. 4
* Or, sight
u xi. 3, 14 1 Chr. xxi. 1, 2. Job i. 11, 12. ii. 3. 5. 9, 10. Zech. iii. 1—4. Luke xxii. 31. John xiii. 2. 27 Acts [illegible]. 25. 1 Cor. vii. 5. Eph. vi. 11, 12. 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26. 1 Pet. v. 8. Rev. ii. 24. xii. 9—11 xiii 8.
x Acts xx 1—6
y Acts xiv 27. 1 Cor. xvi. 9. Col iv. 3 Rev. iii. 7, 8.——z vii 5, 6.——a viii. 6. 16. 23. xii. 18. Gal. ii. 1. 3. 2 Tim iv 10. Tit i. 4.

but taking my leave of them, [b] I went
from thence into Macedonia.
14 Now [c] thanks *be* unto God, [d] which
always causeth us to triumph in Christ,
and maketh manifest [e] the savour of his
knowledge by us in every place.
15 For we are unto God [f] a sweet
savour of Christ [g] in them that are saved,
and in them that perish:
16 To the one *we are* [h] the savour of
death unto death; and to the other the
savour of life unto life: and [i] who *is*
sufficient for these things?
17 For we are not as many, [k] which
† corrupt the word of God: [l] but as of
sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of
God, speak we in Christ.

b Acts xx. 1, 2.
c i. 11. viii. 16 ix. 15. Eph. v. 20 1 Thes. iii. 9. Rev vii. 12.
d Ps. cvi. 47. cxlviii. 14. Rom viii 37 1 Cor. xv 57.
e 15, 16. Cant i. 3 Rom xv 19. Col i. 6 23
f Gen. viii 21. Ex. xxix 18 25. Ez xx. 41 Eph. v 2. Phil iv 18.
g iv. 3, 4. Is. xlix. 5, 6. 1 Cor i 18. 2 Thes ii. 10.
h Luke ii 34. John ix. 39. Acts xiii. 45—47 xx 26, 27. 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8.
i iii. 5, 6. xii 11. 1 Cor. xv. 10.
k iv. 2. xi 13—15. Jer v. 31 xxiii. 27—32 Matt. xxiv. 24. 1 Tim. i. 20 iv 1 3. 2 Tim. ii 16—18. iv. 3 4. Tit. i 11. 2 Pet. ii. 1—3 1 John iv. 1 2 John 7—11 Jude 4 Rev. ii 14, 15. 20. xii 9. xix. 20.——† Or, *deal deceitfully.*
l i. 12. iv. 2. Acts xx. 20. 27.

V. 5—11. (*Notes*, 1 *Cor.* v.) The crime of the incestuous Corinthian, and the connivance of the Church had peculiarly troubled the apostle; but he had borne only a part of this grief, as many of them had shared it with him. This he mentioned, that he might not charge too much criminality on them, or be supposed to intimate that they had all alike been culpable in that transaction. As to the offender himself, let the rebuke and excommunication, which had been inflicted on him by *many*, (or by the Church and its ministers, acting according to the sentence and command of the apostle,) suffice for his punishment. It appeared to have had a salutary effect; and therefore, instead of further severity, they ought to forgive and encourage him, lest over-much sorrow should unfit him for his duty, or give Satan an opportunity of tempting him to hard thoughts of God and religion, to apostacy, or even to despair, which might swallow him up and occasion his ruin. St. Paul would therefore now entreat for the offender, as he before protested against him; and he besought them to confirm their love to him, by restoring him to communion, and by sympathising in his sorrow, that he might be assured their censures, though apparently severe, had proceeded from the same friendly disposition. Indeed, he had written so decidedly on this subject, to make trial of their prompt obedience to his apostolical authority; and their conduct had satisfied him that they were disposed to regard it in all things. He was therefore confident of their discretion; and ready, not only in this but in similar instances, to concur with them in receiving again into their communion, as penitent and pardoned, those who had been laid under the censures of the Church; this he would do for their benefit, in the presence of Christ, as representing his person, and as acting by his authority. (*Notes*, *Matt.* xvi. 19. *John* xx. 23.) He was also the more desirous of thus concurring in the reconciliation of the offender, lest Satan, their subtile adversary, should obtain some advantage by their delay, either by tempting the offender to despondency, by bringing an evil report on Christians, as rigorous and unforgiving, or by discouraging other offenders, deterring men from embracing the Gospel, exciting further divisions in the Church, or otherwise preventing the success of the Gospel. For he was not ignorant of the manifold devices of that enemy, and by what varied machinations he endeavoured to deceive and prejudice men's minds, and to disturb the peace of the Church. It is observable, that the apostle scrupulously avoided *naming* this scandalous offender.

V. 12, 13. After Paul had been driven from Ephesus, he went to Troas in his way to Macedonia, intending to stay a short time in that city to preach the Gospel, of which a favourable opportunity presented itself. (*Notes*, *Acts* xx. 1, 2.) But not meeting Titus there according to his expectation, and having received no tidings from Corinth, his mind was so discomposed about the affairs of that Church, that he could not comfortably continue at Troas; but he hastened into Macedonia to meet Titus, which he accordingly did, and his report had determined him to write this second epistle, and then to proceed leisurely through the Churches of Macedonia, before he visited Corinth.

V. 14—17. The happy turn given to the affairs of the Corinthians, the confidence which the apostle entertained of success in that undertaking, and his usefulness in other places, caused him to break forth in thankfulness to God amidst his difficulties and distresses. He had indeed sharp conflicts to sustain, but the Lord gave him such multiplied victories, that he went from city to city as a triumphant conqueror in the cause of Christ. And, as in triumphs abundance of odours were used, so the name and salvation of Jesus, ("as ointment poured forth,") was a sweet odour diffused by him in every place; so that he and his fellow labourers were pleasing and acceptable to God, by their testimony to Christ, and through his merits, as a sweet-smelling savour, not only in respect of those who were saved by their means, but also in those who perished through unbelief; for in both cases God was glorified by their preaching. To the one indeed their doctrine was an *occasion* of aggravated condemnation, through the depraved state of their hearts, and their enmity to it or abuse of it; even as costly odours are sometimes pernicious and fatal to

CHAP. III.

To obviate the charge of vain-glory, the apostle shows, that the conversion of the Corinthians was a sufficient attestation of Christ to his ministry, 1—3. *He ascribes all his sufficiency and success to God,* 4, 5; *and proves the glory of the gospel to be superior to that of the law,* 6—11; *declaring that his plain speaking accorded to his ministry, which was less obscure than that of Moses,* 12—14; *showing the blindness of the Jews, which would be removed when they turned to the Lord,* 15, 16; *and describing the liberty and progressive holiness, which arose from faith in Christ and the illumination of the Holy Spirit,* 17, 18.

diseased persons; and to the other their doctrine was as a delightful odour, that exhilarates the spirits, renews health, and prolongs life; for, loving and embracing the salutary message, they found it to be unto life and salvation. But, as such important consequences were connected with their sacred ministry, and as faithfulness alone could render it acceptable and honourable to God, or profitable to men, who of the human race could of himself be sufficient for such a service? Or who would dare to engage in it without trembling? (iii. 5, 6.) This obliquely hinted at the self-sufficiency of the Corinthian teachers; but they were more immediately intended, when he spake of *many* who sophisticated the word of God, as dishonest vintners do their wine, when they preserve something of the colour and taste, but dilute it, or mix it up with other liquids, which weaken it, prevent its efficacy, or even render it poisonous, in order to enhance their profits. Thus these teachers preserved some important truths in their preaching, to render it more specious, but they corrupted it by human inventions, philosophical conjectures, or lax opinions, till it became inefficacious, and even pernicious, to the souls of men; this they did, to pay court to the predjudices and inclinations of their followers, that they might establish their own influence, and gratify their avarice and ambition. Learned men have differed greatly in opinion about these corrupters of the Gospel, whether they were Judaizing Christians, or Gentile converts, or heretics, as the Gnostics in particular were; but, beyond all doubt, there were corrupters of the Gospel, at that time, of different descriptions, who perverted it in various ways. The apostle, however, was conscious that he was not actuated by such principles, nor left to adopt and propagate such delusions; on the contrary, in the most entire sincerity and simplicity, as sent by God and serving him, as influenced by his grace, and as acting in his sight, he spake of Christ and his salvation in every place, without at all consulting his own interest, or the inclinations of his hearers, except in order to their profit.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

We should always give pain reluctantly, even when it must be done; for, if we are of a truly Christian spirit, we shall share the heaviness and sorrow which we occasion. —It is a common case for faithful ministers to have sorrow from those of whom they ought to rejoice, and to be deprived of comfort even from the seals of their ministry, through the necessity they are under of making them sorrowful; whereas their joy ought to be the joy of all the people. That part of an affectionate minister's work which gives most offence, is often performed by him with great affliction and anguish of heart, and with many tears; so far is he from intending to grieve his beloved people, that he does violence to his own feelings, and ventures their displeasure from his abundant affection to them, and that he may, even against their will, preserve them if possible from the dangers to which the artifices of deceivers and their own inexperience expose them. Such ministers will be careful not to over-charge their brethren, and not to condemn them harshly or indiscriminately. They do not desire to magnify their own trials, or to multiply their complaints, they would have no censure employed or continued in force, without evident necessity, they will show kindness and speak comfort to the penitent, and take pleasure in restoring the most grievous offenders "in the "spirit of meekness," when it can be done consistently with the honour of the Gospel, and the purity of the Church, and they will exhort others to assure the offenders of their love, when salutary rebukes or discipline have had their proper effect. Though no man has a right to exercise dominion over the faith of his brethren, yet, as far as ministers act according to the commandments of Christ, they are authorized to expect obedience from the people, and they may sometimes properly make trial of it; yet they should always be ready to express a forgiving disposition; and when church-censures, ministerial rebukes, or the reconciliation of offenders, are regulated according to the word of Christ, and as in his presence, they will be valid, even as if he had been present in person to ratify them. We should always be upon our guard, lest Satan get an advantage against us; that subtle enemy knows how to avail himself of our mistakes, whether of ill-timed lenity or needless severity; he buoys up men with presumption, or pushes them to despair; he represents the ministers and professors of the Gospel as licentious, or as over strict, just as appearances vary; he raises contradictory slanders, to prejudice men against the truth, or to destroy the peace of the Church. We should therefore study, by attention to the Scriptures, by careful observation, by watching our own experiences, by conferring with our brethren, and by fervent prayer, to get acquainted with his devices, that we may counteract them.

V. 12—17.

It is perhaps impossible, in this present state, to separate fervent active zeal, from an over-anxious solicitude; and though we should not yield to any thing, that takes us off from our present work, yet it may sometimes be pro-

DO we [a] begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some *others*, [b] epistles of commendation to you, or *letters* of commendation from you?

2 Ye [c] are our epistle, written [d] in our hearts, [e] known and read of all men:

3 *Forasmuch as ye are* manifestly declared to be [f] the epistle of Christ, [g] ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of [h] the living God; [i] not in tables of stone, [k] but in fleshly tables of the heart.

a ii. 17. v. 12. x. 8. 12. xii 11. 19. 1 Cor iii. 10. iv 15. x. 33.
b Acts xviii. 27. 1 Cor. xvi 3
c 1 Cor. iii. 10. ix. 1, 2.
d vii 3 xi. 11. xii 15. Phil i 7.
e Rom. i. 8 1 Thes. i. 8.
f Ex. xxxi. 18. Rev ii. 1. 8. 11. 18. iii. 1. 7. 14. 22.
g 1 Cor. iii. 5—10.
h vi 16. Josh. iii. 10 1 Sam xvii. 26 Ps. xlii. 2 lxxxiv. 2. Jer x. 10. Dan. vi. 26. Matt. xvi. 16. 1 Thes i. 9. Heb. ix 14.——i Ex xxiv. 12 xxxiv. 1.——k Ps. xl. 8. Jer. xxxi. 33. Ez. xi. 19 xxxvi. 25—27. Heb viii. 10 x 16.

4 And [l] such trust have we through Christ to [m] God-ward:

5 Not [n] that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; [o] but our sufficiency *is* of God;

6 Who also [p] hath made us able ministers of [q] the new testament; [r] not of the letter, but of the spirit; [s] for the letter killeth, [t] but the spirit [*] giveth life.

l ii. 14. Phil. i. 6.
m Ex. xviii. 19. 1 Thes. i. 8
n ii 16 iv. 7. Ex. iv. 10. John xv 5.
o xii. 9. Ex. iv. 11—16. Jer i. 6—10 Matt x. 19, 20. Luke xxi. 15. xxiv 49. 1 Cor. iii. 6 10. xv. 10 Phil. ii. 13. iv. 13 Jam. i. 17.
p v. 18—20. Matt. xiii. 52. Rom. i. 5. 1 Cor. iii. 5. 10 xii. 28. Eph iii. 7. iv. 11, 12. Col. i. 25—29. 1 Tim i. 11, 12. iv 6 2 Tim. i. 11.——q 14. Jer. xxxi. 31. Matt. xxvi. 28. Mark xiv 24. Luke xxii. 20 1 Cor. xi. 25. Heb. vii. 22. ix. 15—20. xii. 24. xiii. 20. *Marg.*——r Rom. ii. 27—29. vii. 6.——s 7. 9. Deut. xxvii. 26. Rom. iii. 20 iv. 15. vii 9—11. Gal. iii. 10—12. 21, 22.——t John vi. 63. Rom. viii. 2. 1 John i. 1.

[*] Or, *quickeneth*, John v. 21. Rom. iv. 17. 1 Cor. xv. 45. Eph. ii. 1. 5 1 Pet. iii. 18.

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fitable for us to recollect, that even St. Paul could have no rest in his spirit in preaching at Troas, through his earnest desire to learn the state of the Corinthian Church. If, however, our hearts be right with God, our disquietudes will terminate in thanksgivings; our conflicts in victories and triumphs: and the labours of the faithful minister will be accepted and graciously rewarded by our God, whether his hearers be saved, or perish. But how dreadful is the case of numbers, to whom the blessed Gospel becomes "the savour of death unto death;" and the faithful and affectionate endeavours of ministers for their salvation serve only to seal and aggravate their condemnation! This is a painful thought to the servants of Christ; as they would gladly be "the savour of life unto life" to all, who come within the sound of their voice, or by any means can be made acquainted with their doctrine. But how should the consideration of the consequences which must follow on our preaching, to ourselves, and our hearers, make us shrink back, as it were, under the consciousness of unworthiness and insufficiency! especially as so many still corrupt the word of God, to their own ruin, and that of their deluded followers. May we then inquire how the case is with us; may we carefully watch ourselves in this matter; and seek the testimony of our consciences, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, that "as of sincerity, as of God, in the sight of God, so we "may speak in Christ!" May the Lord send forth many such ministers into his Church, and stop the mouths of all false teachers; and may every Christian learn to distinguish between faithful shepherds, and all kinds of wolves and foxes in sheep's clothing!

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1—3. The apostle's opponents would be ready to censure the foregoing declaration, as another instance of his commending himself; of which, it is probable, they alleged that his former epistle contained some examples: but could the Christians at Corinth, in general, suspect him of being actuated by such motives? Did he or his friends need such a testimony to their character? Was there any occasion for other churches to give them recommendatory letters to the Corinthians? Or that the Corinthians should thus testify to their character, for the satisfaction of other churches? This indeed was the case of some, who had come in among them with an ambiguous character and mission; and who wanted, and received such recommendations; but the apostle had no need of them. For the Corinthians themselves were his epistle of commendation; it was written in *their* hearts, (as some explain it, perhaps without sufficient authority from manuscripts or copies,) and legible in their lives; so that men of every nation and language might read and understand the import of it. Or, he so valued this testimonial, and so loved them as the seals of his ministry, that he had this epistle, as it were, engraven in *his* heart. For they were manifestly declared to all men, to be Christ's epistle recommending his ministry, which he had employed him in framing. This was not written with ink on paper, but by the Spirit of the living God; nor engraven, as the law was, by the finger of God on tables of stone, but on fleshly tables of the heart; their hearts having been softened, humbled, and prepared to receive this divine impression, by the new-creating power of the Holy Spirit. 'In your hearts, made soft and pliable, and ready to obey 'the word, by the operation of the Holy Spirit, according 'to the promise, *Ez.* xi. 19. xxxvi. 26.' (*Whitby.*) As the apostle therefore firmly believed them to be true Christians, so they could not doubt but he was the apostle of Christ: their conversion sufficiently recommended him and his doctrine, and he needed no other testimonial.

V. 4—6. The preceding considerations gave the apostle such confidence, through Christ, in his cause and in those things which pertained to God, that he spake to the Corinthians in that bold manner of himself and of his ministry, which they censured. Not that he or his associates professed any sufficiency for so important a trust and work, as of themselves, or by any natural wisdom, ability, or good disposition, above other men: they could not execute their ministry faithfully or successfully, if left to themselves, they could not think a good thought without divine grace; they made no estimation of themselves in this great concern; but allowed and were deeply sensible, that all their sufficiency was of God. He indeed had made them able, faithful, and successful ministers of the New Testament, or covenant, which was ratified with believers through the blood of Christ, and ensured to them all spiritual and eternal blessings: and, while they gave him all the glory, they could not but be conscious of what he had done for them and by them; nor might they shun to speak with authority and decision in his cause. For they had not been the ministers of a mere letter, but of a doctrine that was accompanied by the operation of the

7 But if [u] the ministration of death, [x] written *and* engraven in stones, [y] was glorious, so [z] that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses, for the *glory* of his countenance, [a] which *glory* was to be done away;

8 How shall not [b] the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?

9 For if [c] the ministration of condemnation *be* glory, much more doth [d] the ministration of righteousness [e] exceed in glory.

10 For even that which was made glorious, [f] had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.

11 For [g] if that which is done away *was* glorious, [h] much more that which remaineth *is* glorious.

u 9—*See on*, 8. 6. x 3. Ex. xxiv. 12. xxxi. 18 xxxii. 15, 16. 19. xxxiv. 1. Deut. iv. 13. v. 22. ix. 9—11. 15. x 1—4 Heb. ix 4. y Deut. iv. 8. Neh. ix. 13 Ps. xix. 7, 8. cxix. 97. 127, 128. 174. Rom vii. 12—14 22. Gal iii. 21. z Ex. xxxiv. 29—35. Luke ix 29—31. Acts vi 15. a 10, 11. 14. Rom. x. 4 1 Cor. xiii 10 ——b 6 17. xi 4 Is. xi. 2. xliv 3 lix. 21. Joel ii. 28, 29. John i. 17. vii 39. Acts ii 17, 18 32, 33. Rom. viii. 9—16 1 Cor iii. 16 xii 4—11. Gal. iii. 2—5. 14. iv. 5. 22, 23. Eph ii. 18. 2 Thes. ii. 13. 1 Pet i 2 Jude 19, 20 ——c *See on*, 6, 7. Ex. xix. 12—19. xx 18, 19. Rom. i. 18 viii. 3, 4. Gal iii 10 Heb. xii 18—21.

d v. 21. Is. xlvi. 13 Jer. xxiii 6. Rom. i. 17. iii. 21, 22 iv. 11. v. 15—21. x. 3—10. 1 Cor. i. 30. Gal. v. 4, 5. Phil. iii. 9. 2 Pet. i. 1. e 10, 11. 1 Cor. xv 41. Heb. iii. 5, 6 f Job xxv. 5 Is. xxiv. 23. Hag. ii. 3. 7—9. Acts xxvi. 13 Phil. iii. 7, 8. 2 Pet. i. 17. Rev. xxi. 23, 24. xxii. 5. g *See on*, a 7. Heb vii. 21—26 viii. 13. xii. 25—29. ——h 6 iv. 1.

Holy Spirit to render it efficacious: for the mere letter would have proved an occasion of condemnation and death to the hearers; but the Spirit gave life and salvation to them through the Gospel. This is commonly understood restrictively of the legal and evangelical dispensations, contrasted with each other, and the context seems to favour this interpretation: yet it is not satisfactory, as proposed in a general manner; for the legal dispensation was not a killing letter to all that were under it, nor is the Gospel in all cases attended by the life-giving Spirit. But the legal dispensation derived all its saving efficacy from the Gospel, to which it referred; and, after the publication of Christianity, it became altogether a killing letter to those who cleaved to it. For the Gospel was "the ministration of "the Spirit," and the only doctrine through which life and salvation were communicated to sinners, as the apostle shows more fully in the next verses. The moral law indeed is universally "found unto death," to all who remain under it; but the ceremonies and types, together with the prophecies, gave ancient believers a feeble discovery of mercy and grace, through the promised Saviour: yet these to unbelievers were a mere lifeless form, which left them under the condemnation of the moral law, and even added to it. But then it must be remembered, that the Gospel itself, and its ministers, are "a savour of death "unto death" to unbelievers; who often make the same formal use of some evangelical truths, and an attendance on Christian ordinances, which the Jews did of the Mosaic ceremonies, and the traditions of the elders: and in this way, and many others, "the letter," even of the New Testament, "kills;" and it only gives life, when accompanied "by the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." To understand "the letter and the spirit," of a *literal* and an *allegorical* interpretation of Scripture, is both foreign to the apostle's argument, and also palpably absurd and extremely dangerous. Some parts of Scripture are allegorical, and must be so interpreted: but surely *laws*, *doctrines*, *promises*, *exhortations*, and *historical facts*, must be literally understood by all, who do not seek to misunderstand them!

V. 7—11. The Corinthians undervalued the authority of the apostle as the minister of Christ; but he here showed them, how far the ministry of the New Testament excelled that of the Old. The moral law alone was written and engraven in stones; and it was properly the ministration of death and condemnation, by leaving every transgressor under the curse denounced by it: but the unbelieving Jews turned the whole Mosaic dispensation into a mere covenant of works, to their own condemnation. Both the holy, just, and good law, and the legal dispensation, as connected with it, and introductory to the Gospel, were glorious: the whole had the stamp of divinity upon it, and was expressive of the justice, holiness, and truth of God. As an emblem of this, the face of Moses, when he came down from the mount with the tables of the law, and the ratification of that covenant, shone in such a manner that the Israelites could not steadfastly look at it; which caused him to wear a veil in their presence. Yet this represented the glory of that dispensation, which was to be abolished by the introduction of the new covenant in Christ. If, then, the ministry of that dispensation, which, considered apart from the Gospel, could only leave men under the sentence of death, spiritual, temporal, and eternal, was so glorious, and imparted such honour to Moses, how could it be supposed, that the ministry of the New Testament, through which especially the sanctifying Spirit was given to sinners, as the seal and earnest of eternal life, should not be glorious and honourable to those intrusted with it? If that ministry which in itself tended only to condemnation, contained such a display of the divine glory, as rendered the exercise of it honourable; how should not that ministry, by which condemned sinners are taught the way of righteousness, by faith in Christ, and which contains so full and complete a discovery of the glory and harmony of God's perfections, confer far greater honour on the apostles, who were employed to preach it to the world? Indeed, the glory of the law, and that of the legal dispensation, were so eclipsed by the excellent glory of the Gospel, as *in this respect* to be comparatively nothing; and after the publication of Christianity, the Mosaic dispensation had lost all its *reflected* glory and divine authority, and was become a lifeless letter and form to those who rejected Christ. If, then, that which was intended to be temporary, and at length to be abolished, had been glorious when Moses promulgated it, much more must the Gospel, which is intended to continue till the end of the world, as the last and most complete discovery of the divine truth and will, be glorious in itself, and honourable to those who were intrusted to reveal it to mankind. "It should be understood, that the law,' (of ten commandments,) 'is not considered simply, but as 'connected with the ministry of Moses, and as apart 'and distinct from the Gospel; in which respect it may 'be said to have been abolished, when the ministration of 'Moses was abolished. But thou wilt say, is the minis'tration of Moses abolished in this respect? By no means: 'for men must always be prepared for the Gospel by the 'preaching of the law. But this I say, that the minis-

12 Seeing then that we have such hope, [i] we use great * plainness of speech:

13 And not as Moses, [k] *which* put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel [l] could not steadfastly look [m] to the end of that which is abolished:

14 But [n] their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; [o] which *veil* is done away in Christ.

15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, [p] the veil is upon their heart.

16 Nevertheless, [q] when it shall turn to the Lord, [r] the veil shall be taken away.

17 Now [s] the Lord is that Spirit: and [t] where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there *is* liberty.

18 But we all, [u] with open face, beholding [x] as in a glass [y] the glory of the Lord, [z] are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, *even* as * by the Spirit of the Lord.

i iv. 2, 3. 13 John x 24. xvi. 25. 29. 1 Cor. xiv. 19. Col iv 4
* Or, *boldness.*
vii. 4. x 1. Acts iv. 13 29—31 ix. 27 29. xiv. 3 Eph. vi 19, 20. Phil i. 20. 1 Thes ii. 2 1 Tim. iii. 13.
k Ex. xxxiv 33—35
l 18.
m Rom. x. 4 Gal iii. 23, 24. Eph ii. 14, 15. Col ii. 17. Heb. x. 1—9
n iv. 3, 4. Ps. lxix 23 Is vi. 10. xxix. 10—12. xlii. 18—20. xliv. 18 lvi. 10. lix. 10. Jer. v. 21. Ez. xii. 2. Matt. vi. 23 xiii. 13—15. John ix. 39—41 xii 40. Acts xxviii. 26, 27. Rom. xi. 8—10. 25 ———— o iv. 6. Is xxv. 7. Matt xvi. 17. Luke xviii. 31—34. xxiv. 25—27. 44—46. John viii. 12. xii. 46. Acts xvi. 14. xxvi. 18. Eph. i. 17—20.

p Acts xiii. 27—29.
q Ex xxxiv. 34. Deut. iv 30. xxx. 10. Lam. iii. 40. Hos. iii. 4, 5. Rom. xi. 25—27
r Is xxv 7 xxix. 18. liv. 13. Jer. xxxi. 34. John vi. 45, 46.
s 6. John vi. 63. 1 Cor. xv. 45.
t Ps. li. 12. Is. lxi. 1. Rom. viii. 2. 15, 16. Gal. iv 6. 2 Tim. i. 7.
u 13.
x 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Jam. i. 23.
y iv. 4 6. John i. 14. xii. 41. 1 Tim i. 11. *Gr.*
z v 17. Rom viii. 29. xii. 2. xiii 14. 1 Cor. xv. 49. Gal. vi. 15. Eph iv 22—24. Col. iii. 10. Tit. iii. 5. 2 Pet. i. 5—9.———* Or, *of the Lord the Spirit.* 17.

‘ tration of Moses is in all cases abolished, when the manifest grace of the Gospel succeeds to the figurative preaching of the law.’ (*Beza.*) From this argument it is generally concluded, that the false teachers at Corinth *Judaized:* but it has before appeared, that their leading errors were of a different nature; though some might also be prone to run into that extreme. The apostle, however, seems to have principally intended to magnify his office; and to show, from the example of Moses, that the ministry of the New Testament was honourable, in proportion to the superior glory of that dispensation: and that he, as immediately intrusted with the important stewardship of the divine mysteries, as an inspired apostle, and as faithful in this service, had a right to demand respect and deference to his authority; which his opponents, whoever they were, refused him, and instructed their partizans to refuse him.

V. 12—16. Having this hope and confidence, that he was made of God an able minister of that glorious dispensation, by which the gift of righteousness and the life-giving Spirit were conferred on men, the apostle used great plainness, liberty, and boldness of speech: declaring without reserve "the whole counsel of God," and faithfully reproving what was false and sinful, as one that had authority and sufficiency from God. His doctrine was not hid in obscurity or ambiguity, or under types and shadows, as the legal dispensation had been, of which the veil on the face of Moses was a figure, or emblem. As this covering concealed the lustre of his countenance; so, the obscurity of that dispensation concealed its real glory; and the Israelites were unable to look steadfastly to Christ, the great End, Scope, and Substance of those ceremonies, which were shortly to be abolished. Even believers had only indistinct and transient glimpses of that glorious Object: and unbelievers looked no further than the outward institution, except as they expected a temporal deliverer and king. Thus their minds were generally blinded by pride, prejudice, and carnal lusts, which formed a veil over their hearts, in addition to that which was thrown over the Mosaic law: and this veil remained, to close their minds against the truth, even after the light of the Gospel had shown the real import of the legal ceremonies: so that, when the Jews read the Old Testament, the veil upon their hearts prevented them from understanding its true meaning, or deriving any spiritual benefit from it. For the veil is only done away in Christ; his doctrine tends to remove it from the written word: but faith in him, and the supply of his Spirit, must remove it from the heart, and enable the believer to perceive the spiritual meaning of the types, prophecies, and promises of the whole Scripture. For want of this the Jews at that time, (and their awful case is the same to this day,) had a veil on their hearts, when the law of Moses was read among them; nor could all their diligence, attention, or attachment to it, enable them to understand it in a saving manner. But when any individuals among them were converted to the Lord Jesus, this veil was removed from their minds: and this will be the case respecting the nation in general, when they shall, according as it is predicted, believe in their long rejected Messiah. (*Notes, Ex.* xxxiv. 29—35.) —*Abolished.* ‘Such an oblique manner of speaking on ‘this subject makes the argument peculiarly striking. ‘It is taken for granted, as a thing certainly known, and ‘quite indisputable, that the Mosaic dispensation was to ‘be abolished.’ (*Doddridge.*) ‘We, the ministers of ‘the Gospel, speak plainly and openly, and put no veil ‘upon ourselves, as Moses did, whereby to hinder the ‘Jews from seeing Christ in the law: but that which ‘hinders them is a blindness on their minds, which ‘remains to this day. Their unbelief comes not from ‘any obscurity in our preaching; but from a blindness ‘which rests upon their minds. But when their heart ‘shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.’ (*Locke.*)

V. 17, 18. It appears from the preceding argument, that the Lord Jesus is that Spirit, or animating soul, which gives life to the letter of the Scriptures, and to believers. Without him, doctrines, promises, ordinances, and commandments, are a mere carcass of religion; the power and life of which wholly depends on their relation to his person, mediation, and grace: and without faith in him, and grace from him, all knowledge, ordinances, or external obedience, constitute a dead form of godliness. In both respects he is, as it were, the soul that animates the body, and gives activity, energy, and value, to every part of it. This union with Christ is effected by the indwelling of his Holy Spirit: and where this divine Agent, proceeding from the Father and the Son, and One with them, inhabits the heart, there is true liberty. He gives freedom from sin and Satan, from condemnation and servile principles, from the love of the world, and the fear

CHAP. IV.

The apostle declares his unwearied zeal and integrity in preaching the Gospel, 1, 2. *Satan blinds the minds of unbelievers against the light of the divine glory of Christ; which God imparts, by shining into the hearts of his people,* 3—6. *The weakness and sufferings of the apostle redounded to the praise of the power of God,* 7—12. *The supports, motives, and prospects of glory, by which he and his helpers were induced to persevere without fainting,* 13—18.

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of men: he enables the believer to find liberty in willing obedience, and in spiritually worshipping God. And he gives him confidence and boldness in his conduct among men, without regarding their censures and frowns, or courting their friendship or applause, from conscious integrity and satisfaction of the Lord's acceptance. Thus all Christians, in proportion to their degree of faith and grace, being enlightened by the Spirit of the Lord, behold with open face, as in a mirror, by faith exercised on divine revelation, the glory of God in the Person and work of his Son: and this *glory*, beaming upon their souls with transforming efficacy, (as opaque objects reflect the rays of the sun, and so become in a measure luminous,) they are gradually changed into his image of righteousness, purity, truth, and love, growing more and more like their beloved Saviour, in judgment, disposition, affections, and conduct, from one degree of this glorious holiness to another; even as by the work "of the Spirit of the Lord," or *the Lord the Spirit*, by which he new-creates the soul; and according to the measure in which he discovers to a man the glory of God in Christ, and enables him to behold it with open face and fixed admiration. Till at length the work will be perfected, when the view of faith, as in a mirror, shall be changed for immediate and perfect vision. (*Marg. Ref.*) Some expositors explain the "open," or *unveiled*, "face," to mean the face of Christ; rendering the words, "We all, in an unveiled face, beholding as in a glass the "glory of the Lord," &c. The glory of God in the face of Christ is certainly the object contemplated. The veil on the face of Moses implied, that this glory was but obscurely shown by his ministration: but the veil, by the ministration of righteousness and of the Spirit, is removed, so that the glory of God in the face of Christ is unveiled; and all they, from whose hearts the veil of prejudice, pride, unbelief, and worldly lust is removed, see it clearly and distinctly. If the "unveiled face," be understood of the beholders, this latter *veil* is meant; and the contrast is between them and the unbelieving Jews: but if it be understood of Christ, then the contrast is between the obscure ministration of Moses, and the clear and full ministration of the apostles. As believers they beheld this glory, (*Note*, iv. 4—6:) and through their doctrine, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, all Christians did, and still do, behold it.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

Even the appearance of self-commendation is painful to the humble and spiritual Christian; whereas the proud and carnal court applause, and are highly gratified with it. The conversion of sinners, and their subsequent holy lives, are the minister's best letter of recommendation: if these effects be evident and abundant, he will generally want no other testimonial among real Christians. For his usefulness is manifestly declared, and fully understood, to be Christ's own attestation to his ministry, which the Saviour hath written by the Spirit of the living God upon the hearts of his people, and made legible in their lives and actions. Professors of evangelical truth should remember, that their tempers and conduct are supposed to form an exhibition of the tendency of that doctrine and ministry on which they attend. Indeed, the stamp of much religious profession is a lax practice, self-confidence, boasting loquacity, censoriousness, a disputatious temper, bitterness, and clamour: this epistle often shows under what sort of a ministry it was formed; though it leaves the reader in great doubt whether Christ had any part in it, or whether an enemy alone was concerned. But, alas! many, who attend on the most faithful and practical preachers, exhibit such an epistle, (so to speak,) to the perusal of the church, as has evident marks of spuriousness in it: though numbers charge all the blame on the doctrine and ministry, which are thus disgraced. But when professed Christians act consistently, obeying the commands, and copying the example, of their Lord, they honour and recommend the Gospel and the preachers of it, and are instrumental in bringing others also to attend on the truth without prejudice. Success in this blessed work should inspire our minds with confidence in God: yet we ought always humbly to recollect and acknowledge, that we are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; that our whole dependence must be on the Lord, and that the whole glory belongs to him alone. It is a very great honour to be made able ministers of the New Testament. We should not indeed suppose ourselves to be such, in that high sense which the apostle meant: yet, by imbibing his principles, copying his example, and adhering to his doctrine, we may hope that the Lord will, in an inferior degree, qualify us for the same honourable service. Even the New Testament will be a killing letter, if exhibited as a mere system and form, without a dependence on the Spirit of God to give it a quickening energy: yet it is by the blessed doctrine of God our Saviour alone that the Spirit is given to sinful man.

V. 7—18.

The holy law of God, though excellent and glorious in itself, can only be held forth as the ministration of death and condemnation to fallen man: but justifying righteousness and sanctifying grace come from Jesus Christ, and by the ministry of the Gospel. This gracious revelation so far exceeds in glory the holy law itself, that it even seems to eclipse it, as the noon-day sun does the glimmering stars. Much more, then, does the clear light and

THEREFORE, [a] seeing we have this ministry, [b] as we have received mercy, [c] we faint not;

2 But have [d] renounced the hidden things of * dishonesty, [e] not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but, [f] by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

3 But if [g] our gospel be hid, [h] it is hid to them that are lost:

4 In whom [i] the god of this world hath [k] blinded the minds of them which believe not, [l] lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is [m] the Image of God, should [n] shine unto them.

a iii. 6. 12. v 18 Eph. iii. 7, 8.
b 1 Cor. vii. 25. 1 Tim. i. 13. 1 Pet. ii. 10.
c 16. Is xl. 30. Gal. vi. 9 Eph iii. 13 Phil iv. 13. 2 Thes. iii. 13. *Marg.* Heb xii. 3. Rev. ii. 3.
d 1 Cor. iv. 5.
* Or, *shame.* Rom. vi. 21. Eph v. 12.——e i. 12 ii. 17. xi. 3. 6. 13–15. Eph. iv. 14. 1 Thes, ii. 3–5.——f v. 11. vi 4–7.
g Rom. ii. 16. 1 Thes. i. 5. 1 Tim. i. 11.
h 4. ii. 15, 16. iii. 16 Matt. xi. 25. 1 Cor. i. 18. 2 Thes. ii. 9—11.
i Matt. iv. 8, 9. John xii. 31. xiv. 30. xvi. 11. 1 Cor. x. 20. Eph ii. 2. vi. 12. 1 John v. 19. *Gr.* Rev xx. 3
k iii. 14. 1 Kings xxii 22. Is. vi. 10. John xii. 40.——l iii. 8 11. 18. John viii 12. xii. 35. Acts xxvi. 18. Col i. 27. 1 Tim. i. 11. Tit ii. 13.——m John i. 18. xii. 45 xiv. 9. 10. xv. 24. Phil. ii. 6. Col. i. 15. Heb. i. 3.——n 6. Ps l. 2. Is. lx. 1, 2. 2 Pet. i. 19. 1 John ii. 8.

glory of the Gospel exceed those of all preceding dispensations. May Christians then learn to value the faithful ministry of the Gospel, and encourage their preachers to use great plainness of speech, suited to the doctrine with which they are intrusted! May we read the Scriptures with continual prayer to have the veil removed from our hearts, that we may discover and steadfastly behold the Lord Jesus, as "the End of the law for righteousness to "every believer;" that so we may profit even by those things which are now abolished! May we pray also in behalf of them whose minds are still blinded by pride, prejudice, and unbelief; especially for the poor Jews, who are preserved a living demonstration of the truth of the Scriptures, though themselves utterly unacquainted with their spiritual import! May they speedily be turned to the Lord, and the veil be taken from their hearts! May we always remember that the Lord Jesus is the life and soul, as it were, of the Scriptures and of all true religion; that being One with him, by faith and his indwelling Spirit, we enjoy true liberty in the service of God; and that "beholding with open face, as in a glass, the glory of "the Lord, we are changed into his image from glory to "glory, as by the Lord, the Spirit!" This transformation of the soul into conformity to Christ, is the proper evidence and test of spiritual illumination; and without a measure of it, all supposed discoveries and revelations are mere delusion and enthusiasm. May then all, who are called ministers, have the eyes of their understanding enlightened, to behold in this manner the glorious Object of our faith, hope, love, and imitation; and point him out to others with the same efficacy on their souls also: that so the triune JEHOVAH, Father, Son, and Spirit, may be glorified in all and by all, now and for evermore!

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 2. The apostle having had such a glorious and excellent ministry intrusted to him as had been described, and being sensible of the abundant mercy which had been shown to him in his extraordinary conversion and reconciliation unto God, and his call to the apostleship, did not faint or draw back in a dishonourable manner, because of the difficulties and sufferings which he had to encounter: but he and his fellow-labourers renounced with abhorrence all those artful contrivances, by which the idolatrous priests, or the scribes and priests of the Jews, or corrupt teachers of Christianity, imposed on their followers, served their own dishonourable and dishonest purposes, or concealed their secret crimes. The true servants of Christ did not thus exercise their ministry with craftiness or duplicity, professing one thing and aiming at another and covering avarice, and ambition, or sensual indulgence, under high pretensions to zeal and sanctity. Nor did they deceitfully model their doctrine to suit the prejudices and inclinations of men, for their own selfish ends, by keeping back profitable truths, or making such additions and alterations, as might render their preaching less offensive; or by using ambiguous and obscure language, that their meaning might not be clearly apprehended. On the contrary, they endeavoured to set divine truth before their hearers in the most manifest, convincing, and affecting light, that so their doctrine, ministry, and conduct, might be commended to every man's *conscience*, even should his heart rise against it; that every one might perceive the truth and importance of their message, and be sensible that both his interest and duty required him to attend to it; and this they did, as in the sight of God, the ever present Witness and Judge of the thoughts and intents of their hearts. 'What reason can 'be assigned why they, who preached the Gospel plainly, 'should write the same things to the same persons obscurely? "Whatsoever things were written of old "time, were written for our learning." (*Rom.* xv. 4.)— 'And surely they who wrote afterwards by the same Spirit, 'wrote for the same end. And if they wrote for our 'instruction, to be sure they wrote plainly and clearly; 'since otherwise they wrote not so as to instruct and 'teach, but rather to confound the reader. Seeing therefore the great end of writing the Scripture was to instruct 'the world in the will and mind of God, and the great 'things of the Christian faith, their writings are an 'effectual means to obtain it; which yet they cannot be, 'unless they are plain and clear, as to the great things of 'religion.' (*Whitby*). This was written against the papists, who discourage the reading of the Scripture, because they are obscure, lest the common people should learn heresy from them; and on the same ground rest the claims of the Church to infallibility, and the authority of their traditions. But the reasoning is equally conclusive against all those nominal protestants, who suppose that great learning and skill are needful to understand the Scriptures, especially the apostolical epistles; otherwise conclusions may be drawn from them, which they think heretical.

V. 3, 4. If then, after all, the Gospel, which the apostle preached so plainly, was covered with a veil, (as the Mosaic law had been,) if its truth, nature, and glory, were hidden from any who heard it, such persons were evidently as yet in a lost estate, and in the most imminent danger of final predition; and the veil must be upon their hearts, through the prevalence of pride, prejudice, and ungodly lusts. For Satan, the god of this

5 For [o] we preach not ourselves, but [p] Christ Jesus the Lord; [q] and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

6 For God, [r] who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, * hath [s] shined in our hearts, to *give* [t] the light of the knowledge of the glory of God [u] in the face of Jesus Christ.

7 But we have [x] this treasure [y] in earthen vessels, [z] that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

o Matt. iii. 11. John i. 21—23 iii. 27—31. v. i. 18. Acts iii. 12, 13. viii. 9, 10. x 25, 26. xiv. 11—15. Rom. xv. 17, 18. 1 Cor. i. 14, 15. iii. 5, 6. x. 33. Phil. i. 15. 1 Thes. ii. 5, 6. Tit. i. 11. 1 Pet. v. 2—5. 2 Pet. ii 3.——p i. 19. Matt. xxiii 8. Acts ii. 36 v 31. x. 36. Rom. xiv. 8, 9 1 Cor. i. 23 ii. 2. viii 6. xii. 3. xv 48. Phil. ii 11.——q i. 24. v. 14, 15. Matt. xx. 25—27. Luke xxii 25, 26. John xiii. 14, 15 Rom. xv. 1, 2. 1 Cor ix. 19—23. Gal. v. 13 2 Tim ii. 10.——r Gen. i. 3. 14, 15. Ps lxxiv. 16 cxxxvi. 7—9. Is. xlv. 7.——* Gr. *is he who hath.*

s Eph. i. 17, 18 v. 8. 2 Pet. i. 19. t 4. iii. 18. Ex. xxxiii. 18—23. xxxiv 5—7. Ps. lxiii. 2 xc 16 Is. vi. 1—3 xxxv 2. xl 5. lx. 2 John xi. 40. Acts vii. 55 56. u Luke ii. 14. John i. 14 xii 41 xiv 9, 10. Phil. ii. 6. Col. i 15. Heb. i. 3 1 Pet i. 12.——x i. vi. 10 Matt xiii. 44. 52 Eph. iii. 8. Col. i. 27. ii 3 ——y v 1. x 10. Judg vii. 13. 14. 16—20. Lam. iv. 2. 1 Cor i 28. iv 9—13. Gal iv. 13, 14 2 Tim ii 20.——z iii. 5, 6. xii. 7—9. xiii. 4. 1 Cor. ii. 3—5. Eph. i 19, 20. ii. 5. 8, 9. Col ii. 12. 1 Thes i. 5.

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world, whom all unconverted men worshipped and served, in one way or other, prevailed to blind the understandings of numbers who heard the Gospel, and disbelieved it through love of sin and pride of heart; that so the "light of "the Gospel of the glory of Christ," (as the words most literally signify,) even the light which exhibits so clearly the glory of Christ as the Image of God, representing and displaying all divine perfections harmoniously exercised in his character and salvation, might not shine upon them, or within them. Vast multitudes of Satan's subjects are kept from hearing the Gospel; others hear, and for a time are blinded by the tempter to oppose or reject it: and his grand design is, at any rate or by any means, to keep out this transforming light; yet many, who for a season were blinded, have been at length converted. But among the number of unbelievers, the enemy is permitted, in awful judgment, to blind many to their perdition; and this was peculiarly to be expected by those who closed their eyes to this light, when apostles were the preachers, and their doctrine was confirmed by evident and multiplied miracles. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'The fault is not in us, or in the ob'scurity of the Gospel, but in their own blindness, for 'we hide nothing from them.' (*Whitby.*) It is most astonishing, that many of the ancient Christian writers understood the true God to be meant by "the god of "this world:" and it also shows, that their authority, as expositors of Scripture, is not implicitly to be depended on; and that the reformers from popery, who conceded to join the fathers of the first four centuries with the Scriptures, in stating and defending their doctrine, did not act with their usual judgment, but greatly embarrassed the cause which they most zealously maintained. ***Image,*** &c. (*Note, Col.* i. 15—17. *Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5, 6. The peculiarity of the apostle's ministry, and that of his faithful associates, was this: they preached not themselves, they did not seek to exalt or enrich themselves, they did not aspire after authority, reputation, or any secular pre-eminence; but they preached Christ Jesus as their great Subject, in respect of his Person and salvation; they endeavoured to exalt and glorify him; they declared him to be the Lord of the Church, and the Lord of all; and they called on men to accept of his salvation, submit to his authority, and become his obedient servants. But, as to themselves, they not only were fellow-subjects to the common Lord of all Christians, but they were the willing servants of the Church for Christ's sake; they declared that they were bound readily to labour, venture, suffer, and submit to the deepest debasement in doing good to men, as far as the glory of Christ could be advanced by it, or his command required it. This zeal to glorify their beloved Lord made them earnest to be understood in their preaching, which ought to have recommended them to all Christians, in proportion as it excited the enmity and opposition of Satan and his servants. They were induced and enabled to act in this manner by what they had themselves experienced; for they too might have been blinded by the god of this world, and for a time were in an awful state of opposition to the light of the glorious Gospel; but at length, "That GOD, who," in the creation of the world, "commanded light to spring forth out of darkness," had, of his sovereign mercy, effected a similar change in their souls, where ignorance, error, sin, and misery, had before prevailed. By his new-creating Spirit he had removed all obstacles, and let the light of divine truth shine into their hearts; having prepared the understanding to admit, and the heart to love, the doctrine of the Gospel. Thus had he given them the illumination of that knowledge of the divine glory, which their faith perceived in the face of Jesus Christ, in his Person, miracles, character, righteousness, atonement, and mediation; and which, being thus steadfastly beheld with open face as in a mirror, transformed the soul into the glorious image of God exhibited in it. The apostle seems especially to have adverted to his own extraordinary conversion; yet he evidently meant to include that of all other faithful ministers and true believers, which is similar in its nature and effects, and wrought by the same divine power, though it be not attended by the same miraculous circumstances. Satan blinds men's minds, lest the light of the Gospel should make known to them the glory of Christ; but God enlightens the minds of his chosen people, that they may behold that glory; so that this seems the grand distinction between those whom Satan blinds, and those whom God the Spirit illuminates. ***Face.*** 'The apostle 'continually alludes to the face of Moses, which was 'not uncovered, (that the image of God might be clear,) 'but covered.' (*Beza.*) 'The face of Moses gave a feeble and transient reflection of the glory of God, which was covered with a veil; but the face of Christ, the Image of God, displays it fully and permanently to those who are divinely illuminated. "The light of the Gospel of the "glory of Christ," (4.) and "the light of the knowledge "of the glory of God," are spoken of as the same; for "Christ and the Father are One."

V. 7. This treasure, (even the light of the know"ledge of the glory of God, in the face of Christ," and that important ministry which related to it,) was, as it were, deposited in earthen vessels, (*Notes, Judg.* vii. 16—22.) (*Marg. Ref.*) Even the apostles and most eminent evangelists were sinners by nature and practice; their bodies were frail and mortal as those of other men; liable to the same infirmities, susceptible of pain and suffering, and easily worn down by fatigue and hardship, or pinched with hunger and cold; nor were their minds less suscep-

8 *We are* [a] troubled on every side, [b] yet not distressed; *we are* perplexed, but * not in [c] despair;

9 Persecuted, [d] but not forsaken; [e] cast down, but not destroyed;

10 Always [f] bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, [g] that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

11 For we which live [h] are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in [i] our mortal flesh.

12 So then [k] death worketh in us, but life in you.

13 We having [l] the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, [m] I believed, and therefore have I spoken; [n] we also believe, and therefore speak;

14 Knowing [o] that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and [p] shall present *us* with you.

15 For [q] all things *are* for your sakes, that [r] the abundant grace might, through the thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God.

16 For which cause [s] we faint not; but [t] though our outward man perish, yet [u] the inward *man* [x] is renewed [y] day by day.

17 For [z] our light affliction, which is but for a moment, [a] worketh for us a [b] far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory;

18 While [c] we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: [d] for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

a i 9—10 vi. 4. vii 5. xi.23—30.
b 16, 17 xii 10. 1 Sam. xxviii. 15 xxx. 6. Ps. lvi 2, 3. Prov. xiv.26. xviii. 10. Rom. v. 3—5. viii.35—37 Jam i. 2—4. 1 Pet. i. 6, 7. iv 12—14.
* Or, *not altogether without help, or means* Ps. xxxvii. 33. John xiv 18. 1 Cor. x. 13.
c 1 Sam xxxi. 4 Job ii. 9, 10
d Ps ix 10. xxii. 1 xxxvii 25. 28. Is. lxii 4. Heb. xiii. 5, 6.
e vii. 6 Job v. 17—18 xxii. 29. Ps xxxvii. 24 xlii 5. 11. Is. xliii. 2
f i 5. 9. Rom viii 17, 18 Gal. vi. 17. Phil. iii. 10, 11 Col i. 24.
g xiii 4. John xiv. 19. Acts xviii 9, 10. Rom viii. 17. 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12. Rev. i. 17, 18.
h Ps xliv 22. cxli. 7. Rom. viii 36 1 Cor. xv. 31.
i iv. 4 Rom. viii. 11. 1 Cor. xv 53, 54.
k xii 15. xiii 9. Acts xx. 24 1 Cor. iv, 10. Phil. ii. 17 30. 1 John iii 17.
l Acts xv. 11. 1 Cor. xii. 9. Heb. xi. 1, &c 2 Pet. i 1.
m Ps. cxvi. 10.
n iii. 12 Prov. xxi. 28.
o Is xxvi. 19. John xi. 25, 26 Rom. viii. 11. 1 Cor. vi. 14. xv. 20—22. 1 Thes. iv. 14.
p xi. 2. Eph. v. 27. Col. i. 22. 28. Jude 24.
q i 4—6. Rom. viii. 28. 1 Cor. iii. 21—23. Col i. 24. 2 Tim. ii. 10.
r i. 11. viii. 19. ix. 11, 12. Ps. l. 14. 23. Gal. i. 24 Eph iii. 20, 21. Col. iii 16, 17. Heb. xiii. 15, 16 1 Pet. ii. 9. iv. 11. Rev. iv. 8—11 v. 8—14. xix. 4—6.
s *See on*, 1. Ps. xxvii. 13. cxix. 81. Is. xl 39.
t xii. 15. Job xix. 26, 27. Ps. lxxiii. 26. Is. lvii. 1, 2. Matt v. 29, 30.
u Rom vii. 22. Eph iii. 16. 1 Pet. iii. 4.
x Ps. li 10 Is. xl. 31 Rom. xii. 2. Eph. iv. 23. Col. iii. 10. Tit. iii. 5.
y Luke xi. 3.
z xi. 23—28 Ps. xxx 5 Is. liv. 8. Acts xx. 23, 24. Rom viii. 18. 37. 1 Pet. i. 6. iv. 7. v. 10.
a Ps cxix. 67. 71. Matt. v 12. Rom. v 3—5. Phil. i. 19 2 Thes. i. 4—6. Heb. xii. 10, 11. Jam. i. 3, 4. 12.
b iii. 18. Gen xv. 1. Ps. xxxi 19. lxxiii. 24 Is. lxiv. 4. Luke vi. 23. Rom. ii 7. 1 Cor ii 9 1 Pet. i. 7, 8. v. 19. 1 John iii. 2 Jude 24
c v. 7. Rom. viii. 24, 25. Heb. xi. 1. 25—27. xii. 2, 3.
d Matt xxv. 46. Luke xvi. 25, 26. 2 Thes. ii. 16. 1 John ii. 16, 17. 25.

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tible of fear, sorrow, anxiety, and disquietude, than those of others. They were also conscious of many defects and impediments, and destitute of those accomplishments which the world generally admires; they had no wealth or authority, they made no show of superior genius, learning, or eloquence; nay, they were not delivered from the effects of in-dwelling sin. So far therefore were they from being such illustrious persons as to attract general admiration, that they were treated as the filth of the world; and, while their infirmities sometimes rendered them less acceptable even to the churches, their stripes and imprisonments increased the contempt with which the proud and self-wise beheld them. This was appointed by God for most important purposes. He could have commissioned angels to proclaim the glorious doctrine of the Gospel, or he could have put this treasure into more splendid vessels, by sending the most eminent and admired of the sons of men to instruct the nations; but his plan was, that the superior energy of the Gospel, and the wonderful effects produced by it, should evidently appear to be wholly owing to the excellency of his power, as working by that doctrine; and not at all to be ascribed to the superior endowments of the person whom he employed. For this end he chose mean brittle vessels, by which to convey this treasure to mankind, that his power might be glorified in their preservation, and in the blessed change wrought amongst mankind by their ministry.

V. 8—12. It was very suitable to the apostle's design, of re-establishing himself in the affections of the Corinthians, to remind them of his sufferings and supports in that ministry, from which they had received such unspeakable advantage. He, and other faithful ministers, were "troubled on every side," in every place, from persons of every description, and with all kinds of afflictions; yet were they "not distressed" or straitened, as men who had no way of escape or relief. They were "perplexed" with difficulties, about what course they should take, and how they should endure amidst such multiplied trials; yet they were not left to "despair" of help and comfort. They were "persecuted" wherever they went; yet the Lord did not forsake them, or permit their enemies to prevail against them. Nay, they were even cast down in the conflict with temptation and persecution; yet they were not destroyed, but were enabled to rise up again, and to renew the fight, without any material damage to themselves or the cause. Thus they carried about with them in their bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus, in those bruises, wounds, and stripes, which they received for his sake, and from such men as had crucified him; that so the life of Jesus, as risen and glorified, might be evidently proved, by the protection, deliverances, supports, and consolations, afforded to them, which enabled them to proceed with constancy and fortitude in their ministry, amidst these complicated dangers and sufferings. For, while some of their brethren had sealed their testimony with their blood, they, who still lived, were continually delivered to death, in the persecutions which every where met them; that so the power of their ever-living Saviour might be manifested, in still preserving their mortal flesh in life and fitness for service. So that death was, as it were, continually at work on them, by the hardships which they endured in conformity to the death of Christ: but life was wrought in the souls of the Corinthians by means of their sufferings, as they were not only exempted from persecutions, but were made partakers of spiritual and eternal life by their ministry. And did it then become them to augment the trials of their pastors, by their neglect and disaffection? 'While you are called to live for his honour, we may be said to serve our Redeemer, by bearing for his sake repeated deaths.' (*Doddridge.*)

CHAP. V.

The apostle declares, that the assured hope and earnest desire of being present with the Lord, when absent from the body, rendered him indifferent as to this life, 1—8: *that he laboured to approve himself to Christ, in the prospect of a future judgment,* 9, 10; *knowing the terrors, of which he conscientiously persuaded men,* 11: *that this was said, not as boasting, but to furnish the Corinthians with an answer to false pretenders,* 12: *that the*

V. 13—18. The apostle and his fellow-sufferers persevered in their ministry, because they were actuated by the same spirit of faith which the Psalmist had expressed, when, amidst imminent dangers and distressing difficulties, he had declared his confidence, that God, according to his promise, would deliver him out of them all. (*Note, Ps.* cxvi. 10, 11.) They believed most firmly the doctrines which they preached, and therefore nothing could induce them to conceal, retract, or corrupt them. In the daily expectation and anticipation of martyrdom, they were fully assured that God would raise their mangled bodies from the grave by the powerful work of Jesus, even as he had raised him from the dead; and that he would thus present them, with all those to whom their labours had been blessed, before his glorious throne, as the objects of his love, whom he at length had made perfect in glory and felicity. They also understood, that all their sufferings, as well as their ministerial endowments, were intended to subserve the Lord's purposes of love to their brethren, (as indeed all things were ordered in that manner, which might best promote their eternal good,) that the abundant mercy and grace vouchsafed to them, might excite vast numbers to thank God for the benefit received by their means, and so conduce to his glory also. With these prospects and hopes, they were preserved from fainting, or declining the dangers and difficulties attending on their ministry. For, "though their outward man perished," their bodies were worn out by fatigue and sufferings, and their lives destroyed by repeated violences, yet their "inward man," or their souls as regenerate, daily became stronger in faith, hope, love, patience, &c. and were renewed more and more into the holy image of God. They therefore considered their various trials to be "light affliction," which ought scarcely to be mentioned, being as nothing, when compared with the end which they had in view; and the continuance of their sufferings, (though for many years,) was but for a moment, when contrasted with eternity. Moreover, they knew, by faith and experience, that these afflictions were working out for them an increase of future and eternal felicity; both as means by which their souls were made partakers of the holiness of God, and rendered more capable of spiritual enjoyment, and as he would graciously and abundantly recompense those sufferings which they endured for his sake. (*Marg. Ref.*) The words here used are far more emphatical than any translation of them can be. There is a repetition of the word *hyperbole*, by which is generally meant a person's exceeding the limits of exact truth, in any animated description or narration; but in the subject, on which the apostle spoke, the boldest figures of speech must come short of the mark. If a man proceeded from one apparent *hyperbole* to another, and accumulated the most energetic terms as much as possible, he could not fully express the real excellency of that glory, honour, and immortality, in which the believer's sufferings would assuredly terminate. Compared with it, all temporal afflictions were levity itself, a momentary lightness of affliction; and earthly prosperity mere vanity and emptiness. This glory was substantial, weighty, durable, exceeding description and imagination, and human language must labour in vain to convey any suitable ideas of it. It would even have been an insupportable *weight* to them, until their bodies and souls were prepared by Omnipotence to sustain it. It was "a weight of glory," a fulness of God, a measure of knowledge, holiness, dignity, and felicity, in his favour, presence, and according to his glorious excellency and beauty, adequate to whatever they should be made capable of possessing and enjoying, and all this would be unchangeable and eternal. In this prospect the apostle and his brethren disregarded visible and sensible objects, they did not aim at worldly honours and advantages, they looked not at them with estimation or desire, but by faith they beheld, and in hope they sought, invisible glories as their great object; being assured that all visible and sensible things, whether pleasant or painful, the good or the evil things of the world, were temporal, and would speedily be terminated; whereas the unseen objects which faith realized were eternal, whether the final happiness of believers, or the final misery of the wicked, were intended; and this gave such an incomparable importance in their judgment to unseen things, that nothing else seemed worthy of their desires or of their fears. 'What an influence St. Paul's Hebrew 'had upon his Greek is every-where visible. *Cabad* in 'Hebrew signifies *to be heavy*, and *to be glorious.* St. 'Paul in the Greek joins them, and says, *weight of glory.*' (*Locke.*) That the writers of the New Testament frequently *hebraise*, so to speak, is manifest; but whether this might not in some cases be intentional may be questioned. Even the copious Greek, as found in Pagan writers, could not have expressed, in full energy, the apostle's exalted conceptions, without some of those sublime allusions and metaphors, which are found only in the Hebrew Scriptures, and in the New Testament.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

They are not meet for the sacred ministry of the New Testament, who do not expect the salvation of their own souls from the free mercy of God through Jesus Christ. If we have received this mercy, or have a prevailing hope of it, we should not faint under any tribulations, while employed to recommend it to our fellow-sinners. Indeed, divine grace will teach faithful ministers "to renounce "the hidden things of dishonesty;" they will not walk "in craftiness, nor handle the word of God deceitfully;" and if any, who are artfully imposing on men for their own credit or profit, suppose themselves partakers of the saving *love of Christ constrained him to devoted obedience, and made him dead to all other regards,* 13—16: *that all in Christ are new creatures,* 17: *that God, in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, had reconciled him and other preachers, and had committed to them the ministry of reconciliation,* 18, 19: *and that as ambassadors, they, in the stead of Christ, besought men to be reconciled to God, through his righteousness and atonement,* 20, 21.

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mercy of Christ, they are as much deceived by Satan as others can be by them. For the minister of Christ must avoid all appearances of duplicity; he must neither pay court to any man's passions, nor connive at his vices: but he ought, in the most perspicuous and intelligible manner, to declare and apply the truth, and so to commend himself to every man's conscience as in the sight of God. If the Gospel, when thus preached, be hidden from the hearers, it is evident that they are still in the way of destruction: and they have reason to dread the consequences of their obstinate unbelief, as it is among such persons, especially, that Satan, the usurping god of this world, is permitted finally to blind and harden numbers to their ruin. His great object is, to keep men in the dark: particularly to keep out of their minds "the light of the Gospel of the "glory of Christ;" he therefore spares no pains to keep them at a distance from faithful preaching, or by various prejudices to set them against it, or by manifold corruptions to destroy its efficacy. His grand opposition is always made to the personal and mediatorial glory of Christ; for he knows, that no other knowledge, or religious observances, will sanctify or save those on whom this divine light doth not shine: and that none can perish who are illuminated by it. But, though many are blinded, the minister must go on with his work; he must not preach himself, either as the *subject* or the *object* of his discourses; but he must "preach Christ Jesus, the Lord;" dwelling on his love and salvation as his favourite theme, and seeking his glory as the great end of his labours: and, instead of aspiring to pre-eminence and authority, he should willingly be the servant of the disciples of Christ, for his sake, and stoop to any thing that may promote their good. Indeed, this will be the disposition of all those, into whose hearts God hath shined by his new-creating Spirit, to give them "the light of his glory, in "the face of Jesus Christ." In proportion to the degree of our spiritual illumination, we shall reflect the image of Christ, even as he is to us the Image of the invisible God; and we shall learn lowliness, self-denial, and love, from that admired pattern. But without this illumination the soul remains a dark, confused, and deformed chaos, when science hath done its utmost; nor can that knowledge of God and of Christ, "which is eternal life," be obtained in any other way. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 7—12.

The Lord puts the treasure of heavenly truth into mean earthen vessels; he often employs persons of such infirm bodies, moderate abilities, or low rank in society, as worldly policy would reject and despise; for, whatever instrument be selected, he will make it appear, that the "excellency of the power," by which the Gospel is made successful, "is of God, and not of men." He therefore uses various methods to convince his most useful servants of their weakness and insufficiency; and sometimes he makes their infirmities visible to others, that they may not give them undue honour and respect. These earthen pitchers are very brittle; but the rich treasure they contain is often most manifest when they are most exposed; and when they are broken to pieces, it is sometimes more abundantly communicated than it was before. In one way or other both Christians and ministers must be troubled; and sometimes it will be on every side. Yet faith and grace will preserve them from deep distress. They may be perplexed by various difficulties and complicated discouragements; yet they will be preserved from utter despair; the Lord will not forsake them in their persecutions and temptations. Even when cast down by their enemies, they shall not be destroyed; for he will lift them up again, and enable them to renew the combat. But the troubles and sins of ungodly men, as well as their temporal prosperity, will terminate in everlasting darkness and despair. It is indeed a great honour, though painful to nature, always to bear about with us the dying of the Lord Jesus, by suffering for his sake and after his example, from the contempt and enmity of this evil world; and he will show his life and power, by supporting and comforting those who are thus tried and exposed in his cause. Indeed, if we by faith are interested in our dying Redeemer, and conformed to him in outward troubles, and the crucifixion of the flesh, we shall, in hope, comfort, holiness of life, and constancy in his service, abundantly manifest his power and truth, as risen and glorified: and, as far as we resemble him, we shall be willing and thankful for death to work in us, that life may be given to others by our means.

V. 13—18.

Nothing can be done in the spiritual warfare, without the same Spirit of faith which animated the ancient prophets, apostles, and martyrs of Jesus: we shall be timid, hesitating, and wavering in our testimony, unless we can say, "I believe, and therefore have I spoken." But when we are fully assured of the truth, importance, and excellency of the Gospel, nothing can durably prevail with us to retract, alter, or conceal, the great doctrines, which we are called to preach or profess. Yet true religion does not require us to neglect our real interest: it assures us, that he who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise up all his faithful followers, and present them before the assembled world, as those who have honoured him, and whom he will honour. Knowing, therefore, "that all "things work together for good to those who love God;" giving diligence to obtain the assurance that we are of this number; and being animated by the hope, that our labours and trials will conduce to the benefit of our brethren and the glory of the Lord; we shall not faint in our work and

FOR [a] we know that if [b] our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were [c] dissolved, we have [d] a building of God, [e] an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 For in this [f] we groan, [g] earnestly desiring to be [h] clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

3 If so be that [i] being clothed, we shall not be found naked.

4 For [k] we that are in *this* tabernacle [l] do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, [m] but clothed upon, [n] that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

5 Now he that hath [o] wrought us for the self-same thing *is* God, who also hath given unto us [p] the earnest of the Spirit.

6 Therefore [q] *we are* always confident, knowing that, [r] whilst we are at home in

a Job xix. 25, 26. Ps. lvi. 9 2 Tim. i. 12. 1 John iii. 2. 14 19. v. 19, 20
b 4. iv. 7. Gen. iii. 19. Job iv. 19. 1 Cor. xv. 46—48. 2 Pet i. 13, 14
c Job xxx. 22 2 Pet. iii. 11.
d John xiv. 2, 3. 1 Cor. iii 9 Heb. xi. 10
e Col. ii. 11. Heb. ix. 11. 24
f 4. Rom. vii. 24. viii. 23. 1 Pet i. 6, 7.
g Phil i. 23.——h 3, 4. 1 Cor. xv. 53, 54——i Gen. iii. 7—11. Ex. xxxii. 25. Rev. iii. 18. xvi. 15.
k 2 Pet. i. 13.
l *See on*, 2.
m 3
n Is. xxv 8. 1 Cor. xv 53, 54
o v. 17. Is xxix 23. lx. 21 lxi. 3. Eph. ii. 10.
p i. 22. Num. xiii. 23 — 27. Rom. viii. 23. Eph. i. 13, 14. iv. 30. 1 John iii. 24.
q 8 Ps. xxvii. 3, 4. Prov. xiv. 26. Is. xxx. 15. xxxvi. 4. Heb. x. 35. 1 Pet. v. 1. Rev. i. 9.
r *See on*, 1. 1 Chr. xxix. 15. Ps. xxxix. 12. cxix. 19. Phil. iii. 20, 21. Heb. xi. 13. xiii. 14.

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warfare. Even when our bodies waste away by disease, wear out by labour, grow feeble through old age, or are about to perish by persecution and death, the soul may be renewed and grow more vigorous and holy day by day; and more ripe for the enjoyment of heavenly felicity. But if the apostle could call his heavy and long continued trials "light affliction, and but for a moment," what must our trifling difficulties appear in the estimate of faith and grace! How shameful then is it, that we should complain or despond under them! What powerful supports and consolations must there be in the hope and earnest of heaven, beyond what we have hitherto experienced! May we then seek to have all our light and momentary afflictions sanctified to us, that, by promoting our humility, spirituality, and admiring love of God our Saviour, they may "work "for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory!" We know not indeed what we shall be, but the unutterable nature of the felicity which we are encouraged to expect, should enhance our value of it. That must be little, which human language can express, or human imagination conceive; but the joys of heaven will be immense and everlasting. On the other hand, what must be the weight of that misery reserved for the wicked, concerning which the Scriptures use the most energetic language; when all the sufferings that a man is here exposed to are light and momentary, according to the judgment of the inspired writers! Let us then look off from the things which are seen; let us cease to seek for worldly advantages, or to fear present distresses; let us take warning to flee from the wrath to come, and give diligence to ensure future felicity; for "the things which "are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen "are eternal."

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1—4. The apostle, continuing the argument of the preceding chapter, stated, that he and other faithful ministers endured persecution, from the assurance of a far happier state, whenever they should be cut off by death. The body might be deemed "an earthly "house," in which the soul dwelt on earth, and which would soon "return to the dust whence it was taken:" yet it was rather a *tabernacle*, the unsettled and precarious abode of a few days, than a *stated residence*. This house, or tabernacle, was about to be taken down, and the materials of it to be dissolved; but when that change should take place, the soul being released from a mean mouldering tenement, which continually needed repairs, and had been a constant source of trouble, sorrow, temptation, and sin, would immediately have a building of God, a habitation far superior to all that ever was made with hands, a blessed mansion in the heavens, where God displays his glorious presence, and where light, purity, and felicity, are found in full perfection: and this mansion would continue to all eternity. As the apostle spake of what was to follow immediately upon the dissolution of the body by death, he must be supposed to mean the state of the immortal soul, before, as well as after, the resurrection; for the language is figurative, and must not be confined by a too literal interpretation. In this prospect, he and his brethren groaned earnestly desiring to be delivered from their present troubles, and to be clothed with that glory, felicity, and immortality, which might be considered as the garment, as well as the mansion, of the blessed inhabitants of heaven. This he seems to have longed for, and desired to possess, without passing through death, if it might have been so. He, however, knew, that seeing they should be thus arrayed, they would not be found naked or destitute, when they left this world, and all its possessions and accommodations; nor would they experience trouble, want, shame, or any inconvenience, for evermore. This then must be a most desirable change: for while they were in the frail tabernacle of the body, they groaned, being burdened with manifold trials, temptations, and difficulties, from which they longed to be released. Not that they desired to be *unclothed*, by putting off the body at death, merely in order to be rid of its incumbrance: the prospect of that dissolution was not in itself pleasing to them: but they would rather have been "clothed upon," by being taken immediately to heaven, as Enoch and Elijah were, that mortality might at once have been swallowed up and lost in life and immortality; yet the prospect of the consequences of death, and the hope of a future resurrection, reconciled them even to the pangs of the separating stroke. The passage, being expressed in metaphors unusually bold, is indeed rather difficult; yet the above seems the evident meaning of it. Nor does it appear that the apostle intended to express any expectation that the day of judgment, and the general resurrection, were at hand; or to determine any thing concerning the manner, as to external form, in which the soul subsists, either before or after that solemn season. The word *naked*, may allude to Adam and Eve, after they had eaten the forbidden fruit, and lost the robe of innocency; whereas believers, being "made the righteousness of God in "Christ," will not be thus found naked, in whatever manner they leave this world.

the body, we are absent from the Lord:

7 (For [s] we walk by faith, not by sight:)

8 We are confident, *I say*, [t] and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be [u] present with the Lord.

9 Wherefore [x] we * labour, that [y] whether present or absent, we may be [z] accepted of him.

10 For [a] we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may [b] receive the things *done* [c] in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad.

11 Knowing therefore [d] the terror of the Lord, [e] we persuade men; [f] but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

12 For [g] we commend not ourselves again unto you, but [h] give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to *answer* them which glory in † appearance, and not in heart.

s i. 21 iv 18. Deut. xii 9. Rom. viii. 21, 25. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Gal. ii. 20. Heb. x. 38. xi. 1, &c. 27. 1 Pet. i. 8 v. 9.

t 6 xii 2, 3. Luke ii. 29. Acts xxi. 13. Phil i. 20–24. 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. 2 Pet. i 14, 15. iii. 11, 12.

u 9. Ps. xvi 11. xvii. 15. lxxiii. 23–26. Matt. xxv. 21. 23. John xiv. 3. xvii. 24. 1 Thes. iv. 17, 18. 1 John iii. 2. Rev. viii. 14–17. xxii. 3.——x John vi. 27. 1 Cor ix. 26, 27. xv. 58. Col. i. 29. 1 Tim. iv. 10. Heb. iv. 11. 2 Pet i 10, 11. iii. 14.——* Or, *endeavour*. Rom. xv 20. 1 Thes. iv. 11. *Gr.*——y 6 8. Rom xiv. 8.——z Gen iv. 7 Is. lvi 7. Acts x 35. Eph. i 6. Heb. xii. 28 ——a Gen. xviii 25. 1 Sam. ii 3 10. Ps. vii. 6–8. ix. 7, 8 l 3–6 xcvi 10–13 xcviii, 9 Ec. xi 9. xii. 14. Ez xviii 30. Matt xxv 31–46. Acts x. 42. xvii. 31. Rom. xiv. 10–12. 1 Pet. iv. 5. Jude 14, 15. Rev. xx. 11–17.

b 1 Kings viii. 32. 39. Job xxxiv. 11. Ps lxii. 12. Is. iii. 10, 11. Matt. xvi. 27. Rom. ii. 5–10. 1 Cor. iv. 5. Gal. vi. 7, 8. Eph. vi. 8. Col. iii 24, 25. Rev. ii. 23. xx 12, 13. xxii. 12.

c Rom vi. 12, 13. 19. xii. 1, 2. 1 Cor. vi 13–20.

d Gen. xxxv. 5. Job vi. 4. xviii. 11. xxxi. 23. Ps. lxxiii. 19. lxxvi. 7. lxxxviii. 15, 16. xc. 11. Is. xxxiii 14 Nah. i 6. Matt. x. 28. xxv. 46. Mark viii 35–38 ix. 43–50. Luke xii. 5 Heb x. 31. Rev. xx. 15.——e 20. vi. 1. Luke xvi. 31. Acts xiii. 43 xviii. 4. 13. xix. 26 xx. 18–27. xxvi. 26. xxviii. 23. Gal. i. 10. Col. i. 28, 29. 2 Tim. ii. 24–26 ——f i. 12–14 ii. 17. iv. 1, 2. 1 Cor. iv. 4, 5 1 Thes. ii. 3–11.——g iii 1. vi 4 x. 8. 12. 18. xii. 11. Prov. xxvii. 2.——h i. 14. xi. 12–16. xii 1–9.——† Gr. *the face*. Gal vi. 12–14.

V. 5—8. That change of the judgment and affections, by which the apostle and his brethren had been *wrought* and fashioned into a fitness for their perilous and suffering employments, and to that willingness to die for Christ's sake, in the assurance of going to enjoy felicity in his favour, was the work of God himself, and could have been effected by no other agent. They had also received the *earnest* of the Spirit, in his sanctifying joys and consolations; so that they could not possibly be deceived in this respect. (*Note*, i. 22.) They were therefore always confident of the divine favour, and courageous in their work, though exposed to the daily peril of a violent death: for they well knew, that, whilst they *sojourned* in the body, they must be excluded from the immediate presence of the Lord Jesus, as pilgrims in a distant land. For they then lived and laboured by *faith* in him, as invisibly present with them and taking care of them; which afforded them support and encouragement suited to the present state; yet it differed very much indeed from that intuitive vision of his glory and felicity in his immediate presence, which was the object of their hopes and desires. This faith, however, inspired them with confidence and courage; as they were satisfied, that whenever their bodies should be worn out by labours, or endure martyrdom, their souls, being dislodged from that tenement, would immediately be admitted into the presence of their beloved Lord. This is absolutely decisive concerning the felicity to be enjoyed by the souls of believers, when "absent from the body;" and it also shows that they will possess their happiness in the very place, where Jesus displays his glorious presence. The word *home*, (6,) seems not well chosen. This world is not the believer's *home*, but the place of sojourning and pilgrimage; and his body the tabernacle, in which he sojourns.

V. 9—12. In this hope, the apostle and his fellow-labourers were *ambitious*, (so the word properly signifies,) 'and it is flat to translate it,' "We labour:" (*Doddridge*.) They were ambitious, not of the honours and applause of the world, but of acceptance with the Lord, in respect of their persons, ministry, and labours; though they should be unacceptable to mankind, or even to their brethren: that so they might be supported by the comforts and consciousness of his approbation, during their sojourning in the body while absent from him; and that, when they should quit the body, they might be welcomed by him as good and faithful servants, and be admitted to the joy of their Lord. For they were assured that they, their hearers, and all men, without exception, *must* necessarily, whether they would or not, *appear*, or be made manifest, in the whole of their true characters, with all the secrets of their hearts and lives, before the solemn and decisive *tribunal* of Christ, the righteous, impartial, holy, heart-searching, omnipotent Judge; who now called on them to trust in him and obey him as a divine Saviour, but who would surely take vengeance on all who rejected or abused his salvation. At this solemn period, every individual shall *receive* the appointed recompense of his deeds, according to the things done while he sojourned in the body, or *by* and through the body, whether they were good or evil, without any respect of persons, or regard to profession, or other distinctions. So that the justified believer, who, from love to Christ hath done good, uprightly and faithfully, will receive an abundant and gracious recompense of his believing, though imperfect, services: but the profligate, the infidel, the Pharisee, the hypocrite, and apostate, with all kinds of impenitent transgressors, will be punished according to the number and aggravation of their crimes. Knowing therefore what a terrible vengeance the Lord would then execute on the workers of iniquity, the apostle and his brethren used every kind of argument and persuasion to induce men, of every nation and description, to believe in the Lord Jesus, and to act consistently with the character of his disciples. In this their earnest endeavour, the motives and intentions of their hearts had already been manifested to God, and judged by him: and they were confident of his gracious approbation: and whatever the prejudices and passions of some at Corinth might suggest, the apostle was confident, that in their consciences they were convinced that he and his helpers acted with integrity, zeal, and faithful affection to their souls. Not that they needed or intended again to commend themselves to favour, from selfish or vain-glorious motives; but they thus suggested such things, as were proper to be opposed to the censures and suspicions of false teachers, and gave the people occasion to glory in the disinterested labours and patient sufferings of their faithful ministers; and so to answer the boastings of those ambitious men, who gloried, in appearance, as if very zealous in the cause of Christ, and greatly

13 For whether [i] we be beside ourselves, [k] *it is* to God: or whether we be [l] sober, *it is* [m] for your cause.

14 For [n] the love of Christ [o] constraineth us; [p] because we thus judge, that if [q] one died for all, [r] then were all dead:

15 And *that* he died for all, [s] that they which live, should not [t] henceforth [u] live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

16 Wherefore, henceforth [x] know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, [y] yet now henceforth know we *him* no more.

17 Therefore if any man [z] *be* in Christ, * *he is* [a] a new creature: [b] old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

i xi. 1. 16, 17. xii. 6. 11. *See on*, Acts xxvi. 24, 25. 1 Cor. iv. 10—13. 1 Thes. ii. 3—11.
k 2 Sam. vi. 21, 22.
l Acts xxvi. 25. Rom. xii. 3.
m vii. 12 Col i. 24. 1 Thes. i. 5. 2 Tim ii. 10.
n viii 8, 9. Cant. i. 4. viii. 6, 7. Matt. x. 37, 38. Luke vii. 42—47 John xiv. 21—23. xxi. 15—17. 1 Cor. xvi 22 Eph. iii. 18, 19. vi. 24. Heb. vi. 10 1 Pet. i. 8.——o Job xxxiii 18. Luke xxiv. 29. Acts iv 19, 20.——p Rom. ii 2. 1 Cor. ii. 14.——q Is. liii. 6 Matt. xx. 28 John i. 29. xi. 50—52. 1 Tim. ii 6. Heb. ii. 9. 1 John ii. 1, 2.——r iii. 7. 9. Luke xv 24. 32 John v. 25. xi. 25 Rom. v. 15. Eph. ii. 1—5. Col. ii. 13. 1 Tim. v. 6. Tit. iii. 3. 1 John v. 19.——s iii. 6. Ez. xvi. 6. xxxvii. 9. 14. Hab. ii. 4. Zech. x. 9. John iii. 15, 16. v. 24. vi. 57. Rom. vi. 2. 11, 12. viii 2. 6. 10. Gal. ii 20. v. 25. Eph. v. 14. Col. ii. 11. iii. 1. 1 Pet. iv. 6. 1 John iv. 9.——t 16. 2 Kings v. 17. Rom. vi 6. Eph. iv. 17. 1 Pet. i. 14, 15. iv. 2—4.

u Luke i. 74. Rom. vi. 13. xii 1 xiv. 7—9. 1 Cor vi. 20. x. 33 Gal ii. 19 Phil. i. 20, 21 Col. iii. 17. 23. 1 Thes. v. 10. Tit. ii. 14. Heb. xiii 20, 21. Rev. i 18.
x Deut. xxxiii 9. 1 Sam. ii. 29 Matt. x 37. xii. 48—50 Mark iii. 31—35 John ii 4 Gal. ii 5, 6. 1 Tim. v 21, 22. Jam. ii. 1—4. iii. 17
y John vi. 63.——z 19. 21. xii. 2. Is. xlv. 17. 24, 25. John xiv. 20. xv. 2 5. xvii. 23. Rom. viii. 1 xvi 7. 11. 1 Cor. i. 30. Gal. iii 28. v 6. Eph. i. 3, 4 Phil. iv. 21.——* Or, let him be ——a Ps. li. 10. Ez. xi. 19. xviii. 31. xxxvi. 26. Matt xii 33 John iii. 3.——b 16. Is xliii. 18, 19. lxv. 17, 18 Matt ix 16—18. xxiv. Rom. vi. 4—6 vii 6. viii. 9, 10. 1 Cor. xiii. 11. Eph iv. 22—24. Phil. iii. 7—9. Col. iii. 1—10. Heb. viii. 9—13. 2 Pet. iii. 10—13 Rev. xxi. 1—5.

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attached to the Corinthians, but who were not really what they professed, and whose hearts dissented from, and, as it were, belied the language of their mouths.

V. 13—15. The great earnestness of the apostle to rectify the disorders at Corinth, and to re-establish his authority among them, his lively affections, and his excessive labours amidst sufferings and dangers, gave his adversaries occasion to represent him as "beside himself," and transported by a vehement zeal, beyond all the dictates of reason and sobriety. (*Marg. Ref.*) But, whatever in his conduct had given them this opinion of him, it was wholly owing to his zeal for the honour of God and his truth, and to his earnest desire to approve himself faithful in his cause; and when at other times he seemed to act with great moderation and candour, and to debate matters with coolness and sobriety, it was wholly from a regard to their welfare, and a desire to recover them from dangerous errors; in order to which he employed every method that he could devise, without regarding their censures or any personal consequences. For in this, as well as in other things, the love of Christ constrained him and other faithful ministers and real Christians. The love which Jesus had manifested towards sinners, in the great work of redemption, and to believers, in calling them to partake of this inestimable blessing, had excited in their hearts such reciprocal love and gratitude to him, as *constrained* them, and carried them on with invincible energy, in every service, by which they could glorify his name or promote his cause; nor could other fears, hopes, affections, or interests, stop their progress, when actuated by this most powerful principle. For in this matter, they judged decidedly, in the most cool and reflecting moments, that, if Jesus died as an atoning Sacrifice for all that should ever believe in him, then were all men *dead*, as under condemnation, enslaved to sin, and utterly destitute of power to deliver themselves; otherwise he needed not to have died for them, or in their stead. And that he died, as a common sacrifice for the sins of all men, or men of every nation and description, that when, through the preaching of his Gospel to sinners, any of them were quickened and pardoned, and so passed from death to life, they should from that memorable period no longer live according to their carnal inclinations, or to seek their own interest, reputation, indulgence, or advancement, as they had formerly done; but should devote themselves, and all their powers, to do the will of the Redeemer, to promote his glory, and to recommend his Gospel; seeing he had died for them, and risen again, to be their Lord and King.

V. 16. The apostle and his associates, therefore, being under such obligations, influenced by such motives, and encouraged by such hopes and assurances of assistance as had been stated, were powerfully impelled to disregard all contrary and interfering objects, that they might show their love to their most gracious Lord and Saviour. So that when this change had taken place, and these principles were matured, they "knew no man after the "flesh;" they had no respect to men's persons, because of nation, sect, rank, or personal attachment, when their obedience to Christ was concerned; they could not accommodate their doctrine or conduct to the humours of men, from any worldly principles, or because of outward connexions with them, or obligations to them. Nay, they did not now regard their external relation to Christ himself, as being of the same nation with him, or otherwise acquainted with him. Even such of the apostles and evangelists, as had personally known him, or been nearly related to him, did in this respect disregard that external tie, when it came in competition with their union with him as believers, and their obedience to him as his servants and ministers. They could not warp their doctrine or deviate from their instructions, to please the Jews, or the nearest relatives of Christ, any more than out of respect to their own friends, or to the philosophers and princes of the Gentiles. Many suppose that the apostle here referred to the Jewish converts, who were displeased with him for admitting the Gentiles into the Church, and being earnest for their conversion, which they deemed a kind of madness: (13:) but the Corinthians were chiefly Gentile converts, and they do not seem to have been generally disposed to *judaize*.

V. 17. The judgment, experience, and principles, which the apostle had stated, should not be regarded as peculiar to himself, but as the standard of genuine Christianity: therefore if any man, whether Jew or Gentile, was "in Christ," as a justified believer, he was also "a "new creature," or a new creation of God; for the marginal reading, "let him be a new creature," does not accord to the rest of the verse, "Old things are passed "away," or "have passed away," &c. By spiritual illumination, and its invariable effects, a new judgment had been produced, with new inclinations, affections, and purposes, from which new words and actions must proceed.

18 And [c] all things *are* of God, [d] who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and [e] hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

19 To wit, that [f] God was in Christ, [g] reconciling the world unto himself, [h] not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath * committed unto us [i] the word of reconciliation.

c John iii 16 27. Rom xi 36 1 Cor. i 30. viii 6 xii. 6. Col i 16, 17 Jam. i. 17.
d Lev vi 30. Ez xlv. 15 Dan. ix. 24 Rom. v. 1 10 11. *Gr* Eph. ii 16 Col. i 21 Heb ii. 17
e 19, 20. Is. lii. 7 lvii. 19 Mark xvi. 15, 16 Luke x. 5. xxiv. 47 Acts x 36 xiii. 38, 39. Eph. ii. 17. Col. i. 20.
f Matt i. 23. John xiv. 10, 11. 20 xvii 23. 1 Tim. iii. 16.——g Rom iii. 24—26. xi. 15. 1 John ii. 1, 2. iv 10——h Ps. xxxii. 1, 2. Is. xliii 25 xliv 22. Rom. iv. 6—8.
* Gr *put in us*. iv. 7.——i 18.

20 Now then we are [k] ambassadors for Christ, [l] as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* [m] in Christ's stead, [n] be ye reconciled to God.

21 For [o] he hath made him *to be* sin for us, [p] who knew no sin; that [q] we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

k iii. 6. Job xxxiii. 23. Prov. xiii. 17 Mal. ii. 7. John xx. 21. Acts xxvi. 17, 18. Eph. vi. 20.
l 11. vi. 1. 2 Kings xvii. 13. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 16. Neh. ix 29 Is. lv 6, 7. Jer xliv. 4. Ez xviii 31, 32.
m Job xxxiii. 6. Luke x. 16. 1 Cor. v. 4, 5 1 Thes. iv. 8.
n Job xxii. 21. Prov i. 22, &c Is xxvii. 5. Jer. xiii. 16, 17. xxxviii. 20 Luke xiv. 23.
o Is liii 4—6 10—12. Dan ix. 24. Zech. xiii 7. Rom. viii. 3 Gal iii. 13 Eph v 2. 1 Pet iii. 18. 1 John ii 1, 2——p Is. liii 9. Luke i 35. Heb vii. 26. 1 Pet. ii 22—24. 1 John iii. 5——q 17 Is xlv 24, 25 liii 11. Jer. xxiii. 6. xxxiii. 16. Dan. ix. 24. Rom. i. 17. iii. 21—26. viii. 1—4. x. 4 1 Cor. i. 30. Phil. iii. 9.

Thus old desires, intentions, expectations, connexions, and satisfactions, passed away and were superseded; for behold, by the marvellous operation of divine grace, all things were become new! So that the Christian experienced new hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, desires and aversions; he learned to speak a new language, to choose new companions, to aim at new objects, and to attend to new employments. Every thing was now cast into a new mould, received a new impression, and took a new direction from the knowledge of God, faith in Christ, and love to him, humiliation for sin, and hatred of it, the desire of holiness, and the hope of eternal life.

V. 18—21. As this change was wrought by the power, and according to the purpose of God, so it bore on it the stamp of his holy image, and led to a proper temper of mind and conduct towards him. Thus he had reconciled the apostle and his brethren to himself by Jesus Christ, the great Mediator; and, having pardoned their rebellions, subdued their enmity, and "shed abroad his love in their "hearts," he had intrusted to them "the ministry of "reconciliation:" that from gratitude to him, zeal for his glory, and benevolence to their fellow-sinners, they might spend their future lives in earnest and unwearied endeavours to bring others to partake of the same mercy, and to devote themselves in love to the service of their reconciled God. This ministry implied that "God was "in Christ," "manifest in the flesh;" as the fulness of the Deity dwelt in, and was displayed by, the human nature, through the incarnation of the eternal Word and Son of God, who was equal to, and one with the Father: that so, being united to man's nature, he might reconcile the world unto himself, by his atonement, mediation, and grace; and that sinners throughout the earth, of every nation and description, might thus be encouraged to hope in his mercy, and taught by his grace to love his holy character, law, worship, and service, to which their carnal minds had before been enmity. When therefore sinners were brought to him, as "in Christ reconciling "the world to himself," in humble faith, he no more imputed any of their trespasses unto them, but blotted them out by a free forgiveness. This word or doctrine of reconciliation he had committed to those, who had once been enemies, but who had thus been reconciled. So that they were now commissioned, as ambassadors for Christ, to go in his name and by his authority, and declare these encouraging truths to sinners in every part of the world. And they were not only instructed to command them to repent and believe the Gospel, and to exhort, persuade, and encourage them to hope in the rich mercy of God through Jesus Christ; but God did, as it were, beseech men by them, as the ambassadors of Christ; and they, "in Christ's stead," most earnestly entreated them not to reject such astonishing love, but to repent, submit to God, accept his salvation, and be reconciled to him, as his worshippers, friends, and children. For it must be certain, that he was really willing to be thus reconciled to all who accepted this invitation, seeing that "He," even God the Father, "had made Him," his incarnate Son, "who "knew no sin," but was most perfectly holy and righteous, "to be sin," or a sin-offering, "for us," who deserved the utmost severity of his vengeance. So that this holy and divine Saviour, being perfectly willing to suffer as a sacrifice, was dealt with as if he had been altogether a sinner; that thus God's hatred of sin, and his determination to punish it, being so wonderfully displayed, he might honourably pardon every believer, and make him "the righteousness of God *in Christ*;" dealing with him as if he had been perfectly righteous, or *righteousness* itself, yea, as "the righteousness of God in Christ;" as a far nobler and more excellent righteousness was thus made his for justification, than any mere creature could ever have performed. (*Marg. Ref.*) This verse contains most conclusive arguments, in proof of the vicarious sufferings of Christ, as the satisfactory atonement to divine justice for our sins; of the imputation of his perfect righteousness to believers, as their title to eternal life; and of his real Deity, whose righteousness becomes theirs for justification, by virtue of their union with him. Perhaps stronger language cannot be used, in declaring these doctrines, by those who most zealously contend for them. The same preposition, (υπερ,) here used, is translated *instead* in the preceding verse; "in Christ's" stead, or instead of Christ. Thus he suffered instead of us! (1 *Pet.* iii. 18.) The apostle doubtless spoke primarily of himself and his fellow-labourers, as Christ's ambassadors, yet, as all faithful ministers are intrusted with the same message, by the same authority, so they too are ambassadors for Christ, though to a smaller number of their fellow-sinners. Some of the professed Christians at Corinth were supposed by Paul to be unconverted, and unreconciled to God; and he might have them in view, when he spake of God's beseeching sinners by his ministers. But he was evidently giving an account of his commission and general ministry through the nations of the earth: wherever he came, he addressed sinners in this pathetic and earnest manner; and while "he prayed them in Christ's stead to be "reconciled to God," it was as if God himself had besought them to lay aside their enmity, and accept of his mercy.

CHAP. VI.

The apostle earnestly exhorts the Corinthians not to receive the grace of God in vain, but to seek salvation without delay, 1, 2. *He shows in what manner he, and his brethren, approved their ministry,* 3—10. *He tells them, that he spake of this the more freely, out of the great love which he bore to them,* 11, 12; *requiring the like affection from them,* 13. *He warns them against intimate connexions with unbelievers, as Christians are the temples of the living God,* 14—16; *and encourages them by the promises of being received as the children of God, to separate from sinners and from sin,* 17, 18.

The change of the language, "ambassadors for *Christ*," "*God* beseeches you; we pray you *in Christ's* stead," &c. shows how familiar it was to the apostle to consider his divine Master as One with the Father, in Deity and authority.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

It is most animating for us to know, amidst our sufferings, temptations, conflicts, and prospects of mortality, that whenever we die we shall enter into the heavens, and be admitted to an unspeakable felicity: but our assurance or prevailing hope of this must be proportioned to the evidence of our conversion. It is not worth while to be very solicitous about, or indulgent to, this clay-cottage, in which the soul is now incommodiously lodged, or rather imprisoned because of transgression. We should not be troubled to feel it, as it were, shake, or to perceive the tokens of its approaching dissolution. We must not expect ease or satisfaction in "this earthly house of our tabernacle;" but we should look forward in hopes of "a building of God, a "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." While we groan, earnestly desiring admission into this blessed mansion, let us seek to be more and more "clothed "upon" with the robes of righteousness and salvation; thus we may be sure that we shall not be found naked, when dislodged from the body. If in the mean time we groan, being burdened with manifold tribulations and temptations; or if we feel a reluctance to be stripped by the cold rude hand of death, and could rather wish to pass to heaven some other way, "that mortality might be swallowed up of life;" it may encourage us to recollect, that even apostles experienced the same troubles, and knew something of the same reluctance. But if the desire of having done with sin and sorrow, and especially of beholding face to face our beloved Redeemer, hath given us, in a measure, a victory over our fears, and made us willing even "to be absent from the body, that we may be present "with the Lord;" we should remember that it is God himself, who hath wrought our hearts into this spiritual and holy disposition; and that these desires and affections are indeed "the earnest of the Spirit," and the first-fruits of our eternal happiness. This should excite us to an unremitted courage and confidence in our duty, whatever dangers may obstruct our course: while absent from the Lord, we may by faith walk with him, and derive support and consolation from him; for thus we may see him who is invisible, and realize those objects that are unseen: and whatever hastens our departure from the body, shortens also our passage to the presence of our Lord, where is fulness of joy for evermore.

V. 9—13.

While others labour for worldly riches, and are ambitious of the honour that cometh from man, let us aspire after the glory of being accepted by Christ, in all our services during life, and of being received into his joy when we leave the world. As we must all appear without disguise before his judgment-seat, let us beware of hypocrisy, and be impartial in judging ourselves; and especially let us carefully acquaint ourselves with him, as our Saviour, who will shortly be manifested as our Judge; that by his grace we may henceforth do those good things, which he will recompense, as the fruits and evidences of saving faith, in that solemn decisive day. This expectation should also render ministers unwearied and faithful in their work: and, knowing what a tremendous day it will be to all the workers of iniquity, they should be the more earnest and affectionate in their persuasions and warnings to sinners, to seek salvation before it be too late. Happy are they, who are warranted to appeal to God, in respect of their faithfulness and zeal in this good work; and even to the consciences of those who are offended with their plain-dealing. This may sometimes be necessary, though men may censure it as self-commendation: and it is often useful to suggest to the people such things, as are proper to be spoken in defence of the truth and in behalf of faithful preachers, that they may know how to answer the cavils and boastings of such as glory in appearance, but are not hearty in the cause of God.

V. 14—17.

If earnestness to prevent the delusion and destruction of our fellow-sinners, and in the great concerns of the eternal world, bring upon us the charge of being "beside "ourselves;" we need only inquire, whether our conduct be warranted by the word of God, and spring from a regard to his authority and glory; and whether our most vehement affections and addresses, as well as our more cool and temperate reasonings, are indeed intended to promote the salvation of souls. If this be the case, we may venture to disregard the contumely; and we should pray for our revilers, that they may indeed *come to themselves*, and be delivered from that real insanity, with which all unbelievers are affected. If our judgment, concerning our lost estate as sinners, and the love of Christ as dying for our salvation, coincides with that of the apostle, we shall feel, WE then, *as* [a] workers together *with him*, [b] beseech *you* also, that [c] ye receive not [d] the grace of God in vain.

2 (For he saith, I have heard thee in [e] a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.)

a v. 18—20. 1 Cor. iii. 9 b See on. v. 20 x. 1. Matt. xxiii. 37 Rom. xii 1. Gal iv. 11, 12. c Jer viii 8. Gal. iii. 4. Heb. xii. 15. 25.——d viii. 1. 2. Acts xiv. 3. Gal ii. 21. Tit ii. 11. 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11. 1 John v. 12.

e Is. xlix. 8 lxi. 2. Ez. xvi 8. Luke iv. 19. xix. 42—44. Heb. iii. 7. 13. iv. 7.

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in proportion to our faith and hope, the constraining influence of his love, powerfully exciting us to live to him who died for us, and rose again. But, alas! many show the worthlessness of their professed faith and love, by living to themselves and to the world; and our views are often so obscure, our judgments so unconfirmed, and our love so feeble, that comparatively we live but little to the glory of our gracious Lord. All partialities from external relations or connexions, which tempt the minister to waver in his testimony, or the Christian in his obedience, are inconsistent with a proper regard to the Lord Jesus; and in this sense we should henceforth know no man after the flesh, whatever claim he may seem to have to our special regard. The justified believer is a new creature in a new world: his new relation to Christ, to the Church, and to heavenly things, together with his new obligations, interests, pursuits, principles and satisfactions, have superseded those that formerly prevailed: yea, "old things "have passed away, behold, all things are become new." Even the same actions that he formerly did are now performed from new motives and in a new manner; his attention to relative and social duties, and his diligence in worldly business, spring from new purposes, and receive a new direction. They, who know nothing of this new creation, are not in Christ, whatever they may think; and the more evidently it hath been experienced, the more clearly is a man's justification proved.

V. 18—21.

Every good gift comes from God, and to him the whole glory belongs: even they who are new creatures, yea, even apostles and martyrs, who are now perfect spirits before the throne, were once enemies to God by wicked works. The enmity to God began wholly on man's part; but the reconciliation was entirely devised, revealed and effected, by his offended Sovereign. In the person of Emmanuel, in his mediation and atonement, who "was "made sin for us, though he knew no sin, that we might "be made the righteousness of God in him," the foundation of this blessed reconciliation was laid; for "God "was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself."—When the kings of the earth appoint ambassadors, they generally depute them to those who are of their own rank in society; nor would they deign to send a solemn embassy to their own rebellious subjects, when vanquished, disarmed and condemned. But the King of kings and Lord of lords appoints ambassadors from himself to us, poor, apostate worms, and helpless, perishing sinners!—Earthly princes select persons of dignity and eminence to represent their persons, and act by their authority on these important occasions; but the Lord of glory deputes pardoned rebels and reconciled enemies to go to their former associates in rebellion, on this embassy of peace! The gracious proposals which they are instructed to make, and the encouraging terms which they are commanded to use, are equally expressive of condescension, compassion, and good-will to men; for the Lord himself, who might justly, and could easily, destroy them for ever, is pleased to "beseech them to be reconciled to him!" This language of our God and Saviour, by his ministers, to his proud enemies, must appear wonderful, beyond conception, to the holy inhabitants of heaven: yet the reception with which it often meets, and the contempt or disdain which it excites, must exceedingly increase their astonishment, and it will assuredly satisfy them concerning the propriety and equity of punishing the irreconcileable haters of God with everlasting destruction from his presence. The ambassadors for Christ, however, must adhere to their instructions, whatever reception they may meet with. They should magnify their office, and endeavour to represent their Lord, by exhibiting his character in their example, as well as declaring his whole counsel: they must conform to the laws and customs of his kingdom, and not to those of this evil world; neither fearing the contempt or rage of men, while "in Christ's stead they pray them to be re-"conciled to God," nor yet seeking to please men, or expecting any recompense, save from their gracious Lord. On the other hand, let all who hear the Gospel remember, that the faithful minister is the ambassador of Christ to them, sent to treat with them concerning reconciliation to God: and that his Lord will surely punish every insult and injury offered to him, as if done to himself in Person. The refusal of this proffered peace will leave men the enemies of God for ever: the removal of faithful ministers from such as have slighted their message is the recall of an ambassador of peace, and the fore-runner of a declaration of war. Let sinners then hear the voice of God, beseeching them to be reconciled to him: let the trembling penitent rejoice in the assurance that his application for "peace with God will not be rejected:" let professed Christians examine their interest in Christ, the great Reconciler, by inquiring whether they are become the friends of God, his cause, and his people: let ministers not only warn men by the terror of the Lord, but beseech them by his abundant mercies, to repent and turn unto him: and let believers consider, whether God can now withhold any good thing from them; or whether they can venture, lose, labour or suffer too much for him, who gave his beloved Son to be the sacrifice for their sins, that they might be "made the righteousness of God in him?"

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1, 2. The apostle and other faithful ministers, as fellow-labourers of God, and employed by him in reconciling the world unto himself, joined their earnest entreaties to the Corinthians also, as they had to others, that they would not "receive the grace of God "in vain." The word rendered *grace* signifies any special, undeserved favour; and when it is used for the regenerating and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, it implies that this is a special, undeserved favour. The

3 Giving [f] no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:

4 But [g] in all *things* * approving ourselves [h] as the ministers of God, [i] in much patience, in [k] afflictions, in [l] necessities, in [m] distresses,

5 In [n] stripes, in [o] imprisonments, [p] in † tumults, in [q] labours, in [r] watchings, in [s] fastings;

6 By [t] pureness, by [u] knowledge, by [x] long-suffering, by kindness, [y] by the Holy Ghost, by [z] love unfeigned,

f i 12. viii 20. Matt. xvii. 27. xviii. 6 Rom. xiv. 13. 1 Cor viii. 9–13 ix 12. 22. x. 23, 24 32, 33

g ii 17. vii. 11. Acts ii 22. Rom xiv. 18. xvi. 10 1 Cor. xi. 19. 1 Thes ii 3–11 2 Tim. ii. 15

* Gr *commending.* iv. 2 Rom v. 8.

h iii. 6. xi 23 Is lxi 6. Joel i 9. ii 17. 1 Cor. iii 5. iv. 1. 1 Thes iii 2. 1 Tim. iv. 6.

i xii. 12. Luke xxi. 19 Rom v 3, 4. Col. i. 11. 1 Thes v. 14. Tim vi 11. 2 Tim iii. 10 Heb xii. 1. Jam v. 7—11. Rev. i. 9. iii. 10.——k iv 17. Acts xx. 23, 24. Col i. 24. 1 Thes iii. 3. 2 Tim i 8. iii 11, 12. iv 5.——l xi 9 27 xii 10. Acts xx 34. 1 Cor iv 11, 12 Phil iv. 11, 12. m iv. 8. Rom. viii. 35, 36 1 Thes iii 7.——n xi. 23, 24. Deut xxv. 3 Is. liii. 5. Acts xvi. 23.——o 1 Kings xxii 27. 2 Chr. xvi. 10 Jer. xxxiii. 1 xxxvii. 15, 16. xxxviii. 6 Matt xiv. 3. 10 Acts v. 18. xii. 4, 5 xvi. 24. xxii. 24 xxiii. 35. xxiv 27 xxvi. 10 29. xxviii 16, 17 30 Eph iii. 1. Phil. i 13 2 Tim i. 8 ii 9. Heb. xi 36 xii 23. Rev. iii. 10——p i. 8—10 Acts xiv 19. xvii 5. xviii 12—17. xix 23—34. xxi 27—35. xxii. 23. xxiii 10.——† Or, *tossings to and fro* ——q xi. 23. 1 Cor. xv 10 1 Thes ii. 9. 1 Tim. iv. 10.——r xi. 27. Ez. iii 17. Mark xiii. 34—37. Acts xx. 31. 2 Tim iv 5. Heb xiii. 17 s Matt. ix 15 Acts xiii. 3. xiv. 23 1 Cor. vii. 5.——t vii 2. 1 Thes ii. 10. 1 Tim. iv. 12 v. 2. Tit. ii. 7.——u iv 6. xi. 6. 1 Cor ii 1, 2. 16 Eph. iii. 4. Col. i. 9, 10. 27. ii. 3. x 1 Cor xiii. 4 Gal. v 22 Eph. iv 2. 32. Col i. 11. iii. 12. 2 Tim. iii. 10. iv 2——y iii. 3. xi. 4. Rom. xv. 19 1 Cor. ii. 4. Gal iii 2. 5. 1 Thes i 5. 6 1 Pet i. 12.——z ii. 4. xi. 11. xii. 15. Judg. xvi. 15 Ez. xxxiii. 31. Rom. xii. 9 1 Pet. i. 22. 1 John iii. 18.

7 By [a] the word of truth, by [b] the power of God, by [c] the armour of righteousness [d] on the right hand, and on the left,

8 By [e] honour and dishonour, by [f] evil report and good report; [g] as deceivers, and *yet* [h] true;

9 As [i] unknown, and *yet* [k] well known; [l] as dying, and, behold, we live; [m] as chastened, and not killed;

10 As [n] sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as [o] poor, yet [p] making many rich; as having nothing, [q] and *yet* possessing all things.

a i 18—20. iv 2. Ps. cxix. 43. Eph. i 13. iv. 21. Col. i 5. 2 Tim. ii. 15 Jam i 18.

b x. 4. 5 xiii 4 Mark xvi. 20. Acts xi. 21. 1 Cor i. 24. ii 4. 5. Eph. i. 19, 20. iii 20 Heb. ii. 4.

c Is. xi. 5 lix. 17. Rom. xiii 12, 13. Eph vi. 14. 1 Thes v. 8. 2 Tim. iv 7

d Ex. xiv 22. Prov. iii. 16.

e Acts iv. 21 v. 13. 40, 41. xiv. 11—20 xvi. 20—22. 39 xxviii. 4—10. 1 Cor. iv. 10—13.

f Matt v 11, 12. x 25. Acts vi. 3 x. 22. xxii. 12. xxiv. 5. xxviii. 22 Rom. iii 8. 1 Tim iii. 7. iv. 10 Heb xiii. 13. 1 Pet iv. 14. 3 John 12 Rev. iii. 9.——g Matt. xxvii 63 John vii. 12——h Matt. xxii 16 Mark xii. 14. John vii 18——i Acts xvii 18 xxi 37. 38 xxv 14, 15. 19 26——k iv 2 v. 11 xi. 6. Acts xix. 26. Rom. xv. 19. Gal. i 22—24——l i. 8—10 iv 10, 11. Rom viii. 36 1 Cor. iv. 9. xv. 31——m Ps. cxviii 17, 18. 1 Cor. xi. 32.——n ii 4 vii. 4—10 Matt v 4. 12. Luke vi 21. John xvi. 22 Acts v 41. xvi. 25. Rom. v 2. 3. ix 2. xii 15. xv 13 Phil iv. 4. 1 Thes iii. 7—10. v. 16. Heb. x 34. Jam i. 2—4 1 Pet i. 6—8. iv. 13——o *See on,* 4. p iv. 7. viii 9. Rom xi. 12. Eph iii 8. 16 Col iii. 16. 1 Tim. vi 18. Jam ii. 5. Rev. ii. 9——q iv. 15 Prov. xvi 16. Matt. vi, 19, 20. Luke xvi. 11, 12. 1 Cor. iii. 21—23. 1 Tim iv. 8. Rev. xxi. 7.

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unspeakable love of God to sinners in the redemption by his Son, and in the appointment of "the ministry of reconciliation," and the mercy shown to those whom he thus "besought to be reconciled to him," would be altogether in vain, as to such of them as "neglected so great salvation," through unbelief and love of sin. The apostle feared that this had hitherto been the case of some professed Christians at Corinth: and doubtless many such would read or hear his epistle; whom therefore he most earnestly exhorted and entreated, not to render all the advantages set before them ineffectual to themselves, by persisting in unbelief; but that they would without delay, while the word of God was faithfully preached to them, embrace the proposals of mercy and grace set before them. For as JEHOVAH had assured the Messiah, according to the revelation made by the prophet, that he had "heard him in an "acceptable time, and succoured him in a day of salvation," (*Notes, Is.* xlix. 7, 8;) with a special reference to his intercession for the Gentiles, after his exaltation to his mediatorial throne; so the present season might be considered by the Corinthians, as "an accepted time and a day "of salvation" to all who sought an interest in the blessings of the Redeemer's kingdom. But if they refused the embassy of peace, they might expect to be speedily punished as the enemies of Christ. (*Notes,* &c. *Prov.* i. 20—33. *Is.* lv. 6, 7. *Luke* xiii. 25.)

V. 3—10. The apostle and his fellow-labourers, while they thus zealously fulfilled their embassy of peace; behaved with the utmost circumspection, that they might give no offence, or just cause of stumbling in any thing, lest their imprudence or misconduct should expose their ministry to censure or contempt, and thus render it ineffectual. They therefore studied, and were enabled, in all things to approve themselves such persons, as the ministers of a holy God, in so gracious and sacred a service, ought to be. This they did, "by much patience," resignation, constancy, and persevering assiduity, notwithstanding their multiplied and heavy afflictions. They were not discouraged, or induced to repine or despond, by urgent necessities and perplexing difficulties, even about obtaining a subsistence; or by repeated scourgings and imprisonments, from both Jewish and heathen magistrates; or by the tumultuous assaults of enraged mobs. But they patiently continued their labours, often spending the night as well as the day in unremitted toil, and adding religious fastings to those which absolute want imposed on them. To this patience they were encouraged by the pureness of their motives; and they approved themselves as the ministers of God, by the holiness, temperance, and purity of their whole conduct. They also showed themselves competent to impart all kind of divine knowledge and instruction to the world; they meekly endured all injuries and insults; not only without seeking revenge, but without remitting their endeavours of doing good to their enemies, and of showing kindness to all men. They abounded in the fruits of the Holy Spirit, and confirmed their doctrine by his miraculous gifts, and they exercised those gifts disinterestedly, and without ostentation, from unfeigned love to Christ and the souls of men. They were approved as the ministers of God, by "the word of truth," which they every where preached without any adulteration; and by that "power of God," which rendered it effectual to the conversion of sinners. They were also defended on every side by the compact armour of strict integrity, and an universal regard to the righteous commandments of God, from the purest evangelical principles. This fortified them against the assaults of carnal hope and fear, against the frowns and smiles of the world, and against every assault of the tempter. Thus they passed *through* honour and dishonour, without being elated by the distinction conferred on them, or depressed by the ignominy to which they were exposed. The calumnies raised concerning them, and the commendations which they received, were alike incapable of drawing them aside from their steady course. The world indeed treated them "as deceivers," who imposed their fictions on the credulous; yet they acted in all things as faithful men, and showed to mankind the true way of salvation. The noble and haughty of the

11 O [r] *ye* Corinthians, [s] our mouth is open unto you, [t] our heart is enlarged.

12 Ye [u] are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened [x] in your own bowels.

13 Now for a recompense in the same, ([y] I speak as unto *my* children,) [z] be ye also enlarged.

14 ¶ Be ye not [a] unequally yoked together with unbelievers: [b] for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? [c] and what communion hath light with darkness?

15 And [d] what concord hath Christ with Belial? [e] or what part hath he that believeth with [f] an infidel?

16 And [g] what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for [h] ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, [i] I will dwell in them, and walk in *them;* and [k] I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

17 Wherefore [l] come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing;* [m] and I will receive you;

18 And will be [n] a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith [o] the Lord Almighty.

r Gal iii. 1. Phil. iv. 15
s vii. 3, 4. 1 Sam. ii 1. Job xxxii 20. xxxiii. 2, 3. Ps. li. 15.
t ii. 4. xii. 15 Ps. cxix. 32. Hab. ii. 5. Phil. i 8.
u Ex. vi 9 *Marg.* Job xxxvi. 16 Prov iv. 12 Mic. ii 7.
x Phil. i. 8 1 John iii 17.
y 1 Cor. iv. 14, 15 Gal. iv. 19. 1 Thes. ii. 11. Heb xii. 5. 6. 1 John ii. 1. 12—14. iii. 7. 18 3 John 4.
z 2 Kings xiii. 13—19. Ps. lxxxi 10. Matt. ix. 28, 29 xvii. 19—21. Mark vi 4—6 xi 24. Jam. i 6, 7. 1 John v. 14, 15.
a Ex. xxxiv. 16. Lev. xix 19. Deut. vii. 2, 3. xxii. 9—11. Ezra ix. 1, 2. 11, 12. x. 19. Neh. xiii 1—3. 23—26. Ps. cvi. 35. Prov. xxii. 24. Mal. ii. 11. 15. 1 Cor viii. 39. xv. 33. Jam. iv. 4 ——
b 2 Chr xix. 2. Ps. xvi 3 xxvi. 4, 5. 9, 10. xliv. 20, 21 ci 3—5 cxix 63. cxxxix. 21, 22. Prov. xxix. 27. John vii 7 xv. 18, 19 Acts iv. 23 Eph. v 6—11 1 John iii. 12—14. ——
c Prov. iv. 18, 19 Rom. xiii 12—14. Eph. iv. 17—20. v. 8—14. Phil. ii. 15. 1 Thes. v. 4—8. 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10. iv. 2—4, 1 John i 5—7. ——
d 1 Sam. v 2—4. 1 Kings xviii. 21. 1 Cor. x. 20, 21.
e Ezra iv 3. Mark xvi. 16. Acts viii. 20, 21 1 John v. 11—13.
f 1 Tim. v. 8.
g Ex xx. 3. xxiii. 13. xxxiv. 14. Deut iv. 23, 24. v 7. vi. 14, 15. Josh xxiv. 14—24. 1 Sam. vii. 3, 4. 1 Kings xviii. 21. 2 Kings xvii. 33, 34 xxi 4, 5. xxiii 5—7. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 4, 5. Ez. xxxvi. 25. Hos. xiv. 8. Zeph i. 5. Matt. vi. 24. 1 John v. 20, 21.
h 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17. vi. 19. Eph. ii. 20—22 Heb. iii. 6. 1 Pet ii 5.
i Ex xxix. 45. Lev. xxvi. 12. Ps. xc. 1. Ez. xliii. 7 9. Zech. ii. 10, 11 John vi 56. Rom. viii. 9. 11. Eph. iii. 17. 2 Tim. i. 14. 1 John iv. 12. 15 Rev. xxi. 3 ——
k Gen. xvii 7, 8. Jer. xxiv. 7. xxxi 33. xxxii 38. Ez. xi. 20. xxxvi. 28 xxxvii. 26, 27. Hos. ii 23. Zech viii. 8. xiii. 9. Rom ix 26. Heb. viii. 10. Rev. xxi. 7. ——
l vii. 1. Num. xvi. 21 26 45 Ezra vi. 21. x. 11. Ps i. 1—3. Prov ix 6. Is. lii. 11 Jer. li. 6. Acts ii. 40 Rev. xviii 4.
m John vi. 37, 38. Rom xv. 7 ——
n Ps. xxii 30 Jer iii 19. xxxi 1. 9. Hos i. 9, 10. John i. 12 Rom. viii. 14—17. 29 Gal iii. 26. iv. 5—7. Eph. i 5. 1 John iii. 1, 2. Rev. xxi. 7.
o Gen. xvii. 1 xlviii. 3. Rev. i. 8. xxi. 22.

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world either knew them not, or despised them as obscure persons; but they were well known to multitudes as the instruments of good to their souls. They seemed continually exposed to death, or even enduring its stroke; yet they still lived by the marvellous power of God. They were chastened by him as in a state of tuition, and he used the malice of their enemies as the rod of his salutary discipline; but they were not killed by it. They had constant calls to be sorrowful, both on account of sins and sufferings, and were looked upon as unhappy men; yet divine consolations rendered them habitually cheerful, and joyful in the Lord. Though poor and needy in this world, they were employed by God in making many rich unto eternal life: and while they had no estates or property on earth, they possessed all things, by their relation to Christ and their interest in the promises; and the whole universe, if they had been the proprietors of it, could have afforded them nothing more, as conducive to their real good, than what they actually enjoyed or expected. Thus the whole of their temper and conduct, in the varied circumstances through which they passed, tended to show that their doctrine had a blessed effect upon their souls; and rendered them holy, beneficent, useful, and happy men. The animation, sublimity, and energy of expression, in this beautiful passage, have been generally and justly admired; and it shows how full the apostle's heart was of holy affections; and how open and communicative in speaking on these interesting topics. *Making many,* &c. 'We are 'continually enriching many with treasures, which they 'would not part with for all the revenues of kings and 'princes.' (*Doddridge.*)

V. 11—13. The apostle's consciousness of integrity and his fervent affection to the Corinthians, opened, as it were, his mouth, in this unreserved declaration of his sentiments and principles; so that he was not careful about the construction which some might put upon his words: for his heart was enlarged with an earnest desire of communicating good to them. If therefore they derived no further advantage from his ministry, it would be wholly owing to themselves. They were not straitened in him, whom Christ had made both able and willing to be useful to them; but they were straitened in their own bowels or hearts, through unkind suspicions, groundless prejudices, and disaffection. Now, the whole recompense that he desired for all his love to them, and his labours and sufferings for their good; (for he considered and spake to them as his beloved children,) was, that they would be enlarged after his example, and open their hearts in love, to receive the salutary counsels, cautions, and exhortations, which he gave them, in the character of a tender and prudent father.

V. 14—18. The apostle especially entreated his beloved children not to contract marriages, or form any intimate connexions, with their unbelieving neighbours, to which carnal motives might induce them. For this would resemble that unequal yoking of different animals, which the law of Moses forbade; (*Note, Deut.* xxii. 10;) and would tend to make them uneasy to each other. Thus, if believers connected themselves with unbelievers, their views, principles, pursuits, and satisfactions, must be discordant. The believer would be retarded and interrupted in his religious exercises, or his various duties in the family, in the Church, and to mankind; or drawn aside from them. And what cordial and comfortable intercourse could be maintained between the righteousness of the one, and the unrighteousness of the other party? What fellowship could there be, in the most important matters, between the children of the light and those of darkness? What agreement could be expected between the servant of Christ, and one in whom Belial, (or Satan,) who had cast off the yoke of obedience to God, abode and wrought? And what part or share could a believer take in the unhallowed pursuits and pleasures of an unbeliever, who despised the blessed Gospel of Christ? for righteousness and unrighteousness, light and darkness, Christ and Belial, might as easily associate in cordiality, as the believer and the infidel: all intercourse between them must be attended with restraint, disguise, or jarring sentiments. Such persons would live in different elements; they would draw different ways, and

CHAP. VII.

The apostle exhorts the Corinthians to follow after holiness, encouraged by the preceding promises, 1; *and to receive him, who had done nothing to forfeit their esteem, but had great love for them, and confidence in them,* 2—4. *He shows what comfort, under his troubles, Titus's good account of them had given him,* 5—7; *so that he did not repent of having grieved them by his former epistle, considering the happy effects of their godly sorrow,* 8—11. *He had written to approve his care of them as in the sight of God,* 12; *and he rejoices, especially, in the joy of Titus, and in his affection for them, as excited by their good conduct, which was answerable to the apostle's former boasting concerning them,* 13—16.

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counteract each other's purposes; so that the unbeliever must be a cross, a snare, a clog, and a hinderance to the believer. In particular, what agreement could subsist between the temple of God and idols? Would Jehovah endure to have these hated rivals placed even in his own temple? Now Christians were the temple of God, his special residence, consecrated by the Holy Spirit. For thus he had promised of old to believing Israelites, and with a view to the days of Christ, that "he would dwell "in them," or "take up his in-dwelling in them," and "walk in them," as a man in his habitation, and so be their "God," &c. (*Notes,* &c. *Lev.* xxvi. 11, 12. *Jer.* xxxii. 37, 38.) Let them therefore value this special relation to God; and, as far as their relative and social duties would permit, let them separate from their heathen neighbours, and be careful to touch no unclean thing, or any thing that related to idolatry or iniquity. Eating things offered to idols, or with idolaters in their festivals, seems to be specially intended. (*Is.* lii. 11.) In this case they might be assured that the Lord would graciously accept of them, and receive them into his special favour; yea, that he would be in every respect a Father to them, and provide for, protect, comfort, enrich, and bless them, as his sons and daughters by regeneration and adoption. This, the Lord almighty, the omnipotent Ruler of the universe, had repeatedly intimated by the ancient prophets; and he now declared it more explicitly by his apostles, even in respect of the Gentiles. And what could they desire more to compensate for all losses, than this most intimate relation and union with the almighty God?

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

It is the peculiar honour of faithful ministers to concur most willingly in the great designs of the Lord, to labour in concert with him, and to join their sincere entreaties with his condescending invitations, in beseeching sinners not to receive the grace of God in vain. But the gracious declaration of the Gospel, and all the abundant provision which is made in Christ Jesus for the salvation of sinners, the labours of the most affectionate pastors, yea, the invitations of God himself by them, are often rendered ineffectual to those that hear them, through negligence, contempt, enmity, pride, and love of sin; save as they occasion their deeper condemnation. To prevent this fatal consequence as far as we are able, we should warn, expostulate, persuade, beseech, and exhort men, by every means that we can devise, to attend to this one thing needful. We should show them that "*now* is the accepted time, "and the day of salvation;" that the present day alone is theirs; the past is irrevocable; the future may find them in eternity: their reason may fail them; the Gospel may be withdrawn, or God may determine to leave them to final obduracy. Through the intercession of the divine Saviour, whom the Father hath "heard in the accepted time, and "succoured in the day of salvation," by carrying him through his sufferings, and exalting him to his heavenly glory, we now enjoy a day of grace: let then all be careful to avail themselves of it, whilst the Gospel is sounding in their ears, and perhaps the convincing Spirit is striving with their consciences. It is peculiarly incumbent on all who preach this great salvation, to give no offence in any thing, (except by their faithfulness,) that their ministry be not blamed; and in all things to approve themselves as the ministers of God to mankind, who are sent to show them the way of eternal life. Patience under afflictions; constancy in necessities and distresses; perseverance under persecutions; assiduity in labours, watchings and fastings; purity, knowledge, meekness, kindness, a spiritual mind, unfeigned love; sound doctrine, producing an evident change by the power of God in men's characters; disinterested, steady integrity, as an armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left; are proper attestations of the ministers of God. Thus supported, they may pass "through "honour and dishonour;" they may go on unmoved, amidst "evil report and good report:" conscious of truth and sincerity, they may disregard the accusation of being deceivers; known and approved of God and his people, they may be reconciled to obscurity and contempt in the world; their dangers and deliverances, their chastenings and consolations, their outward sorrow and inward rejoicing, their poverty and usefulness in enriching many, their contentment with, yea, sometimes almost without food and raiment, and their interest in the unsearchable riches of Christ, may be contrasted with each other, and the whole of their conduct, circumstances, and labours, will concur to recommend their doctrine to mankind. But, alas, how few of those, who wear the garb or bear the office of ministers, answer this description! How many are the exact reverse of it! How often do even the preachers of *truth* give such offence by their evident, allowed, and habitual misconduct, that the ministry is blamed, and men are fatally prejudiced against the truth! And how common is it for us to be drawn into such improprieties of conduct, as prevent the usefulness of our most earnest exhortations! We should therefore continually beseech the Lord to erase every unfavourable impression, HAVING [a] therefore these promises, dearly beloved, [b] let us cleanse ourselves from all [c] filthiness of the flesh and spirit, [d] perfecting holiness [e] in the fear of God.

2 [f] Receive us: [g] we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man.

3 I speak not *this* [h] to condemn *you:* [i] for I have said before, that [k] ye are in our hearts [l] to die and live with *you.*

4 Great *is* [m] my boldness of speech toward you, [n] great *is* my glorying of you: [o] I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.

a i. 20. vi. 17, 18. Rom. v 20 21. vi 1, &c. Heb. iv. 1 2 Pet i. 4—8
b Ps. cxix. 9 Prov. xx. 9 xxx 12. Is. i. 16 Jer xiii. 27. Ez. xviii 30—32. xxxvi. 25. Matt. v. 8 xii. 33. xxiii 25, 26 Luke xi. 39. 40 Tit i. 11—14 Jam iv. 8. 1 Pet. i. 22 ii. 11. 1 John iii. 3.——c Is lv. 7 Jer iv 14. 1 Cor vi 20 Eph. ii 3 1 Thes v. 23 ——d Matt. v. 48. Eph iv 12, 13. Phil iii. 12—15. 1 Thes. iii 13 iv. 7 Heb. xii 23 1 Pet v. 10
e 2 Chr xix. 9. Ps xix. 9. Prov. viii 13 xvi. 6 Acts ix 31 Heb xii 28.——f xi 16 Matt. x. 14 40 41. Luke x. 8 Phil. ii. 29 Col iv 10. Philem 12 17 2 John 10. 3 John 8—10 ——g i 12. iv 2. vi 3—7. xi 9. xii 14—18 Num xvi 15. 1 Sam xii. 3, 4 Acts xx. 33. Rom. xvi 18 1 Thes. iii. 3—6. 10 2 Thes. iii. 7—9

h 12. ii 4, 5 xii 10. 1 Cor. iv. 14, 15.
i vi. 11, 12.
k iii. 2. xi. 11. xii. 15. Phil i. 8, 9
l Ruth i 16, 17. 1 Thes. ii. 8.
m iii. 12. *Marg.* vi 11. x. 1, 2. xi 21. Eph vi. 19, 20. Phil i. 20. 1 Thes ii. 2.
n i. 14 ix. 2—4. 1 Cor. i. 4. 1 Thes. ii. 19.
o 6, 7 ii. 14 vi. 10 Acts v. 41. Rom v. 3. Phil. ii. 17 Col. i. 24 1 Thes iii. 7—9 Jam. i. 2

which any past misconduct may have made on men's minds, and to prepare us for serving him more unexceptionably for the future, that we may give up every worldly interest and indulgence, and be willing to labour and suffer in the cause of Christ. We should seek to be made fruitful in good works, to be endued with pureness and knowledge, to be strengthened in the exercise of long-suffering and kindness, to be armed with the whole armour of God, to rejoice in the midst of tribulation, to be more desirous of making others rich than of avoiding poverty in our own circumstances, to leave our character and concerns in the Lord's hands, and to count ourselves to possess all things in his all-sufficient favour and precious promises.

V. 11—18.

Evident uprightness and enlarged love give us confidence in addressing even those, who have imbibed prejudices; our mouths will be opened in the cause of Christ, by the consciousness that we only seek the good of the people, and not our own emolument or reputation. We shall be more concerned, when they close their minds against our instructions, than when they refuse to communicate to our necessities; and the most desired recompense of our labour of love will be, their readiness to receive the truth from our lips. It will especially be near the heart of such pastors, to caution their beloved children in the Gospel not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers. The fatal effects of neglecting the scriptural precept in this matter are most evident. They whose cross it is to be thus connected, without their wilful fault, may expect peculiar consolations under it; but when believers will thrust themselves into these disadvantageous circumstances, contrary to the express warnings of God's word, they may expect to feel much additional distress. Indeed, all intimate connexions with unbelievers should be avoided. There can be no profitable communion between contrary characters; the attempt of making a coalition between Christ and Belial is unnatural and abominable; the kingdoms of righteousness and unrighteousness, of light and darkness, must wage perpetual war with each other; and we are most likely to do good to unbelievers, when we stand aloof from all other intercourse with them, besides that of duty and compassion. If Christians indeed, we are the temples of the living God; what have we then to do any more with idols? Let us value our relation to him, and not profane it; let us admire his condescending promises of dwelling and walking in us poor sinners, whom he hath reconciled to himself by Jesus Christ. Let us earnestly desire to have his temple made and kept pure, that we may have the comfort of his manifested presence. Let us beseech him to be our God and Portion, and to number us with his chosen people. Let us come out from among the workers of iniquity, and separate from all their vain and sinful pleasures and pursuits, and from all conformity to the corrupt customs and fashions of this evil world. Let us not touch any gain or indulgence that is spotted with sin. Let us remember that the world, though called Christian, still lieth in wickedness, and is full of unclean things which we must abhor. Let us assure ourselves that the Lord will receive all, who come in his appointed way, and at his call, and that he will be a Father unto them, and take them for his children; and if it be so envied a privilege to be the son or daughter of some earthly potentate, who can express the dignity and felicity of being the sons and daughters of the Lord almighty!

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1. This verse is evidently connected with the subject of the former chapter. The promises, which God has given in the Gospel, should excite those who hear them to aspire after holiness. All sin is *filthiness* in the judgment of God, because contrary to his holy nature and law. Sensual lusts may be called "filthiness of the flesh;" while pride, envy, revenge, avarice, and idolatry, may be intended by the "filthiness of the spirit;" or the former may signify the outward expression of sin by the body, in word or deed, the latter its inward workings in the imagination and affections. Aspiring after acceptance, adoption, and communion with God, and depending on his promises, Christians ought to cleanse themselves from all this filthiness; constantly watching against all evil thoughts, desires, words, and works, mortifying every corrupt propensity, renouncing every sinful interest or pleasure, seeking for an increase of all spiritual dispositions, and abounding in every good word and action. In this manner they ought to proceed in perfecting holiness, and in seeking entire conformity to the holy image and law of God, from reverence of his authority, fear of his displeasure, and an habitual sense of his holy heart-searching presence. Thus they should persevere in unremitted endeavours after perfect holiness, as long as they live, because their highest attainments leave them short of perfection. In this the apostle joined himself, thus intimating, that he too needed more perfect cleansing from the filthiness of sin, and that he called on others to do nothing, but the same which he himself was continually endeavouring to accomplish. *Perfecting,* &c. 'Still making progress in holiness.' (*Whitby.*)

5 For, [p] when we were come into Macedonia, [q] our flesh had no rest, but we were [r] troubled on every side: [s] without *were* fightings, within *were* [t] fears.

6 Nevertheless, God, [u] that comforteth those that are cast down, [x] comforted us by the coming of Titus;

7 And not by his coming only, [y] but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, [z] when he told us your [a] earnest desire, your [b] mourning, your [c] fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more.

8 For [d] though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, [e] though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though *it were* but for a season.

p i 16, 17. ii 13. Acts xx. 1. 1 Cor. xvi 5 q iv. 8—12. xi 23—30 Gen viii. 9. Is xxiii. 12. Jer. viii. 18 xlv. 3 Matt xi. 28—30. r iv. 8. Job xviii. 11. Jer. vi 25. xx. 10. s Deut. xxxii. 25. 1 Cor. xv. 31, 32. t ii. 3. 9. xi 29. xii 20, 21 Gal. iv 11 19, 20 1 Thes. iii. 5. u i. 3, 4. ii. 14. Is. xii. 1. li 12. lvii 15. 18. lxi. 1. 2. Jer. xxxi 13 Matt v. 4. John xiv. 16. Rom. xv 5 Phil. ii. 1. 2 Thes. ii. 16, 17. x ii. 13. 1 Cor. xvi. 17, 18. 1 Thes iii. 2 6, 7. 3 John 2—4. y Acts xi. 23. Rom. i. 12. Col ii. 5. 1 Thes iii. 8. 2 John 4. z 11. ii. 9. Ps. cxli 5 Prov. ix. 8, 9.——a v. 2. viii. 16. Luke xxii. 44. Phil. i. 20. Heb. ii. 1. Jam. v. 17 Jude 3.——b 10. Judg. ii. 4, 5. Ps. vi. 1—6. xxx. 5. xxxi 9—11 xxxviii. 18 li. 1. cxxvi 5, 6. Jer. xxxi. 18—20 Matt. v 4. xxvi. 75 Jam. iv. 9, 10.——c i. 14. ii. 3 1 Thes. iii 6.——d 6. 11 ii. 2—11. Lam. iii. 32. Matt. xxvi. 21, 22. Luke xxii. 61, 62. John xvi. 6. xxi. 17. Heb xii. 9—11. Rev. iii. 19.——e Ex. v. 22, 23. Jer. xx. 7—9.

9 Now [f] I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry * after a godly manner, [g] that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.

10 For godly sorrow worketh [h] repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but [i] the sorrow of the world worketh death.

11 For, behold, this self-same thing, [k] that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what [l] carefulness it wrought in you, yea, *what* [m] clearing of yourselves, yea, *what* [n] indignation, yea, *what* [o] fear, yea, *what* [p] vehement desire, yea, *what* [q] zeal, yea, *what* [r] revenge! In all *things* ye have [s] approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

f *See on.* 6, 7. *and on.* h 10 Ec vii. 3. Jer. xxxi. 18—20. Zech xiii. 10. Luke xv. 7. 10 17—24. 32. Acts xx. 21. * *Or, according to God* 10, 11. & 12 *Gr.* g ii 16. x. 8—10. xiii 8—10. Is. vi. 9—11. h xii. 21. 2 Sam. xii. 13. 1 Kings viii. 47—50. Job xxxiii. 27, 28 Ez. xviii. 27—30. Jon iii 8—10. Matt. xxi. 28—32. xxvi 75. Luke xv. 10. xviii. 13. Acts iii. 19. xi. 18. 2 Tim ii. 25, 26. i Gen. iv. 13—15. xxx 1. 1 Sam. xxx. 6 2 Sam. xiii 4 xvii. 23. 1 Kings xxi. 4. Prov xv 13. 15. xvii. 14. 22. Jon. iv. 9. Matt. xxvii. 4. 5. Heb. xii. 17. k 9. Is. lxvi 2. Zech. xii. 10—14. 1 Cor. v. 2——l *See on,* a 7. 1 Cor. xii 25 Tit. iii. 8.——m Gen xliv 6, 7 1 Cor. v. 13. Eph v 11. 1 Tim. v. 21, 22.——n 2 Sam. xii. 5—7. Neh. v 6, &c. xiii. 25. Job xlii. 6 Jer xxxi. 18—20. Dan. vi 14 Mark iii 5——o 1. Ps. ii. 11 Prov xiv. 16. xxviii 14 Rom. xi 20. Phil. ii. 12. Heb. iv. 1 xii. 15, 16. 1 Pet. i. 17 Jude 23. p Ps. xxxviii 9. cxlv. 19. Cant. viii 16. Is xxvi 18. 1 Pet ii. 2.——q ix 2. Ps lxix 9. cxix. 139. John ii. 17. Acts xvii 16——r Ps. xxxv. 13. Matt. v. 29. Mark ix. 43—48. s vi. 4. xiii. 7. Rom. xiv. 18. 2 Tim ii. 15.

V. 2—4. The apostle here returned to his more immediate purpose of re-establishing his authority among the Corinthians. (*Note*, vi. 11—13.) He called on them to receive him and his brethren as the ambassadors of Christ. There could be no reason for a contrary conduct, as they had injured no man in his person or connexions, corrupted no man's principles or morals, and defrauded no man in regard to his property, or in any respect *coveted* aught belonging to them. He did not speak thus, as disposed to condemn them of bringing such charges against him; for he had so favourable an opinion of them in general, that they were most dear to his heart, as he had before intimated, (iii. 2;) and, if other engagements would have permitted, he would willingly have spent and ended the remnant of his days among them. Indeed, he was so confident that they would submit to his apostolical authority, that he addressed them with great freedom and boldness, not fearing but they would take it in good part; and he even gloried among his friends concerning their conduct in the late transactions; yea, he was filled with such comfort on that account, as abundantly counterbalanced all his trials.

V. 5—7. After the apostle had passed from Troas into Macedonia, (ii. 13.) he was so harassed with persecution, that he had no rest in his flesh, or in respect of his outward circumstances; and he was troubled on every side, because the outward conflicts which he sustained with his enemies concurred with much inward anxiety about the Corinthians. But that God, whose peculiar character, prerogative, and delight it is to comfort such of his servants as are dejected and discouraged, and indeed all those who are *humble* and lowly in heart, was pleased to comfort him, by the arrival of Titus from Corinth. His safety and company were sources of satisfaction to him; but he was still more rejoiced at the comfort which Titus had received from the behaviour of the Corinthians, and while he described their earnest desire to remedy all abuses, their poignant sorrow for having dishonoured the Gospel, and their fervent affection towards the apostle, and longing desire of seeing him. So that his present joy was rendered the more abundant, even by means of the sorrow which had preceded it.

V. 8. The superintending inspiration of the Holy Spirit did not supersede the exercise of the understanding and faculties in the sacred writers; and the apostle's excess of concern, about the consequences of his former epistle, seems to have rendered his mind uneasy as to some expressions on it, lest they should counteract his design. If indeed he actually *repented* of having written so sharply, as well as had felt *an after carefulness* about it, it must not be ascribed to the things written, as if they had not been divinely inspired; but to infirmity, as not being fully sanctified, or freed from a propensity to excess of anxiety and solicitude. Some, however, render the passage, "Even if I had repented, I should not now repent."

V. 9—11. The apostle understood that his epistle had made the Corinthians sorry, as he expected it would, but it had been only for a short space; he therefore rejoiced, not in their sorrow, in which he shared, but in their repentance, which had been effected by it. For they had sorrowed "according to God," under the influence of his grace, with reference to his will and glory, and in dependence on his mercy; and this had been so ordered, that they might receive damage from the apostle in no respect, not even as the innocent occasion of it. For that sorrow, which was the effect of divine grace and the fear of God, tended directly to work repentance in the heart, and to render it humble, contrite, submissive, afraid of punishment, dependent on mercy, disposed to renounce and mortify every sin, and to walk in newness of life; and this repentance was "unto salvation;" as always connected with faith in Christ, and an interest in his atonement; so that no man would repent of thus sorrowing and repenting. Some are of opinion that the word, rendered

12 Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, [t] *I did it* not for his cause that hath done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but [u] that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you.

13 Therefore [x] we were comforted in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, [y] because his spirit was refreshed by you all.

14 For [z] if I have boasted any thing to him of you, I am not ashamed; but as [a] we spake all things to you in truth, even so our boasting, which *I made* before Titus, is found a truth:

15 And his * inward affection is more abundant towards you, whilst he remembereth [b] the obedience of you all, how [c] with fear and trembling ye received him.

16 I rejoice therefore, [d] that I have confidence in you in all *things*.

[t] ii. 9. 1 Cor. v. 1.

[u] ii. 4. 17. xi. 11. 28. 1 Tim iii 5.

[x] ii. 3 Rom xii. 15. 1 Cor. xii. 26 xiii. 5—7. Phil. ii. 28. 1 Pet. iii. 8.

[y] 15. Rom. xv 32. 1 Cor xvi. 18. 2 Tim i. 16. Philem. 20.

[z] 4. viii. 24. ix. 2—4.

[a] i. 18—20

* Gr *bowels are.* vi. 12. Gen. xliii 30 1 Kings iii. 26. Cant. v. 4. Phil. i. 8. Col. iii. 12. 1 John iii. 17

[b] ii. 9. x. 5, 6. Phil ii 12. 2 Thes. iii. 14.

[c] *See on,* 10, 11. Ezra ix. 4 x. 9. Job xxi. 6. Ps. ii. 11. cxix. 120. Is lxvi. 2. Hos. xiii. 1. Acts xvi. 29. Eph vi. 5. Phil ii. 12.

[d] 2 Thes. iii 4. Philem. 8. 21.

"not to be repented of," should be referred to "salvation," rather than to "repentance:" in the same sense as it is applied to "the gifts and calling of God," in the only place where the same word occurs in the New Testament, (*Rom.* xi. 29;) signifying its *unchangeableness;* or denoting a salvation which will infinitely more than compensate all that may be endured in attaining it: and perhaps the construction, in the original, favours this opinion. On the other hand, the sorrow of carnal men about worldly objects, being separated from the fear and love of God and faith in his mercy, often drank up their spirits, broke their proud rebellious hearts, drove them to suicide, or prompted them to the most desperate wickedness; and so worked death, temporal and eternal. (*Marg. Ref.*) "The sorrow of the world," is the certain way to desperation, unless 'God prevent it, as appears from the horrid examples of Cain, Saul, Ahithophel, and Judas: but the written tears of David give the clearest example of the other kind of sorrow.' (*Beza.*) It was evident that the sorrow of the Corinthians had been "after a godly sort," from their carefulness to rectify and amend what had been amiss, and their ready obedience in censuring the criminal; from their desire to show, that their connivance at the evils which had taken place was not the effect of corrupt principles, but of inattention, that by thus clearing themselves they might preserve the credit of the Gospel; from their indignation at themselves for having thus disgraced their profession; from their fear, lest any repetitions of such abuses should occur: from their most earnest desire of further degrees of purity; from their zeal for the glory of God; and from their desire, as it were, to revenge his cause on themselves, by submitting to any humiliations, or corrections, that were requisite for the honour of the Gospel. So that in every thing they were now freed from further imputation in this transaction. Numbers of them thus showed that they had not been directly guilty, though they had inadvertently connived at the offenders; and of this connivance they had repented, and sought forgiveness. Others, who had been more directly criminal, had likewise repented, and concurred in such measures, as implied a decided protest against the sins which had disgraced the cause of Christ, and those teachers who allowed of them: and thus the Church, as a society, was cleared from the guilt and infamy under which it lay; and the whole blame now rested with the individuals who still persisted in impenitence. As this verse relates to the conduct of a Christian society, in particular circumstances; and, probably, some of the clauses to one part, and some to another of this society; so these several particulars can only be applied by accommodation to the repentance of an individual.

V. 12. The apostle further assured them, that he had not written concerning the incestuous person, from a personal dislike to him, or merely on his account in any respect; nor from regard to his father, who had been so grossly wronged in this matter; but in order to show to them, as in the sight of God, his attention to their spiritual interests. The other offenders at Corinth, (1 *Cor.* vi. 1—11;) might also be alluded to; but it is evident, that the principal criminal was more directly intended.

V. 13—16. The apostle's endeavours had been made successful, and had eventually issued in the comfort of the Corinthians; and thus he shared their consolations, as he had before sympathized in their sorrows. It also increased his joy, to see how joyful their conduct had rendered the pious heart of his beloved Titus. If then he had before spoken so confidently of them, that it seemed to be boasting, he was not now ashamed of it; for as his doctrine and his professed affection for them had been true, so this his boasting of them to Titus had proved true also. And the love of Titus towards them was greatly increased, while he remembered the obedience which they all had shown to the authority of the apostle, signified by him; and how they received him even with a trembling fear, lest they should grieve him, or impress his mind unfavourably towards them. So that the apostle could now rejoice in the confidence which he had in them in all things. There was great address in this part of the epistle; and his kind acceptance of what had been done, and the confidence he expressed in the Church, were in general well suited to excite them to a more entire reformation, to break the party formed against him, to deliver them from the fascinations of the false teachers, and to re-establish his own authority.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

The promises of God should excite and direct us in following after holiness. His grace alone can efficaciously purify us: but it is our duty to use the means which he hath appointed; and, depending on that grace, to search out, and cleanse away, all "filthiness of the flesh and spirit," as abhorred by God and all his people. Perfect holiness should be the object of our unremitting prayers and endeavours: we should follow after it, as in the pre-

CHAP. VIII.

The apostle sets before the Corinthians the liberality of the poor Christians in Macedonia, 1—5; *and excites them to imitate this liberality toward the poor saints in Judea, that they might abound as much in this grace, as in other things; and show the sincerity of their love, as animated by the self-abasing and self-denying love of Christ,* 6—9. *They had before shown a readiness to this contribution, which would be graciously accepted by the Lord,* 10—15. *He commends to them Titus, and two other brethren whom he had engaged in this service, and who were, on many accounts, worthy of their particular regard,* 16—24.

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sence of God, and influenced by the fear of him, when no eye but his can possibly witness our conduct; and our lamented imperfections should excite us the more diligently to “go on unto perfection.” If the ambassadors of Christ would be received in that character, they must be careful “to wrong no man, to corrupt no man, to defraud no “man:” and they who reject those ministers, whose conduct and doctrine are thus uncorrupt, will greatly offend him that sent them. Yet we should avoid all rigorous censures, and show cordial love to the people, notwithstanding their faults; we should express as much confidence in them, and speak as favourably of them, as the case will admit: and when they show a readiness to amend what hath grieved us, we should deem it such a comfort, as may render us exceedingly joyful in all our tribulation. But we ought not to expect much rest to our flesh in this evil world: and if inward fears concur with outward opposition to distress us, we only taste of that cup, of which far better men have drunk more abundantly. We cannot sufficiently admire the compassion and condescension of our God, in revealing himself as the Comforter of those that are cast down. In all our dejections and perplexities, therefore, let us rely on him as our all-sufficient Helper. And, seeing the time of our extreme distress is commonly that of his interposition, we should endeavour to make it that of our most enlarged expectations. He works, however, by second causes and instruments: the converse of some pious friend, or a good account of those about whom we were anxious, or the affection of such as we feared were alienated, are often sources of relief and consolation, in which the kindness of the Lord should be acknowledged with much thankfulness.

V. 8—16.

Through anxiety about the event of his labours, the faithful minister may be tempted to repent of his best intended and most scriptural endeavours to do good. He may fear that he spake too decidedly or sharply, and so gave needless offence, or excited undue sorrow, when he only performed the office of an affectionate reprover, under the influence of the Spirit of truth and love. Thus a man may be rendered uneasy for having done his duty, and afraid of doing it on another occasion. Indeed, we should be reluctant to cause sorrow; (even as the skilful, and tender surgeon is averse to give pain, though he finds it often necessary;) but we should rejoice in bringing men to that godly sorrow which worketh repentance, as their grief will be transient, and the benefit eternal. The loss of an earthly friend, the displeasure of a powerful superior, or other secular misfortunes, excite men's sorrow, and they think they have cause to mourn: how then should we be grieved for having offended our Creator, dishonoured his name, incurred his frown, and deserved eternal misery! The objects of worldly sorrow are trivial; its exercise is commonly unavailing; and it tends to death: we should therefore be careful not to indulge it. Unless sin be mourned over, as the cause of men's sufferings, and God be regarded as the righteous and merciful Author of them, their sorrow under afflictions and calamities leads to increasing enmity, to distraction, despair, and blasphemy. (*Rev.* xvi. 9—11.) We should therefore endeavour to turn all our mourning into a religious channel, that we may “sorrow after a godly sort.” But even sorrow about sin and our eternal concerns will be of no use to us, unless it worketh repentance; and even repentance itself may be counterfeited, and so not be “unto salvation.” Of all deceptions, this is most to be feared. A partial and superficial repentance; an unbelieving and hopeless repentance, like that of Judas; a pharisaical repentance, which is presented as an atonement for sin, and the rival of Christ's expiation; outward penances, mortifications, and observances, with an unhumbled and unrenewed heart; apparent contrition, without renouncing the favourite iniquity, or throwing back the wages of unrighteousness; these, and other kinds of repentance, are not unto salvation, but must be repented of, either in this world, or for ever in hell. But deep humiliation before God, hatred of all sin, attended by faith in the merits of Christ, a new heart and a new life, constitute “repentance unto salva-“tion never to be repented of.” May the Lord bestow it on every one of us! Sorrowing after this godly manner will work great carefulness and watchfulness in us, to amend our lives and subdue every iniquity: we shall thus be led to a serious endeavour to clear up the reality of our repentance to our own consciences, and to all men; we shall feel an indignation at ourselves for past transgressions; a fear of relapsing into sin; a vehement desire of forgiveness and sanctifying grace; a zeal for the honour of God; and a revenge, as it were, against those lusts which have excited us to offend him. When the faithful minister of Christ, (who hath warned the sinner of his guilt and danger, and reproved the inconsistent professor of the Gospel, that his care of them in the sight of God might be evidenced,) witnesses such “fruits meet for “repentance,” he will be comforted in helping their comfort; he will rejoice in the joy of other believers on their account; he will exult in realizing the favourable hopes which he had entertained; he will encourage the abundant affection of others towards them; he will commend their

MOREOVER, brethren, [a] we do you to wit of [b] the grace of God bestowed on [c] the churches of Macedonia:

2 How that [d] in a great trial of affliction, [e] the abundance of their joy, and [f] their deep poverty abounded unto [g] the riches of their * liberality.

4 For [h] to *their* power, [i] I bear record, yea, and [k] beyond *their* power *they were* willing of themselves;

4 Praying us with much entreaty [l] that we would receive the gift, and *take upon us* the fellowship of [m] the ministering to the saints.

5 And *this they did*, not as we hoped, but [n] first gave their own selves to the Lord, and [o] unto us by the will of God:

a v. 19.
b 2—7. ix. 12. Acts xi. 23. 1 Cor. xv 10. Eph. iii. 8. Col. i. 29.
c ix 2. 4. xi. 9. Acts xvi. 9. Rom. xv. 26. 1 Thes. i 7, 8. iv. 10.
d 1 Thes i 6. ii 14. iii. 3. 4.
e Neh viii 10—12. Acts ii. 45. 46.
f Mark xii 42—44 Luke xxi 1—4. Jam. ii. 5. Rev ii. 9
g vi. 10 ix. 11. 13. Deut xv 4. Prov. xi. 25 Is xxxii. 5-8.
* Gr *simplicity*. i 12. Rom xii 8.
h ix 6, 7. Mark xiv. 8 Acts xi. 29 1 Cor xvi. 2 1 Pet. iv 11.
i Rom x 2 Gal. iv 15. Col. iv 13
k 12 16, 17. Ex xxxv. 5 21, 22. 29. 1 Chr. xxix. 5, 6. 9 13—17. Ps cx 3. 1 Cor ix. 17. Phil. ii. 13 1 Thes. ii. 8. Philem. 14. 1 Pet. v. 2
l 18, 19. Gen. xxxiii 10. 11 2 Kings v 15, 16. Acts xvi. 15. 1 Cor xvi 3. 4.——m ix. 1. 12—14. Matt. x. 42 xii. 50 xxv 40. 44, 45 Mark xiv 7. John xix. 26, 27. Acts vi 1, &c ix 39—41. xxiv. 17. Rom. xv. 25, 26 1Cor xvi. 1. 15. Gal ii 10 vi. 10 1Tim. v. 10 Philem. 5, 6. Heb vi. 10 1 John iii 16—18.——n v 14, 15. 1 Sam. i. 28 2 Chr xxx. 8. Is. xliv. 3—5. Jer. xxxi. 33 Zech xiii 9 Rom vi. 13. xii 1. xiv. 7—9. 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.——o iv. 5. 1 Chr. xii. 18. 2 Chr xxx. 12.

6 Insomuch that [p] we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same † grace also.

7 Therefore, [q] as ye abound in every thing, *in* [r] faith, and utterance, and [s] knowledge, and *in* all diligence, and [t] *in* your love to us; [u] *see* that ye abound in [x] this grace also.

8 I [y] speak not by commandment, but [z] by occasion of the forwardness of others, and [a] to prove the sincerity of your love.

9 For ye know [b] the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that [c] though he was rich, yet [d] for your sakes [e] he became poor, [f] that ye through his poverty might be rich.

p 16, 17. xii. 18.
† Or, *gift*. 4. 19. *Marg*. ix. 8. Phil. iv. 18. 1 Pet. iv 10.
q Rom. xv. 14. 1 Cor. i. 5. iv. 7 xiv. 12. Rev. iii. 17.
r 1 Cor. xiii. 2.
s 1 Cor. viii. 1, 2. xiii. 8.
t vii. 7.
u Phil. i. 9 11. 1 Thes iv. 9, 10 2 Thes. i. 3. 1 Pet. i. 22. 2 Pet. i. 5—8.
x 6 ix. 14. Eph. iv 29. 2 Tim. ii. 1 Heb. xii. 28 2 Pet. iii. 18.
y 10 ix. 7. 1 Cor. vii. 6. 12. 25.
z 1—3. ix. 2. Rom. xi. 12—14. Heb x. 24.
a 24. vi. 6. Josh. xxiv. 14. Ez. xxxiii. 31. Rom. xii. 9. Eph. iv. 15. *Marg* vi. 24. Jam. ii. 14—16. 1 Pet. i. 22. 1 John iii. 17—19.
b xiii. 14. John i. 14 17. Rom. v. 8. 20, 21. 1 Cor i. 4. Eph. i. 6—8. ii. 7 iii. 8. 19.
c Ps cii 25—27. John i 1—4. 10. xvi. 15. 1 Cor. xv 47. Phil. ii. 6. Col. i 16, 17. Heb. i. 2 6—14 ——d Is. lxii 1. lxv 8. John xii. 30. xvii. 19 Col. i 24.——e Is. liii. 2. Matt. viii 20. xvii. 27. xx. 28 Mark vi. 3. Luke ii. 7. viii. 3. ix. 58. Phil. i. 7, 8
f vi. 10 Luke xvi 11 Rom. viii 32. xi. 12. 1 Cor iii. 21, 22. Eph. iii. 8. 1 Tim. vi. 18. Jam. ii 5. Rev. xxi. 7.

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prompt and circumspect obedience, and rejoice to have confidence in them in all things.

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1—5. The mention which the apostle had made, of his confidence in the Corinthians, gave him an occasion of introducing the subject of the collection which he was making for the Christians in Judea, which takes up this and the following chapter. With great delicacy and propriety he brought this forward by *informing* them, as an article of interesting intelligence, concerning the admirable conduct of the churches at Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea in Macedonia. In extolling the generosity of the Christians in these cities, he gave the glory "to the grace of God bestowed upon "them;" the cause being thus manifested by the effect. Though they had been tried with great afflictions and persecutions, by which they had been greatly impoverished, yet the abundance of their joy in the Lord and his salvation had so enlarged their hearts to love of him, and his poor disciples whom they had not seen, that a large collection had been made among them, and their deep poverty had illustrated the riches of their liberality. So that the apostle testified in their behalf, that they were willing of themselves, not only do as much as was in their power, and even more than could have been expected from them, but that their inclinations were larger than their ability, and they would gladly have done more, had they been able; and instead of needing to be solicited, they had entreated him to accept of their subscriptions, and to take a part in the charge of conveying them to Jerusalem, and applying them to the intended purposes. In all this they had exceeded his most sanguine hopes concerning them; for they first devoted themselves to the Lord Jesus as his redeemed and "peculiar people, zealous of good works;" and then they gave themselves up to the apostle and his fellow-labourers, to be directed by them in doing the will of God according to his appointment, and in improving their talents to his glory. The word rendered *grace*, is, no doubt, sometimes translated *gift*; but to interpret "the "grace of God towards the churches," &c. to signify the large subscription for the poor Christians in Judea, as some learned men do, is wholly unprecedented; and the obvious meaning, viz. that their bounty to their poor brethren was the effect of the special grace of God conferred on them, agrees far better with the simple and reasonable language of Scripture on these subjects. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6—9. If the poor and persecuted Macedonians had exceeded all expectation in the riches of their liberality, the prosperous and affluent Corinthians would doubtless fully answer the apostle's hopes of them. When Titus had before been at Corinth, he had begun this good work among them; and Paul had therefore desired him to go again and complete it. By "this grace also" most expositors understand the benefaction itself, and indeed the word may signify the *free gift* of man, as well as that of God; yet it seems more consonant to the apostle's language, to explain it of the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit on their hearts, than of the gift itself, or *their act of grace* towards their brethren. As, however, the Corinthians abounded in all spiritual gifts, and in various Christian graces, they would doubtless "abound in this grace "also," and exceed other churches as much in the largeness of their contributions, as they did in affluence, or in faith, knowledge, utterance, and spiritual gifts. He did not speak this as a *commandment* how much they ought to give; but from the forwardness of their poorer brethren, he took occasion to make trial of their sincerity, in that love which they professed to Christ and his people, which would, he trusted, be satisfactorily demonstrated. For he was persuaded that they were spiritually and experimentally acquainted with the astonishing *grace* and love of Christ to sinners, "that though he was rich" in all the glory, authority, sufficiency, and felicity of the God-

10 And herein [g] I give *my* advice; for this is [h] expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also [i] to be * forward a year ago.

11 Now therefore perform the doing *of it;* that as *there was* a readiness to will, so *there may be* a performance also out of that which ye have.

12 For [k] if there be first a willing mind, *it is* accepted according to that a man hath, *and* not according to that he hath not.

13 For *I mean* [l] not that other men be eased, and you burdened:

14 But by an equality, *that* now at this time your abundance *may be a supply* for their want, that their abundance also may be *a supply* for your want, that there may be equality;

15 As it is written, [m] He that *had gathered* much had nothing over; and he that *had gathered* little had no lack.

[g] 1 Cor. vii. 25. 40.
[h] xii 1 Prov xix. 17. John xi. 50. xvi. 7. xviii. 14. 1 Cor vi 12. x. 23 Phil iv. 17 1 Tim vi. 18, 19. Heb. xiii. 16.
[i] 8. ix. 2
* Gr *willing.* *See on,* 3.
[k] ix. 7. Ex. xxv. 2 xxxv. 5. 21, 22. 29 1 Chr. xxix 3—18. 2 Chr. vi 8. Prov xix. 22. Mark xii. 42—44 xiv. 7, 8 Luke vii. 44—46 xii. 47, 48. xvi. 10. xxi. 1—4. 1 Pet iv. 10.
[l] Acts iv. 34. Rom xv. 26, 27.
[m] Ex. xvi 18. Luke xxii. 35.

16 But [n] thanks *be* to God, which put the same [o] earnest care into the heart of Titus for you.

17 For indeed he [p] accepted the exhortation; [q] but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you.

18 And we have sent with him [r] the brother, whose praise *is* in the Gospel [s] throughout all the churches;

19 And not *that* only, [t] but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this † grace, which is administered by us, [u] to the glory of the same Lord, and *declaration of* your ready mind:

20 Avoiding this, [x] that no man should blame us in this abundance, which is administered by us:

21 Providing [y] for honest things, [z] not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

22 And we have sent with them our brother, [a] whom we have oftentimes

[n] Ezra vii. 27. Neh. ii. 12. Jer. xxxi 33 xxxii. 40. Col. iii. 17. Rev. xvii. 17.
[o] vii. 7. 12. Phil. ii. 20.
[p] 6 Heb xiii. 22.
[q] *See on,* 8 10.
[r] 19. 22, 23. xii. 18.
[s] Rom xvi 4.
[t] 1—4. Acts vi. 3—6 xv. 22. 25. 1 Cor. xvi. 3, 4.
† Or, *gift. See on,* 6. ix. 8.
[u] 1, 2 iv. 15. ix. 12—14 Phil. iv. 18, 19. 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11.
[x] xi. 12. Matt. x. 16. Rom. xiv. 16. 1 Cor. xvi. 3. Eph v 15. 1 Thes. v 22.
[y] Rom xii. 17. Phil iv. 8. 1 Tim. v. 14 Tit. ii. 5. 8. 1 Pet. ii. 12
[z] ii. 17. v. 9—11. Matt v. 16. vi. 1 4. xxiii. 5 1 Thes v 22.
[a] Phil. ii. 20—22.

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head; yet "for their sakes," who were in themselves poor, guilty, polluted, and perishing sinners, "he had become poor," by assuming human nature, being born of a poor virgin, in a stable; living in poverty and affliction for many years on earth; and at length entirely impoverishing himself, as it were, to ransom their souls by his sacrifice on the cross. All this he submitted to most freely, in unspeakable compassion and condescension, that they by his poverty might be made rich with all the blessings of salvation; the mighty debt of sin having been thus discharged, and the forfeited inheritance of eternal life redeemed, with all things pertaining to their everlasting glory and felicity; and surely they could want no other argument to prevail with them to part largely and freely with their riches, for the relief and support of his poor brethren! In the judgment of the apostle, *Jesus was rich before he was poor;* and that it was voluntarily and graciously that he became poor for our sakes, &c.; but he was born in a stable, and educated in poverty; he was poor all his life, and had not where to lay his head, and only became rich after his death; and therefore if he was no more than a man, he certainly *was poor before he was rich, not rich before he was poor.*

V. 10—15. In respect of this service, to which the Corinthians would, as it must be supposed, feel themselves constrained by the love of Christ, the apostle only interposed with his advice; for it would be expedient for them, and consistent with their profession and character, to abound in this grace also, and evidently to copy that love by which they were saved; especially as they had begun a year before, not only to deposit money for this use, but to enter upon the service with a willing, earnest, and fervent mind. It behooved them therefore to make no hesitation about performing it, that their actions might coincide with the promptitude of their former determinations. In doing this, let every one of them proportion his contribution to his circumstances, for a small sum would be equally acceptable from a poorer person, as a larger from his more wealthy brother; and indeed, in every case, where a willing mind, to honour and obey Christ from humble love to him, was the principle of a man's actions, his services would meet with a gracious acceptance, nor would more be expected from him than he was enabled to do. To express and evidence this willing mind, the proportion, before recommended, would be necessary; yet it would not be proper to urge any man to exceed what he was thus disposed to give, lest, in vying with his brethren, he should intrench upon other duties. Nor did the apostle mean to relieve the poor Christians in Judea by burdening the Corinthians; or even to exact from them, and exempt other churches, so as to give rest to the one, and affliction to the other. He only desired that some measure of equality might be preserved among brethren in Christ: and that, in order to this, the Corinthians should on the present occasion communicate from their abundance, to relieve the necessities of their poor brethren in Judea: and then, if a reverse of condition should take place, through persecutions or other calamities, either to individuals or the collective body, the abundance of the Jewish converts, or of other churches, might be a fund for the supply of their necessities. Thus one might help another after an equal manner, according as it was written concerning the Israelites respecting the manna, which, though collected in different quantities, being thus properly dispensed, was all used, without the redundance being wasted, or any of the congregation left destitute of a sufficient supply. (*Notes, Ex.* xvi.) 'So far Christianity seems to require this equality, as that we should not 'suffer others to lack the necessaries of this present life, 'while we abound in them.' (*Whitby.*)

proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which * *I have* in you.

23 Whether *any do inquire* of [b] Titus, *he* [c] *is* my partner [d] and fellow-helper concerning you: or our brethren *be inquired of, they are* [e] the messengers of the churches, *and* the glory of Christ.

24 Wherefore, [f] shew ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf.

* Or, he hath.
b 6. 16 vii. 6. xii. 18.
c Luke v. 7 10. Philem. 17.
d Phil. ii 25 iv. 3 Col i. 7. 1 Thes. iii 2. Philem. 1. 24. 3 John 8.
e 19. Phil. ii. 25. Gr.
f 8. vii. 14. ix. 2—4.

V. 16—24. The cordiality and diligence of Titus, in his attention to the Corinthians, as well as his zeal for the good work in hand, were put into his heart by the Lord; and the apostle heartily thanked him for this interposition in his favour. For Titus not only complied with his exhortation to return to Corinth, from regard to his authority, but he was more prompt and willing for that service, than to need solicitation. The brother, that was sent with him, is generally supposed to have been Luke, whose praise was in all the churches, on account of the Gospel which he had written. This, however, is on many accounts uncertain: but this brother had been chosen by the churches of Macedonia to travel with the apostle, as their messenger to Jerusalem, with the contributions raised by them; which they were to dispose of, (as the deacons did the donations of their several churches,) to the glory of Christ, the one Lord both of the Jewish and Gentile converts; as the evidence of their ready mind to such good works; and to cultivate love with their Jewish brethren by reciprocal kindness. This the apostle had proposed and accomplished, that he might avoid all censure and suspicion of injustice or partiality, in the disposal of those large sums of money which had been raised: and that he might, by a prudent foresight, take care that his whole conduct should appear honourable, consistent, and unexceptionable in the sight of men; as well as that it should really be so in the sight of God. With Titus and the brother before mentioned, he had also sent another of his brethren, whom he had frequently found diligent in other services; but he expected extraordinary diligence from him on this occasion, as he was animated by the confidence in them which the apostle had expressed. Some think that Apollos is meant; but this is not probable, for he wanted no recommendations to the Corinthians: indeed curiosity, rather than edification, is concerned in determining such questions. If, however, any of them inquired who Titus was, that he should take the lead in this business; (as the apostle's adversaries would be likely to do;) let them be answered, that he was the partner of the apostle in the sacred ministry, who cordially united with him in all his designs, and who was particularly helpful to him in the affairs of Corinth. If the other brethren were inquired of, let it be said, that they were the chosen messengers of the Macedonian churches, whose characters, zeal, and conduct, in that important service, made them an honour to the Gospel, and greatly instrumental in manifesting the glory of Christ. It therefore was proper that the Corinthians should show, in their liberality on the present occasion, before these excellent persons, and the churches whom they represented, the proof of their love to Christ; and that they deserved those warm commendations which the apostle had bestowed on them. (*Notes, Acts* vi. 1—6.) It may here again be observed, that there is not the least reason to doubt, that the messengers, intrusted with the contributions of the Christians for their Jewish brethren, were *chosen by the suffrage of the churches:* how then is it that so little satisfactory Scriptural proof can be adduced, that the spiritual pastors were elected in the same manner? 'It would have been a most ready calumny against Paul, 'to have said that he greatly desired the care of these 'contributions, that he might sacrilegiously convert the 'consecrated money to his own use, had he not by every 'means guarded against it. But who, during these thousand years, and more, has followed this truly apostolical 'example?' (*Beza.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

By ascribing all good works to the grace of God, we not only give the glory to him, whose due it is, but we also show men where their strength lies, and enable humble believers to read the Lord's special love to them, in the fruits of their love to him and to his people. Abundant spiritual joy not only supports the soul under great trials of affliction, but it enlarges the heart in the work and labour of love; so that the depth of poverty, in joyful Christians, only serves to render more admirable the riches of their liberality; for they will do more than could have been conceived in their power, and will manifest a still more enlarged good will. How different is this from the conduct of those, who will not concur in any expensive good work, except their reluctance is overcome by importunity, as uneasy to themselves, as to those who solicit them! The happy frame of mind before described must spring from an unreserved surrender of ourselves to the Lord, that we may henceforth live to his glory, as well as partake of his salvation; and then giving up ourselves to the counsels of his faithful ministers, as far as we are satisfied that they instruct us by the will of God. Remarkable examples of piety and charity should be brought forward, in order to excite others to a holy emulation, especially when their inferiority in outward things renders them less likely to be observed: and such instances will commonly be found very efficacious to this end, among those who are partakers of divine grace. They whom God hath employed to begin, will commonly best carry on and finish, his work of grace *in* his people. They who abound in faith, knowledge, utterance, fervent affections, and attachment to pious ministers, should be exhorted to abound proportionably in liberality to their poor brethren. And occasion should be taken from the forwardness of some, to excite others to show the *sincerity* of their love; for nothing can evince this, except the fruits of love, in good works to Christians for the Lord's sake. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ was not declared in kind words only; but, "though he was rich, yet for our

CHAP. IX.

The apostle assigns his reasons for sending the brethren before-hand, to make up the collections of the Corinthians, notwithstanding his confidence in them, 1—5. *He encourages their cheerful liberality; under the figure of sowing seed, from which they might expect that God would give them an abundant increase, to enable them to sow still more abundantly to his glory,* 6—11: *for such services not only supply the wants of the saints, but excite them to abundant thanksgivings to God, and fervent love to their benefactors, and prayers for them,* 11—14. *He concludes the subject by thanking God for his unspeakable gift,* 15.

FOR as [a] touching [b] the ministering to the saints, [c] it is superfluous for me to write to you:

2 For I know [d] the forwardness of

a Gen xxvii. 42. 1 Sam xx 23. 2 Kings xxii 18. Job xxxvii. 23. Ps xlv 1. Mat. xxii. 31. Rom. xi. 28. Phil. iii. 5, 6.

b 12—14. See on viii. 4. Gal. vi. 10

c 1 Thes. iv. 9, 10 v. 1. 1 John ii 27.

d viii. 8. 10 19. 1 Thes. i. 7, 8.

"sakes he became poor; that we through his poverty "might be rich:" and they who truly know and experience the happy effects of his grace, will show their love to him and his people by good works, and not merely by a cheap profession. But, alas, we may easily estimate the degree in which most of us know the grace of Christ, by considering how small a proportion of our superfluities we retrench, and how little we deny ourselves, forego the prospect of wealth, endure inconveniences, and stoop to men of low estate, from love to his name! Doubtless this is the proper standard of our spiritual knowledge of Christ. In proportion to our views of his glory, we shall bear his image: and if this change were more fully effected, we should embrace poverty, endure hardship, and even lay down our lives, for the good of his people, when properly called to it: and at last we should deem all this as nothing, when compared with our obligations to his infinite love.

V. 10—15.

We may not enjoin the proportion, in which Christians should communicate to the relief of the necessitous; yet we may advise them concerning what is becoming, and consistent with their ability, profession, and hopeful beginnings, that their readiness to *will* may be manifested by the performance of it. But while the wealthy must be charged to be ready to communicate, the poorer should be encouraged to contribute their help also; yet without being urged to what may distress them: for if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted. This is indeed a universal rule: the sinner's willingness to repent, to believe in Christ, to love and obey him, and to do good to others for his sake, springs from divine grace: without this, all external services must be ostentatious and hypocritical; but where this is *first* produced, the *defective* attempts of the believer to glorify God will be accepted and graciously rewarded, though in strict justice they merit condemnation. We should be careful to act impartially in promoting works of charity: one should not be burdened to ease another, but equality and reciprocal help should be aimed at. Even among the poor people, in any parish or congregation, the most distressed may be relieved by such as are less straitened, with what they can at present spare; and when they in their turn come to be straitened, their brethren may concur to help them. Thus mutual love will be cemented, and prayers and thanksgivings for each other will be multiplied; and though none may have any thing superfluous, yet absolute want may commonly be excluded. But upon a larger scale, and where more wealthy persons are concerned, greater effects may be produced: and the most prosperous may be exhorted to liberality, from the consideration of the vicissitude in human affairs: nor can riches be secured so effectually for the benefit of the possessor, as by thus lending them to the Lord.

V. 16—24.

We should love those who have an earnest care for the welfare of the church, and we ought to be thankful to our benefactors: but the Lord, who put it into their hearts, should be first acknowledged and adored. It is becoming, to show a readiness for difficult and laborious services, and even to render exhortations superfluous by a willing mind: and it is proper to commend what is good in the most candid manner; for this is often the best method of exciting men to redoubled diligence. All our good works should be referred to the glory of the Lord, and be considered as the evidences of our ready mind to his service. Whatever disputes may have arisen about the appointment of rulers and officers in the church, it seems indisputable, that men should choose the persons, who are to manage their charitable contributions; though they may be *counselled* to select those whose praise is in all the churches. When ministers are in any way intrusted with large sums of money, they should be peculiarly careful to avoid all occasion of suspicion, or appearance of evil. It is indeed in the first place necessary to act uprightly in the sight of God, but things honest in the sight of men ought also to be circumspectly provided for. The world is full of selfishness, and enmity to true religion; and suspicions and slanders will be unavoidable, without great prudence, as well as exact conscientiousness: whereas a clear character, as well as a pure conscience, is requisite to usefulness. When approved, diligent, and faithful men are employed, in services evidently conducive to the benefit of mankind, and the glory of God, they are not only honoured by their brethren, but their character, conduct, and usefulness, is "the glory of Christ," and his Gospel is recommended by them. It therefore behooves Christians, among whom they labour, to respect them, and to show, before them and the churches of Christ, the proof of their love, and of the expectations which have been raised concerning them.

your mind, for which [e] I boast of you to them of Macedonia, [f] that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath [g] provoked very many.

3 Yet [h] have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, [i] ye may be ready:

4 Lest haply if [k] they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not ye) should [l] be ashamed in this same confident boasting.

5 Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, [m] and make up beforehand your * bounty, † whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as *a matter of* bounty, and not as *of* covetousness.

6 But [n] this *I say*, [o] he which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully.

7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, *so let him give;* [p] not grudgingly, or of necessity; for [q] God loveth a cheerful giver.

e viii 24.
f i 1. viii. 10. 1 Cor. xvi. 15.
g viii. 8. Heb. x. 24.
h 4. vii. 14 viii. 17–24.
i 5. 1 Cor xvi. 1. &c. Tit. iii 1.
k 2 viii. 1—5.
l xi 17.
m viii. 6. 1 Cor. xvi. 2
* Gr *blessing.* Gen. xxxiii. 11. 1 Sam xxv. 27. xxx. 26. *Marg.* 2 Kings v. 15
† Or, *which hath been so much spoken of before.*
n 1 Cor. i. 12 vii. 29. xv. 59. Gal. iii. 17. v. 16. Eph. iv. 17. Col. ii. 4.
o 10. Prov xi. 18. 24, 25 xix. 17. xxii. 9 Ec. xi. 1. 6. Luke vi. 38. xix. 16—26. Gal vi. 7—9. Heb. vi. 10.
p Deut xv. 7—11. 14. Prov. xxiii. 6—8. Is xxxii. 5 8. Jam. v. 9. 1 Pet iv. 9 ——q viii. 12. Ex. xxv. 2. xxxv. 5. 1 Chr. xxix. 17. Prov. xxii. 9 Acts xx. 35. Rom. xii. 8.

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1—5. Beza explains the "ministering to the saints," not of the money contributed, but of the office and duty of those persons, who were chosen to take charge of it, and the care of the Corinthians in selecting them: but the context does not seem to favour this interpretation; at least as *exclusive*. The whole transaction, from the first thought and proposal of thus relieving the poor Christians in Judea, to the completion of the design, in the distribution of the money among them, by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, may be included in this general term. (*Marg. Ref.* viii. 4.) The apostle, however, deemed it superfluous for him to write particularly on the duty and benefits of ministering to the necessities of the saints; as he took it for granted, that the Corinthians were well instructed in this respect, and even taught by God himself, thus to show love to their brethren. He also knew that they were forward to concur in the present good work; and accordingly he had spoken of them with confidence to the Macedonians, declaring that the Christians in Achaia, (of which Corinth was the capital city,) had been ready with their subscriptions a year before; and their zeal in so good a cause had quickened and excited many, who were before remiss. Yet he had sent Titus and the other brethren to complete the design, lest his boasting of their readiness should be in vain in that respect; for though he did not doubt but they would contribute, yet he feared lest they should not be ready when he came. And in that case the Macedonians, who accompanied him, would witness this circumstance; which would put him to shame for having boasted so confidently of them; and also tend to their disgrace, for having disappointed the expectations which had been formed respecting them. He had therefore judged it needful to desire the brethren to go before him to, make up their contributions, *of which mention had been made before*, both to them and the Macedonians; that it might evidently appear to be *a bounty*, or benefaction willingly bestowed, and not money extorted from them by importunity. 'The apostle calls that *covetousness*, which is 'done sordidly, and as extorted from a covetous person.' (*Beza.*) 'To give alms out of shame, or to satisfy the 'importunity of others, rather than out of love and good-'will, is a symptom of a covetous temper.' (*Whitby.*) The word, rendered *bounty*, signifies *a blessing;* which may either intimate that it should be given as an expression of gratitude to God, and as an act of praise and thanksgiving to him; or that it should spring from love, and a disposition to bless and do good to their brethren. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6, 7. The apostle would not prescribe the proportion, which every one ought to give; nor would he write as one that aimed to extort money from them; but this he said, that God would measure to them, according to the measure which they used towards their poor brethren. The seed-corn seems thrown away, yet this alone yields any increase: the prudent husbandman will not therefore sow sparingly, for he knows that in that case he must expect to reap sparingly; but, when the ground is well prepared, it may be expected, that if he sows liberally, he will receive a proportionable increase. Thus, money given in charity seems, to unbelief and selfishness, finally thrown away; but in fact, when given from proper principles, it is seed sown, and the only part of a man's substance, from which a valuable increase can be expected. God in his providence will often frown upon the undertakings of him who gives sparingly, and, by concurring causes, keep him poor; the evidence of his conversion must be proportionably dubious. If a real Christian, his consolations will be scanty, according to his penurious conduct towards his brethren; and his final recompense will be proportioned to the small measure of his present fruitfulness. But he who sows plentifully, from gratitude to God, and love to man, will in every sense reap a plentiful and bountiful increase. (*Notes, Is.* lviii. 7—12.) The word rendered *bountifully*, is, literally, *with blessings.* (*Note*, 1—5.) Let then every one determine for himself how much he would spare from other expenses, or deduct from his accumulated treasure, to sow in this fertile field, from which the word of God ensured so large an increase; and let no man do it grudgingly or of necessity, merely to keep up his character, or through the importunity of ministers; for God loved the willing cheerful giver, and no other; as this was the effect and evidence of his grace, and so well-pleasing to him through Jesus Christ. 'Two things are 'excluded by the apostle, namely, *grief* and *necessity*,' (*Gr.*) 'when, for instance, any person gives indeed, but 'with a grudging and illiberal mind, or even unwillingly, 'because he would not be evil spoken of among others; 'else he would not give at all.' (*Beza.*)

8 And [r] God *is* able to make [s] all grace abound toward you; that ye, [t] always having all sufficiency in all *things*, [u] may abound to every good work:

9 (As it is written, [x] he hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: [y] his righteousness remaineth for ever.

10 Now [z] he that ministereth seed to the sower, both minister bread for *your* food, and [a] multiply your seed sown, [b] and increase the fruits of your righteousness:)

11 Being [c] enriched in every thing to all * bountifulness, [d] which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.

12 For [e] the administration of this service, not [f] only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;

13 Whiles by the experiment of this ministration, [g] they glorify God for your [h] professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, [i] and for *your* liberal distribution unto them, and unto all *men*;

14 And [k] by their prayer for you, which [l] long after you for [m] the exceeding grace of God in you.

15 [n] Thanks *be* unto God for [o] his unspeakable gift.

r 2Chr xxv. 9. Ps. lxxxiv 11. Prov iii. 9, 10. x 22 xxviii. 27 Hag. ii. 8. Mal iii 10. Phil. iv. 18, 19
s viii. 19. 1 Pet iv 10
t 11. 1 Chr. xxix. 12—14.
u viii 2 7 Acts ix. 36. 1 Cor. xv. 58. Eph. ii 10. Col i 10. 2 Thes. ii. 17 2 Tim. iii 17. Tit. ii. 14. iii. 8 14.
x *See on*, Ps cxii. 9.
y Ps. cxii 3 Prov. viii. 18. xxi 21. Is. li 8. 1 Cor. xiii. 13. Gal v. 5, 6.
z Gen i 11, 12. xlvii. 19 23, 24. Is. lv. 10.
a 6. Prov. xi. 18. Ec. xi. 6. Phil. iv 17.
b Hos. x. 12. Eph v 9. Phil. i. 11. 1 Thes. iii. 12. iv. 10.——c viii. 2, 3. 1 Chr xxix. 12—14. 2 Chr. xxxi. 10. Prov. iii. 9, 10. Mal. iii. 10, 11. 1 Tim vi. 17, 18.——* Or, *liberality* Gr. *simplicity*. viii. 2. *Gr.* Rom. xii. 8.——d 12. i. 11. iv. 15. viii. 16. 19.
e *See on*, 1 viii 4.
f viii. 14, 15. Phil. ii. 25. iv. 18, 19. Philem. i. 7. Jam ii. 14–16. 1 John iii 17, 18.
g Ps. l. 23. Matt. v. 16. John xv. 8. Acts iv. 21. xi. 18. xxi. 19, 20. Gal. i 24. 1 Pet. ii. 9. iv. 11.
h x. 5. Luke vi. 46. Rom. x. 16. xvi. 26. Heb. v 9.
i Heb xiii. 16.
k i. 11 Ezra vi. 8—10. Ps xli 1, 2. Prov. xi. 26. Luke xvi. 9. Phil. iv. 18, 19. 2 Tim. i 16—18.
l 2 Sam xiii. 39. Rom. i 11. Phil. i 8. ii 26 iv. 1.
m viii. 1, 6, 7. 1 Cor. i. 4, 5. 1 Tim i. 14.
n 11. ii. 15. 1 Chr. xvi. 8. 35. Ps. xxx 4. 12. xcii. 1. Luke ii. 14. 38. 1 Cor. xv 57. Eph. v. 20 Rev. iv. 9.——o Is. ix 6 xlix. 6. John i. 16. iii. 16. Rom. vi. 23 viii. 32. 1 John iv. 9, 10. v. 11, 12.

V. 8—11. The Lord would, without fail, in one way or other, make up to the givers what they expended in this good work; for he was able to make *every gift of his free favour* to abound to them; that so, having a sufficiency of all things desirable for themselves and families, and being enlarged in faith and love, they might have both a willing mind, and ability, for every good work. Thus the character and blessedness mentioned by the Psalmist would be verified in them, (*Note, Ps.* cxii. 9.) and their acts of kindness to the poor, from love to Christ, would be accepted works of righteousness, of which the benefit would remain with them for ever. The apostle therefore besought God, who, in his providence, both supplied the husbandman with seed, and mankind in general with food, from the increase of the field, that he would both provide for their wants in proportion to their seed sown in acts of charity; multiply to them the ability of sowing more in the same manner; accompany it with a larger blessing to others; cause them to abound more and more in the fruits of righteousness; and give them an increase of comfort in their own souls. That so, being enriched in every respect, they might be enabled to all bountifulness, which would occasion many to thank God on their behalf; and the apostle would then rejoice to be the instrument and means of such an honourable and beneficial work. The tenth verse may be thus literally translated: "May he, "who supplieth seed to the sower, and bread for food, "supply and multiply your seed, and increase the produc"tions of your righteousness." The sense is thus rendered more obvious, but it is not materially altered. The word rendered "seed sown," more properly signifies *seed for sowing*.

V. 12—15. The proper management of the service which was spoken of, by the liberal contribution of believers towards it, and the faithful and prudent application of the sums thus raised, would not only relieve the necessities of the poor saints in Judea, to whose comfort they ought gladly to communicate, but it would also produce abundance of thanksgivings to God, both for the seasonable supply given them, and for his grace bestowed on the Gentile converts. For thus experiencing their brotherly love, they would praise and glorify God for bringing them to act so consistently with their professed subjection to the Gospel of Christ; and for exciting them to so liberal a distribution to their brethren there and elsewhere. At the same time, they would glorify God by their fervent prayers in their behalf, as they would very much long to be acquainted with them, because of their love to them, and admiration of the exceeding grace of God, by which so happy a change had been effected in their character and conduct. This last consideration caused the apostle to break out in thanks to God for the unspeakable grace of the Gospel, and the gift of his Son to be the Saviour of sinners; by whom idolatrous Gentiles had been thus brought to glorify him; a foundation had been laid for the mutual love of Jews and Gentiles, as members of one Church, and children of one family; and the most effectual motives, encouragements, and example, had been afforded, to excite men to love and good works. 'The admirable 'charity, by which God is so much glorified, the Gospel 'receives such credit, others are so much benefited, and 'you will be so plentifully by God rewarded.' (*Whitby.*) 'If we understand it in this sense, it will be as remark'able a text as most in the Bible, to show that *every* good 'affection in the human heart is to be ascribed to a divine 'influence. But I am ready to think the apostle's mind, 'to which the idea of the invaluable gift of Christ was so 'familiar, rather, by a strong and natural transition, glan'ced on that.' (*Doddridge.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

◆

The duty of ministering to the saints is so obvious, that it might be deemed superfluous to exhort Christians to it; yet they are so apt to forget their principles and obligations, and the remains of unbelief and carnal self-love are so powerful against the constraining love of Christ in their hearts, that it is in general necessary "to stir up "their minds by way of remembrance." This is often done most effectually, by expressing a favourable opinion of them, and high expectations from them; by commending the forwardness which they have shown on former

CHAP. X.

The apostle intreats the Corinthians not to leave him any cause, to exert that spiritual power, with which he was armed and which he was ready to use against those who despised his person and ministry, 1—6; *assuring them, that when he came, he would be found as mighty in deeds, as he was in writing when absent,* 7—11: *and contrasting his own conduct, with the ostentatious boastings and ambitious intrusions, of the false teachers,* 12—18.

NOW [a] I Paul myself [b] beseech you, [c] by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in * presence *am* [d] base among you, but being absent, [e] am bold toward you:

2 But I beseech *you,* [f] that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which † think of us as if [g] we walked according to the flesh.

3 For though [h] we walk in the flesh, [i] we do not war after the flesh:

4 (For [k] the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but [l] mighty ‡ through God [m] to the pulling down of strong holds;)

5 Casting [n] down § imaginations, [o] and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and [p] bringing into captivity [q] every thought to [r] the obedience of Christ:

a 1 Cor. xvi. 21, 22. Gal. v. 2. 2 Thes. iii. 17. Philem. 9. Rev. i. 9.
b 2 v. 20. vi. 1. Rom. xii. 1 Eph. iv. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 11.
c Ps. xlv. 4. Is. xlii. 3, 4. Zech. ix. 9. Matt. xi. 29. xii. 19, 20. xxi. 5. Acts viii. 32. 1 Pet. ii. 22, 23.
* Or *outward appearance.* 7. 10.
d xi. 30. xii. 7—9. xiii. 4. 1 Cor. ii. 3. iv. 10. Gal. iv. 13.
e iii. 12. *Marg.* vii. 4. xi. 21. xiii. 2, 3. Rom. x. 20. xv. 15.
f iv. 2. xii. 20. xiii. 2. 10 1 Cor. iv. 19—21
† Or, *reckon.*
g xi. 9—13. xii. 13—19. Rom. viii. 1. 5. Gal. v. 16—25. Eph. ii. 2, 3.
h Gal. ii. 20. 1 Pet. iv. 1, 2.
i 4. 1 Tim. i. 18. 2 Tim. ii. 3, 4. iv. 7. Heb. xii. 1.
k vi. 7. Rom. vi. 13 *Marg.* xiii. 12. Eph. vi. 13—18. 1 Thes. v. 8.
l iii. 5. iv. 7. xiii. 3, 4. Judg. vii. 13—23. xv. 14—16. 1 Sam. xvii. 45—50. Ps. cx. 2. Is. xli. 14—16. Zech. iv. 6, 7. 1 Cor. i. 18—24. ii. 5. Heb. xi. 32, 33.
‡ Or, *to God.*
m Josh. vi. 20. Is. xxx. 25. Jer. i. 10. Heb. xi. 30.——n Luke i. 51. Acts iv. 25, 26. Rom. i. 21. 1 Cor. i. 19, 27—29. iii. 19.——§ Or, *reasonings.*——o Ex. v. 2. ix. 16, 17. 2 Kings xix. 22. 28. Job xi. 11, 12. xlii. 6. Ps. x. 4. Is. ii. 11, 12. lx. 14. Dan. iv. 37. v. 23—30. Acts ix. 4—6. Phil. iii. 4—9. 2 Thes. ii. 4—8.——p Rom. vii. 23.——q Deut. xv. 9. Ps. cxxxix. 2. Prov. xv. 26. xxiv. 9. Is. lv. 7. lix. 7. Jer. iv. 14. Matt. xv. 19. Heb. iv. 12.——r Ps. xviii. 44. cx. 2, 3. Rom. i. 5. xvi. 26. Heb. v. 9. 1 Pet. i. 2. 14, 15. 22.

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occasions, and the happy effects of their zeal on the conduct of others; and when we have a good hope that the persons addressed are real believers, this will consist with godly sincerity, and may be considered as true wisdom.—It is very painful for ministers to be compelled to retract or excuse the commendations which their fervent love had bestowed on their people, and when other Christians witness in them a conduct inconsistent with such confident boastings. Men should be very careful not to shame or grieve in this manner their faithful pastors, as that will eventually tend to their own deeper disgrace. Many an intended good work has been neglected or rendered useless by delay: it is therefore proper to exhort men to be prompt in doing what they have shown a willingness to engage in. Works of piety and charity should flow spontaneously from the gratitude and benevolence of a believing heart; and not require extorting by importunity. This savours of covetousness, and it even puts those, who forward useful designs, to the painful necessity of labouring to draw money from those who ought to give, but are reluctant to part with it. Yet the main benefit of every act of charity for the Lord's sake will redound to the giver. He sows this good seed in a fruitful soil, and his bountifulness to man will assure him of the Lord's bountifulness to him. Whatever expenses therefore are retrenched, or from whatever fund it is deducted, we should not grudge or be sparing in this seed. It is spiritual policy for us to spend less on every kind of indulgence, and to lay by less for our families, that we may give more to the needy for Christ's sake; for this will be best secured and most productive. Even persons in moderate circumstances may sow much of this seed, if, by various little savings and self-denials, they will but study to spare something to relieve their distressed brethren; and this they will do, if their faith and love abound. With these truths before their eyes, men must be left to do, as they have purposed in their hearts; for they who give in a grudging manner, and of necessity, have little reason to expect the acceptance of God, who loveth a cheerful giver.

V. 8—15.

There are a few "who scatter, and yet increase;" but there are far more, even among those who are zealous for evangelical doctrines, "who withhold more than is meet, "and it tendeth to poverty;" for God is able to make all grace to abound to those whose hearts are enlarged with kindness to their brethren; and it should be remembered, that he gives us every thing far more *freely* than we can give alms to a poor beggar. If he sees it good for us, he can so prosper us, that, "having all sufficiency in all "things, we may abound unto every good work;" and they who, from love to him, "scatter abroad and give to "the poor," have "a righteousness that shall endure for "ever." He can easily give us enough to use, and enough to disperse, that we may have more, sow more, and reap more, and so "increase the fruits of our righteousness:" that, being enriched in every thing unto all bountifulness, we may be happy in ourselves, blessings to others, and instruments of promoting his glory. But, alas! the faithfulness of our God in this respect is little known among professed Christians, because so few fairly make the experiment. The Lord is pleased to try and purify many of his saints by poverty, and he proves others by employing them as his almoners. Their faithfulness and liberality in this service not only supply the wants of his saints, but abound in a large revenue of praise and thanksgiving to God: it evinces the sincerity of their own professed subjection to the Gospel; it stirs up many to pray for them and long after them, and to admire and glorify God for his exceeding grace in them. Thus they adorn the Gospel, animate the worship of believers, cement mutual love, and derive abundant blessings unto their own souls. While therefore we thank the Lord for the unspeakable gift of his Son to be our gracious Redeemer, through whom we poor sinners may perform such honourable and useful services, with assurance of acceptance and abundant recompense, let us endeavour to copy the example of Christ, by being unwearied in doing good, and deeming it "more blessed to give than to receive."

xiii. 2 10. Num. xvi. 25 — 30. Acts v. 4—11. xiii. 10, 11. 1 Cor iv 21. v. 3—5. 1 Tim. i. 20. 3 John 10. t ii. 9. vii. 15. u i. *Marg* v. 12 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Matt. xxiii. 5 Luke xvi. 15. John vii. 24 Rom. ii. 28, 29.——x 1 Cor. iii. 23. xiv. 37. xv. 23. Gal. iii. 29.

6 And having [s] in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, [t] when your obedience is fulfilled.

7 Do [u] ye look on things after the outward appearance? [x] If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that as he *is* Christ's, [y] even so *are* we Christ's.

8 For [z] though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, [a] I should not be ashamed:

y v. 12. xi. 4.23 xii 11. xiii. 3 Gal i. 11—13. ii. 5—9. 1 John iv. 6.
z i. 24 xiii. 8, 10. Gal. i. 1.
a vii. 14. xii. 6. 2 Tim. i. 12.

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1—6. Having concluded other subjects, the apostle here begins to speak more directly against the false teacher or teachers who opposed him at Corinth. Even he, Paul, whom they reviled and despised, as not daring to assert his authority among them, besought them, by the meekness and gentleness which Christ, though possessed of all power in heaven and earth, had exercised towards his enemies, and which he required of his people, not to compel him to adopt measures apparently of a contrary nature. Some indeed represented him as mean-spirited and abject, when present among them; for they disdained his lowly appearance, and humble, unassuming deportment: yet, being absent, he was bold towards them, and wrote as one who had resolved to vindicate and exert his apostolical authority. But before matters came to this extremity, he besought them, with all meekness and gentleness, not to constrain him to it, that he might not be bold among them, with that kind of confidence with which he was determined to proceed against certain persons, who suspected and accused him of conducting himself with carnal policy, and aiming at secular advantages in the execution of his sacred ministry. In this charge they included his fellow-labourers also, and by such misrepresentations they seduced the Corinthians from their attachment to him and them. But though he and his coadjutors were liable to the manifold infirmities incident to the present mortal life, and were not exempt from imperfections, as "walking in the flesh," living in the body, and not being yet perfected in holiness; yet they did not war against sin and Satan, or conflict with their numerous opposers, according to the maxims of carnal policy, with craft and dissimulation, in dependence on their own wisdom and strength, or with an aim at their own interest or honour. For the weapons, which they employed in this spiritual warfare, were not carnal, nor did they produce their effect by their own natural energy; but they were mighty through God, whose power wrought by them to demolish the strong-holds of Satan by which he had maintained his empire of darkness, idolatry, and wickedness, in the world. For the preaching of the Gospel, confirmed by miracles and accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit, pulled down these strong-holds, dispersed Satan's garrisons, delivered his captives and subverted his authority, by diffusing the knowledge of God, of his commandments, and of his salvation, among men. Thus the ministers of Christ went on, casting down men's vain imaginations, presumptuous speculations, and carnal reasonings; exposing the falsehood and folly of that proud philosophy which led to skepticism and atheism, as well as of those fables which supported the stupid idolatry of the populace, and showing also the worthlessness of pharisaical forms and duties, and of every scheme of religion which flattered men into a good opinion of themselves. So that their doctrine was rendered effectual to "cast down every high thing," every self confident notion, every proud objection or ambitious purpose, and all that self-sufficiency, impenitence, obstinacy in rebellion, unbelief, and independence of spirit, which exalted themselves in men's hearts against the humbling, holy knowledge, worship, and service of God, and enslaved men to idolatry, impiety, infidelity, and vice. When these were cast down, and a man was brought to "the light of the knowledge of the glory of "God, in the face of Jesus Christ," (*Notes*, &c. iv. 1—6.) and to the exercise of repentance and faith, he found every imagination, reasoning affection, and purpose of his heart, captivated by love to his divine Saviour; and being thus conquered by grace, and held captive by love, he became, by a sweet constraint, obedient to his teaching and command, and from his inmost soul he was thenceforth the willing subject of Christ, in all his ordinances and commandments. As no outward miracle could effect this change without new-creating grace, so we may be sure that the power of God *in the latter* was principally intended by the apostle, though many expositors almost wholly confine it to the former. Thus he and his fellow-soldiers waged war against their opposers. By faithful preaching, disinterested labours, patient sufferings, holy lives, and fervent prayers, they sought to change their enemies into friends to them and their divine Master; and thus they prevailed against Satan, to the subversion of his strong-holds and the revolt of his subjects. Yet the apostle had another weapon to use on some occasions, and this also was "mighty, through God," to avenge his despised authority on obstinate opposers. He meant, and was in readiness, by miraculous judgments, to avenge the cause of Christ on those disguised enemies, who persisted in their disobedience, as he had on Elymas and others: but he waited to bring back such as had been deluded by them to their former obedience, and to complete that work of love, before he proceeded to use severer methods. Many expositors seem to confine the interpretation of these verses almost entirely to the divine power, by which the apostles were enabled to confound all open opposers, as well as to inflict judgments on those professed Christians, who by their persevering misconduct exposed themselves to the censures of the Church. But it appears evident that "the "Gospel, as the power of God unto salvation," is primarily intended; and that the conversion of opponents, and the restoring of lapsed Christians to obedience, were the first objects aimed at; but when all proper means had failed in respect of the latter, then not so much the censures of the Church, as miraculous punishments denounced by apostolical authority, and made effectual by the power of God, were the weapons which must be had recourse to.

9 That I may not seem as if I would [b] terrify you by letters.

b 10. 1 Cor. iv. 5 19–21.

10 For *his* letters (* say they,) *are* weighty and powerful; [c] but *his* bodily presence *is* weak, [d] and *his* speech contemptible.

* Gr *saith he*, or, *saith one*. 11.
c 1. xii. 5–9. 1 Cor. ii. 3, 4. Gal. iv. 13, 14.
d xi 6. Ex. iv 10. Jer. i. 6. 1 Cor. i. 17. 21. ii. 1–4.

11 Let such an one think this, that such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, [e] such *will we be* also in deed when we are present.

e xii 20 xiii. 2, 3 10. 1 Cor. iv. 19, 20.

12 For [f] we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, † are not wise.

f iii. 1. v. 12 Job xii. 2. Prov xxv. 27. xxvii. 2. Luke xviii. 11. Rom. xv. 18.
† Or, *understand it not*.

13 But [g] we will not boast of things without *our* measure, but [h] according to the measure of the ‡ rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you.

g 15. Prov. xxv. 14.
h 14. Matt xxv. 15 Rom. xii. 6. xv 20. 1 Cor. xii. 11. Eph iv. 7 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11.
‡ Or, *line*. Ps. xix. 4. Is xxviii. 17 Rom. x. 18.

14 For [i] we stretch not ourselves beyond *our measure*, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in *preaching* [k] the gospel of Christ:

i iii. 1–3. Rom. xv. 18, 19. 1 Cor. iii. 10. iv. 15. ix. 1, 2.
k iv. 4. Mark i. 1. Acts xx. 24. Rom. i. 16. ii. 16. xvi. 25. Gal. i. 6–8. Col. i. 5. 1 Tim. i. 11.

15 Not [l] boasting of things without *our* measure, *that is*, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be § enlarged by you, according to our rule abundantly,

l See on, 13. Rom. xv. 20.
§ Or, *magnified in you*.

16 To [m] preach the gospel in the *regions* beyond you, *and* not to boast in another man's ‖ line of things made ready to our hand.

m Rom. xv. 24–28.
‖ Or, *rule*. 13.

V. 7—11. Some of the Corinthians had been seduced into an ill opinion of Paul, on account of his mean figure, indigent circumstances, and exterior disadvantages; but would they continue to regard such outward appearances, which had no connexion with real excellency? Or would they value men on account of external accomplishments, plausibility, and self-confidence? If any man, who opposed him, were ever so confident that he was a disciple and minister of Christ, yet let him reflect on the evidence which there was, that Paul and his brethren were so too; and then he would perceive, that he had no ground of self-preference, or encouragement to oppose them. St. Paul might indeed have boasted something further of his apostolical authority, which the Lord in his special favour had given him, for the edification of the Church and the salvation of souls, and not for their destruction; no doubt, this might be occasioned by it in some instances, though contrary to its genuine tendency and the use which he had made of it. Nor could this claim of pre-eminence have made him ashamed, as it was sufficiently authenticated by his miracles, conduct, and success in his ministry; and the effects of it might soon be felt by the refractory party at Corinth. Yet he did not choose this topic, or enlarge about his power to punish opposers, that he might not appear disposed to terrify them by his epistles. For some of them ventured to say, that his epistles were written with much apparent weight of argument and power of conviction, and contained the language of authority and firmness; but that his bodily presence was weak and feeble, and his elocution contemptible. It is recorded that the apostle was of low stature, crooked, and bald; some add, that he had an impediment in his speech, that his voice was shrill and unpleasant, and his delivery ungraceful. However this might be, his scrupulous rejection of the studied ornaments of the Grecian eloquence, and his plain, modest, and unaffected address, would render his speech contemptible with many persons, though his subject were ever so judiciously discussed, and his delivery every way suitable to the occasion; and the very meanness of his apparel would render his appearance despised by numbers. But he warned such as ventured to speak thus of him, to expect that he would act as decidedly when he arrived at Corinth as he now wrote, and that he would show them that he was able to assume a firmer tone, and act with more authority and sharpness, when he saw occasion.

V. 12—16. The favourers of the false teachers at Corinth might deem it presumption in Paul to rank himself with such wise, eminent, and eloquent men as they were; and he seems, in an ironical manner, to refer to this opinion. But he assured them, that he could not conscientiously copy their example of ostentatious boastings and self-commendations; for they, by measuring themselves, and their endowments and performances, with their own erroneous judgment of excellency, and with those of each other, and thus comparing themselves with such men as they were, without bringing their characters, gifts, and ministry, to the proper standard, plainly proved that they were defective in wisdom and self-knowledge, and far from the way of attaining them. But the apostle and his friends would not boast of their qualifications or services, in this vague and unmeasurable manner, but would speak of them, with reference to the true standard, even that rule or line, which marked out the services, to which the providence and commandment of the Lord had called them. This measure, as it respected Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, had reached even as far as Corinth. For he had not stretched himself beyond his commission, or left his work in other places, from haste to come to them, though not within the line of his duty, as the false teachers had done; but, proceeding regularly in his work of preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles, he had at length come to them, and had been the first that taught them the way of salvation. To this time, it appears, from the history, that Achaia was the boundary of the apostle's labours in Europe. He did not therefore boast of interfering with services which lay beyond the line of his present duty, or seek the credit of other men's labours, as their false teachers had done, by intruding among them and perverting them. On the other hand he hoped, when their faith

17 But [n] he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

18 For [o] not he that commendeth himself is [p] approved, [q] but whom the Lord commendeth.

n Ps. cv. 3. cvi. 5. Is. xli. 16. xlv. 25. lxv. 16. Jer. iv. 2. ix. 23, 24. Rom. v. 11. *Gr.* 1 Cor. i. 29. 31. Gal. vi. 13. 14. Phil. iii. 3. *Gr.* Jam. i. 9, 10. *Gr.*——o 12. iii. 1. v. 12. Prov. xxi. 2. Luke xvi. 15. xviii. 10—14.

p vi. 4. xiii. 7. Acts ii. 22. Rom. xiv. 18. xvi. 10. 1 Cor. xi. 19. 2 Tim. ii. 15.——q Matt. xxv. 20—23. John v. 42—44. xii. 43. Rom. ii. 29. 1 Cor. iv. 5. 1 Pet. i. 7.

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was increased even by means of these events, so that he could safely leave them to their ordinary teachers, that he should be so magnified and helped forward by them, as to proceed, with abundant success, to preach the Gospel in other parts of the Peloponnesus, or even in the more remote regions of Italy and Spain; according to his rule of labouring for the conversion of the Gentiles, without interfering with the duty marked out to other men, or boasting of things made ready to his hand, as if he had actually performed them. 'To the apostles God allotted the charge of converting the world, and endued them with gifts suited to the greatness of their work. To them therefore it belonged to form their converts into churches, and to appoint rules for their government. The province assigned to the evangelists, and other inferior ministers, was, to assist the apostles, to build upon the foundation laid by them, to labour in the Gospel under their direction, and in all things to consider themselves as subordinate to the apostles. According to this wiew of the matter, the false teacher at Corinth, who was but at best an inferior minister of the Gospel, had in many things acted out of the bounds in which he ought to have laboured.' (*Macknight.*)

V. 17, 18. 'If any teacher boast, let him boast of having performed his duty in the manner the Lord hath appointed.' (*Macknight.*) Surely, this is widely different from glorying in the Lord! (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Jer.* ix. 23, 24. 1 *Cor.* i. 26—31.) The apostle was constrained to speak of his own labours and success; but he must remind the Corinthians, that every man who gloried ought to glory in God as his Portion and in the Lord Jesus as his whole Salvation, and the Giver of all his hopes, grace, endowments, and usefulness, to whom all the honour of them was due. If a man could not thus glory in the Lord, all other glorying must be vain-glory, and end in shame and misery; for that man was not to be considered as approved, in respect of his profession or ministry, who could speak eloquently and plausibly in his own commendation; but he, to whose faithfulness the Lord himself bore testimony, and whose services he commended, by employing him as his instrument for good to many souls, and by giving him the gracious earnests of final acceptance and commendation. Most expositors suppose, that the *commendation*, here mentioned, was given when God enabled a man to work miracles, or exercise spiritual gifts; but many wrought miracles and prophesied, who were workers of iniquity, (*Notes, Matt.* vii. 21—23. 1 *Cor.* xiii. 1—3;) and it could not be properly said, that the Lord commended them. The evident usefulness of a minister's labours is a less equivocal testimony; yet the final account the "Well done, good and faithful servant," and the rejoicing in the testimony of conscience, in the mean while, seem especially intended. (*Note,* 1 *Cor.* iv. 5.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

They who meet with unjust and ungrateful usage from those to whom they are labouring to do good, should frequently meditate on the meekness and gentleness of Christ. As he was reviled and despised by those whom he came to save, none need wonder or be discouraged at meeting with a similar contradiction of sinners, in the same labour of love. They should endeavour to go on patiently and quietly, after his example, and to "overcome evil with good;" and even when constrained by duty to reprove and correct, or to exercise authority with firmness and sharpness, they should do it with reluctancy, show a desire to avoid the painful necessity, and manifest a loving and forgiving spirit, that all may see how dear the meekness and gentleness of Christ are to them. Ministers should be careful to avoid all appearance, and to obviate all suspicion, of walking according to the flesh; and they who falsely accuse them of so doing will expose themselves to the displeasure of God. Though encompassed with infirmities and temptations, and subject to manifold imperfections, the servants of Christ are engaged in a warfare which cannot be waged "after the flesh." Human wisdom, affected eloquence, dissimulation, compulsion, angry disputations, slanders, revilings, and ridicule, are carnal weapons; and however powerful they may seem, they will be found useless in this war, and tend rather to fortify and garrison Satan's strong-holds, than to pull them down. For success against the kingdom of darkness must be expected, "not from might, nor power, but from the Spirit of God." The appointed means, however feeble they appear to unbelief, will be "mighty through God:" by his command, the walls of Jericho fell down at the blast of the trumpets, far more speedily and entirely than any engines of war could have demolished them. (*Notes, Josh.* vi.) And the preaching of the cross, by men of faith and prayer, has always been most fatal to the strong-holds of idolatry, infidelity, impiety, and wickedness. Men may, if they can, give energy to means of their own inventing; but Satan derides their puny efforts, and takes them captive at his will. But God works by his own appointments; by his power the enemy is driven from his fortifications; men's imaginations are cast down, their reasonings and objections silenced, their pride abased, their illusions dissipated; the knowledge of God finds admission into the heart; reverential fear, repentance, humility, faith, love, and gratitude follow; and the whole soul, with all its faculties and operations, is at length captivated to the obedience of Christ. But while he thus makes "his people willing in the day of his power," and gradually perfects them in obedience and the beauties of holiness, he is in readiness to avenge the disobedience of the impenitent and unbelieving, especially that of hypocrites and false teachers, who corrupt the Church and dishonour his name.

V. 7—18.

It is peculiarly unsuitable to the character of Christians, though lamentably common, to judge of men, or look

CHAP. XI.

The apostle excuses himself as to his apparent self-commendation; because he did it out of godly jealousy over the Corinthians, whom he had espoused unto Christ; lest false teachers should pervert them, as Satan did Eve, 1—3. None of their new teachers preached another Saviour, or another Spirit, or another gospel, than he had done, 4. He was not at all inferior to the greatest apostles; for though rude in speech, he was not so in knowledge, 5, 6. He declined being chargeable to the Corinthians, and still would do so, not from want of love, but to counteract his opposers, 7—12; who were false apostles, ministers of Satan, though apparently ministers of righteousness; even as Satan transformed himself into an angel of light, 13—15. As many gloried, and were borne with, even while over-bearing, insolent, and rapacious; he would, though reluctantly, glory also, 16—20. Accordingly, he gives a most astonishing account of his labours, dangers, sufferings, and deliverances, 21—33.

[a] WOULD to God ye could [b] bear with me a little, [c] in *my* folly: and indeed [*] bear with me.

2 For I am [d] jealous over you with godly jealousy; for [e] I have espoused you to one husband, that [f] I may present *you as* [g] a chaste virgin to Christ.

3 But [h] I fear, lest by any means, [i] as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, [k] so your minds should be corrupted from [l] the simplicity that is in Christ.

4 For if he that cometh [m] preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or *if* ye [n] receive another Spirit, which ye have not received, or [o] another Gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear [†] with *him*.

5 For I suppose [p] I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles.

6 But though *I be* [q] rude in speech,

[a] Num. xi. 29. Josh. vii. 7. 2 Kings v. 3. Acts xxvi. 29. 1 Cor. iv. 8

[b] 4. Acts xviii. 14. Heb. v. 2.

[c] 16, 17. 19. 21. v. 13. xii. 11. 1 Cor. i. 21. iii. 18. iv. 10.

[*] Or, *ye do bear with me.*

[d] Gal iv. 11. 17—19 Phil. i. 8. 1 Thes ii. 11.

[e] Gen xxiv. 2—5. 58—67. Ps. xlv. 10, 11. Is. liv 5. lxii. 4, 5. Hos. ii 19, 20. John iii. 29. Rom. vii. 4. 1 Cor. iv. 15.

[f] Eph. v. 27. Col. i 28.

[g] Lev. xxi. 13—15. Ez. xliv 22.

[h] 29. xii. 20, 21. Ps. cxix. 53. Gal. i 6. iii. 1. iv. 11. Phil. iii. 18, 19.

[i] Gen iii. 4. 13. John viii. 44. 1 Tim. ii. 14. Rev. xii. 9. xx. 2.

[k] 13—15. ii 17. iv. 2. Matt. xxiv. 24. Acts xx. 30, 31. Gal. i. 6. ii. 4. iii. 1. Eph iv. 14 Col. ii. 4. 8. 18. 2 Thes ii. 3—11. 1 Tim. iv. 1—4. 2 Tim. iii. 1—9 13. iv. 3, 4. Tit. i. 10. 2 Pet ii. 1—14 iii 3. 17. 1 John ii. 18. iv. 1. Jude 4. Rev. xii. 9.

[l] i. 12. Rom xii. 8. xvi. 18, 19.

[m] Acts iv. 12. 1 Tim. ii. 5.

[n] 1 Cor. xii. 4—11. Gal. iii. 2. Eph. iv. 4, 5.

[o] Gal. i. 7, 8.

[†] Or, *with* me.

[p] xii. 11, 12. 1 Cor. xv. 10. Gal. ii 6—9.

[q] x. 10. 1 Cor. i. 17. 21. ii. 1—3.

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upon things after the outward appearance; as if learning, eloquence, affluence, a graceful person and address, or elegant attire, were evidences of a man's holiness and heavenly wisdom, or the seal of Christ to his ministerial character! Or as if the want of such embellishments proved a man not to be an eminent Christian, or an able, faithful minister of the lowly Saviour! Even Paul was base in the judgment of some self-sufficient and accomplished Corinthians; and though "his letters were weighty "and powerful, yet his bodily presence was weak, and "his speech contemptible;" so that Satan's emissaries far excelled him in these exterior recommendations. This should teach us not to judge of gold merely by its glitter, in which tinsel often exceeds it; but to bring it to the balance, and weigh it. When professors or preachers of the Gospel, are so confident that they belong to Christ, that they can hardly allow those who cannot coincide in their views, or approve their conduct, to be Christians, and when they treat the most approved characters with supercilious contempt and revilings, their very confidence should excite our suspicions, as it far more accords to that of "the deceitful workers" at Corinth, than to that of St. Paul and his fellow-labourers, which was modest, humble, and candid. The great apostle of the Gentiles, when constrained to mention the authority which the Lord had given him for edification, and not for destruction, and which he used in the most excellent manner, and with the most blessed success, spake of it with reserve, lest he should seem to boast or to threaten. Whereas some men seem out of their element, when they are not boasting of themselves, and menacing divine judgments on all who oppose them, as if they would terrify every one into silence and submission! Let us not dare to make ourselves of that number, or to compare ourselves with those who thus commend themselves: let us leave them to expose their own want of wisdom, humility, and charity, by measuring themselves by themselves, and all other men by their own standard; by boasting of themselves without measure or decency; by intruding into other men's labours, glorying in things made ready to their hands, and neglecting their own work, that they may spoil that of other men. But let us humbly compare ourselves with the word of God, and the example of prophets and apostles; let us measure ourselves by the rule of our duty, the obligations conferred upon us, and the work assigned us; let us be diligent, and "study to be quiet and mind our own busi"ness," though in an obscure situation; let us be thankful for success, according to the measure and rule which God hath distributed to us, whether called to preach the Gospel, or to serve Christ in any other way, without meddling in other men's labours, or boasting in services performed by them. Let us hope for the increase of the faith and grace even of those who have most failed in their duty to us; let us be zealous and bold, in a humble, patient, prudent, loving, and self-denying manner; let us rather be desirous of doing abundant good, than of acquiring great reputation; let us remember to glory in the Lord our Salvation, and in all other things, only as evidences of his love, or as means of promoting his glory; and, instead of commending ourselves, or seeking the praise of men, let us desire and aspire after "that honour, "which cometh from God only."

yet [r] not in knowledge; [s] but we have been thoroughly made manifest among you in all things.

7 Have I committed an offence [t] in abasing myself, that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely?

8 I [u] robbed other churches, taking wages *of them*, to do you service.

9 And when I was present with you, [x] and wanted, [y] I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me [z] the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all *things* I have kept myself from being [a] burdensome unto you, and *so* will I keep *myself*.

10 As [b] the truth of Christ is in me, * no man shall stop me of this [c] boasting in [d] the regions of Achaia.

11 Wherefore? [e] because I love you not? [f] God knoweth.

12 But [g] what I do, that I will do, [h] that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein [i] they glory, they may be found even as we.

r Eph. iii. 4. 2 Pet iii. 15, 16.
s iv 2 v. 11. vii. 2 xii. 12.
t x. 1. xii. 13. Acts xviii. 1—3. xx. 34. 1 Cor. iv. 10—12 ix 6. 14—18. 1 Thes. ii. 9. 2 Thes. iii. 8.
u 9 Phil. iv. 14—16.
x vi. 4. ix. 12. Phil. ii. 25. iv. 11—14. Heb. xi. 37.
y xii. 13. Neh v. 15. Acts xx 33. 1 Thes ii. 9. 2 Thes. iii. 8.
z viii. 1, 2 *See on*, 8.
a xii. 14—16. 1 Thes. ii 6.
b 31 i 23. xii. 19. Rom i. 9. ix. 1. Gal. i. 20. 1 Thes ii 5. 10. 1 Tim ii. 7.
* *Gr this boasting shall not be stopped in me.*
c 12 16, 17. x. 15. 1 Cor. ix. 15—18.
d i. 1 ix 2. Acts xviii. 12. 27. Rom. xvi. 5. 1 Cor. xvi 15. 1 Thes. i. 7, 8.
e vi. 11, 12. vii. 3. xii. 15.
f *See on*, b. 10. xii 2, 3. Josh. xxii. 22. Ps. xliv 21. John ii. 24, 25 xxi. 17. Acts xv. 8. Heb. iv. 13. Rev. ii. 23.——g 9. i. 17. Job xxiii. 13 ——h 1 Cor. ix. 12. 1 Tim v. 14 ——i 18. v. 12 x. 17 1 Cor. v. 6. Gal. vi. 13, 14.

NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1—6. The apostle allowed, that, in general, self-commendation implied folly; yet the case required it of him at that time, and his zeal for the honour of Christ, as well as his love to their souls, rendered him an exception to ordinary rules. He therefore wished and prayed, that they would show a disposition to bear with him a little in what they deemed *his folly;* he must, however, venture all consequences, and they must bear with him, whether they approved or disapproved of it. For he was jealous over them, with that fervent love and anxious solicitude for their welfare, which sprang from zeal for the glory of God, and regard to his authority. He had solicited and obtained their consent to that sacred and blessed union with Christ, which might be called their espousals to the One Bridegroom and Husband of the Church; to whom alone their devoted, faithful, and obedient affection belonged, and from whom all their felicity was to be expected. He therefore feared every thing, which tended to alienate, weaken, and divide their attachment to him; or pollute them either in body or mind: for his ambition was to present them to Christ, at last, "holy, unblamable, and unreprovable in his sight;" as a chaste virgin is presented to her intended husband, when the marriage is completed. But he feared, lest, by any means, the false teachers should draw them aside from their simple dependence on Christ, and love and obedience to him, into a false confidence, carnal affections, or disobedience: lest they should be deluded from that purity of doctrine, that spiritual frame of mind, and that honourable conduct, which became this high relation; even as Eve in Eden was beguiled by Satan, in the form of a serpent, to seek happiness in departing from God, and disobedience to him, being deceived by specious and subtle pretences and insinuations. The Corinthians were peculiarly exposed to this danger from those who puffed them up with an idea of their extraordinary knowledge; and seduced them, by artful reasonings, to seek liberty and pleasure in other things, besides obeying, and walking with, God. Indeed, if any man could possibly have preached another Jesus, a more gracious and precious Saviour, than Paul had declared to them; or could have conferred on them another Spirit, whose gifts and influences were more excellent than those which the Holy Spirit, through Paul's ministry, had bestowed on them; or, in short, if another and more suitable Gospel had been preached, than that which they had embraced; there might have been some reason for their bearing with the new teachers, or even preferring them. Or, in that case, it would have become them to have borne with the infirmities of their first instructor in Christianity. But the contrary was manifest; for, whatever they might think, he was conscious that he was in no respect inferior to any of the apostles, without excepting Peter, James, or John, who seemed to be the chief of them all; he might, therefore, well be confident that their new teachers could add nothing valuable to the instructions which he had given. He had indeed appeared among them to be "rude in speech," as a person of ordinary education, ignorant of the rules of eloquence, and careless respecting them; (and this might be the case, though his discourses were replete with natural pathos, and sound argument;) yet he had shown himself competent in knowledge to instruct his hearers in every part of Christianity. St. Paul's declaration, that he "was not a whit behind "the very chiefest apostles," when carried to its consequences, is totally subversive of the enormous baseless fabric of Popery, which rests entirely, (as distinguished from the rest of the professed Christian Church,) on the vain imagination, that Peter was supreme over all the apostles, and that the Pope, or the Roman Church, or both, inherit, by some unknown title, that supremacy. Many expositors suppose, that the expressions used by the apostle, in respect of his espousing the believers at Corinth to Christ, are taken from Grecian customs; and others conclude, that one false teacher, and he a Jew, and disposed to corrupt Christianity with Judaism, was the author of the disturbances at Corinth. But neither of these opinions seems clearly deducible from the epistle itself.

V. 7—12. The chief distinction, between the new teachers at Corinth and Paul, seems to have been in what they had received, and not what they had imparted. And would the Church then be offended with him, because he had abased himself, in working at a trade for his maintenance, and submitting to many self-denials, that they might be exalted to the privileges of God's people, by preaching the Gospel to them without putting them to any expense? Indeed, he had done this, lest he should prejudice their minds; and he might in some sense be said even to have robbed other churches, by receiving money of them for his subsistence, whilst he was labouring for the benefit of the Corinthians. And when he had really been in want

13 For such *are* [k] false apostles, [l] deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

14 And no marvel; [m] for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

15 Therefore *it is* [n] no great thing if [o] his ministers also be transformed as [p] the ministers of righteousness; [q] whose end shall be according to their works.

16 ¶ I [r] say again, [s] Let no man think me a fool: if otherwise, yet as a fool * receive me, that I may boast myself a little.

17 That which I speak, [t] I speak *it* not after the Lord, but as it were [u] foolishly, in this confidence of boasting.

18 Seeing that [x] many glory after the flesh, [y] I will glory also.

19 For ye suffer fools gladly, [z] seeing ye *yourselves* are wise.

20 For ye suffer, [a] if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour *you*, if a man [b] take *of you*, if a man exalt himself, if [c] a man smite you on the face.

k 15 ii. 17. iv. 2. Matt. xxiv. 24. Acts xv. 1. 24. xx. 30. Rom. xvi. 18. Gal. i. 7. ii. 4. iv. 17. vi. 12 Eph. iv. 14. Phil. i. 16. Col ii. 4. 8. 1 Tim. i 1–7. iv. 1–3 vi 3–5. 2 Tim. ii 17–19. iii. 5–9. iv. 3. 4. 2 Pet. ii. 1–3 1 John ii. 18. iv. 1. 2 John 7–11 Jude 4 Rev. ii. 2. 9. 20 xix. 20. l Phil. iii. 2. Tit. i. 10, 11 m 3. ii. 11. Gen. iii 1–5 Matt. iv. 1–10 Gal. i. 8. Rev. xii 9.——n 2 Kings v. 13. 1 Cor ix 11.——o 13. Acts xiii 10. Eph vi. 12 Rev ix. 11. xiii 2. 14. xix 19–21. xx. 2, 3. 7–10.——p 23 iii. 9.——q Is. ix. 14, 15. Jer v. 31 xxiii. 14, 15. xxviii. 15–17. xxix 32 Ez. xiii. 10–15. 22. Matt. vii 15, 16. Gal. i 8, 9 Phil. iii. 19. 2 Thes. ii. 8–12. 2 Pet. ii. 3. 13–22. Jude 4. 10–13. r 1——s 21–23 xii. 6. 11.

* Or, *suffer me* 1. 19.

t 1 Cor. vii. 6. 12.

u 18 27. ix. 4. Phil. iii. 4–6.

x 12. 21–23. x. 12–18. Jer. ix. 23, 24. 1 Pet. i. 24.

y xii. 5, 6. 9. 11.

z 1 Cor. iv. 10. viii. 1. x. 15. Rev. iii 17.

a i. 24 Gal ii. 4. iv. 3 9. 25. v. 1. 10. vi. 12.

b Rom. xvi. 17, 18. Phil. iii. 19. 1 Thes. ii. 5.

c Is. 1 6. Lam. iii. 30. Luke vi. 29.

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among them, he neither ceased from his ministry through discouragement, as an indolent person, nor yet put them to any charge: but the Christians from Macedonia, especially from Philippi, supplied him with what was absolutely necessary. (*Note, Phil.* iv. 10—19.) Thus in all things he had kept himself from being burdensome to them; and he had seen cause to determine that he would continue to do so: and, as surely as he faithfully preached the truth of Christ, he was resolved, that no man, by entreaties, arguments, or reproaches, should ever take from him this ground of glorying; and that he would receive nothing towards his maintenance from any one, through all the regions of Achaia. If the reason of this purpose were demanded, or if any should impute it to his want of love, he would appeal to God, who well knew his tender affection for them. But indeed he was resolved to proceed in his present conduct, that he might deprive those of the occasion of slandering him, who were ready to seize on every handle against him; and to set them a good example, that, in respect of zeal for the honour of Christ and love of the Church, in which they gloried, they might be shown in what manner to make good their pretensions; and learn, that the self-denial and disinterestedness of the apostle was a far more unequivocal evidence of zeal and affection, than their plausible harangues, joined with a selfish and domineering conduct. It is generally supposed, that the false teachers affected the praise of preaching the Gospel *freely:* but the language, which the apostle afterwards uses, clearly proves that this was not the case. (20.) They seem rather to have despised Paul, as degrading himself, and as acting inconsistently with the dignity of an apostle, in thus labouring, and enduring poverty, instead of demanding a maintenance. As Corinth was a rich city, his long continuance there might have been ascribed to mercenary motives, had he not adopted this plan: and as the Macedonians, though far poorer than the Corinthians, yet maintained, in part, the apostle, when labouring at Corinth; it might in some sense be said, that they were robbed, to exalt their more prosperous brethren.

V. 13—15. It was not to be expected that the persons, to whom St. Paul referred, would in this respect be found like him, as they were indeed spurious apostles, who falsely pretended to be sent by Christ; in this and other things working deceitfully, acting with duplicity, and varnishing over their hypocrisy and selfish intentions by specious professions; (iv. 2;) so that their style, manner, and conduct, were an affected imitation of those of the apostles; but their ministry tended to dishonour God, and to deceive souls. Nor need it excite any wonder, that such wicked men should be so specious in their appearance and pretensions: for even Satan, their master, could disguise himself, and tempt men in the form of a holy angel, a messenger from the world of light, instead of appearing as the prince of darkness. He could delude men with professions of extraordinary illumination, high affections, evangelical truth, revelations, singular sanctity, deadness to the world, austerity, or sublimity of devotion, and in various other ways; that so he might undermine or disgrace the holy religion of Christ, hurry them into absurdities and extravagancies, lead them to neglect the plain rule of the written word, and change them into enthusiasts, antinomians, or superstitious formalists. It was not therefore any thing great, or difficult, or marvellous, that his ministers should be transformed, and assume the appearance of the ministers of righteousness, that by them this great deceiver might impose on men to their destruction: for if they appeared openly, as opposers of the Gospel and patrons of vice and impiety, they could do far less mischief; even as depredators succeed best, when disguised as honest men, and reputed to be such. But whatever their professions might be, and however they might be admired and applauded, yet their end would accord, not to their popularity, confidence, eloquence, or sentiments, but to their works, their conduct in the sight of God, and the effect of their principles among men. The *plural* number, used in these verses, in which the apostle directly speaks out on a subject, to which he had all along covertly referred, does not favour the opinion that one false teacher was *exclusively* meant, though one might possess greater influence than the others.

V. 16—20. Having thus openly decided against those, who persisted in opposing his authority at Corinth, the apostle again returned to his subject. He desired that no man would esteem him to be a fool, or a vain-glorious man, on account of what he said in his own behalf, when the importance of the occasion demanded it of him: yet, if they would form so unfavourable a conclusion concerning him, let them at least receive him in that character, while he boasted himself for a short time, and as to some things in which he was really distinguished: for he sought their good, and not his own credit, in what he said. He did not indeed speak on this occasion according to the general

21 I speak as concerning reproach, [d] as though we had been weak. Howbeit, [e] wherein soever any is bold, ([f] I speak foolishly,) I am bold also.

22 Are they [g] Hebrews? so *am* I: are they Israelites? so *am* I: are they [h] the seed of Abraham? so *am* I.

23 Are they [i] ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool,) [k] I *am* more: [l] in labours more abundant, [m] in stripes above measure, [n] in prisons more frequent, [o] in deaths oft.

24 Of the Jews five times received I [p] forty *stripes* save one.

25 Thrice was [q] I beaten with rods, [r] once was I stoned, [s] thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;

d x. 1, 2. 10. xiii. 4.
e 22—27. Phil. iii. 3—6.
f 17. 23.
g Ex iii 18 v. 3. vii 16. ix. 1. 13 x. 3. Acts xxii. 3. Rom. xi. 1. Phil. iii. 5.
h Gen. xvii. 8, 9. 2 Chr. xx. 7. Matt. iii. 9 John viii. 33—39. Rom. iv. 13—18.
i iii. 6. vi. 4. 1 Cor. iii 5. iv. 1. 1 Thes. iii. 2. 1 Tim. iv. 6 ——k 5. xii. 11, 12——l 1 Cor. xv. 10 Col. i. 29.
m 24. 25. vi. 4, 5. Acts ix. 16.
n Acts xvi. 24. xx 23. xxi 11. xxiv. 26, 27. xxv. 14. xxvii. 1. xxviii. 16 30. Eph iii. 1. iv. 1. vi 20 Phil. i 13. 2 Tim. i. 8 16. ii 9. Philem 9. Heb. x. 34
o i. 9, 10. iv. 11. vi. 9. Acts xiv. 19. 1 Cor. xv. 30—32. Phil. ii. 17. Col. i 24.
p Deut. xxv. 2, 3 Matt. x 17. Mark xiii 9.——q Acts xvi. 22 23. 33. 37. xxii. 24.
r Matt. xxi. 35. Acts vii. 58, 59. xiv. 5. 19. Heb xi. 37.——s Acts xxvii 41.

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precepts or example of the Lord, or what was proper to be imitated in ordinary cases; nor was it an immediate revelation that he was about to declare: but he followed that same confidence of boasting, which their conduct had imposed upon him, and which the example of some among them seemed to authorize; though they would perhaps deem it foolish in him to do it. As, however, many of them, both the deceivers and the deceived, had got into this habit of glorying, "he would glory also;" but on other ground and in another manner, in order to counteract the pernicious tendency of their vain confidence.—Well satisfied indeed with their own wisdom, they were accustomed to bear, with a self-complacent joy, the conduct of those who acted foolishly; and had, no doubt, often looked down on him with this mixture of pity and contempt. They had not indeed greatly shown their wisdom in tolerating the false teachers; for they endured it without complaint, at least without being undeceived, if any one brought them into an abject dependence on him, and enslaved their consciences to his unwarranted impositions: if he devoured their substance, (as the Pharisees did the widow's houses,) by exorbitant demands under covert specious pretexts; if he took large sums from them by way of presents; if he exalted himself, as some absolute ruler over them, and behaved in the most insolent manner; nay, if he even smote them on the face, as treating them with contempt and disdain, in his furious passion. Doubtless, this refers to facts known to the apostle, in which the violent, litigious, ambitious, selfish temper of the false apostles had been evident to all men: yet they were still allowed to retain their influence, through the fascination of their eloquence, confidence, and crafty management of their deluded admirers! *Glory after the flesh.* This is, by most expositors, without any clear proof, explained of the false teachers glorying in their Jewish extraction and in circumcision. But the expression, "after the flesh," according to the apostle's language, implies every thing that an unregenerate man can possess; and learning, eloquence, and various other distinctions may be meant, whether the Jewish extraction and circumcision be included or not. 'If subjection to the Jewish rites had been that which the 'apostle was so zealous against, he would have spoken 'more plainly and warmly, as we see in the epistle to the 'Galatians; and not have touched it only by the by slightly, in a doubtful expression. Besides, it is plain, that no 'such thing was yet attempted openly; only St. Paul was 'afraid of it.' (*Locke.*)

V. 21, 22. The apostle referred, in what he had said, to the reproaches which these deceivers had cast upon him and his friends, as if he had been weak and timid in his conduct at Corinth. They ascribed his modesty, meekness, and self-abasement, to a want of courage, and a consciousness that he had no apostolical authority, or no power to enforce it. Yet, in whatever particular any man was bold, as a Christian, a minister, or an apostle, he was bold also; though, in avowing this, he did what on other occasions would be foolish. Commentators generally suppose, that in what follows he meant to compare himself with the false teacher or teachers at Corinth; and infer, that these were Hebrews, and wanted to impose the law on the Gentile converts; of which no trace is found in either epistle. (*Note,* xii. 17—21.) But I apprehend that the whole passage will appear far more natural and animated, if we understand it with reference to "the "chiefest of the true apostles," and the words, "where-"in soever *any* is bold," obviously lead to this interpretation. It was indeed a small matter for him, to show that he was superior to "the ministers of Satan," whom he had just condemned: indeed, how could he speak of them as the ministers of Christ? but, in order to re-establish completely his *apostolical* authority, he must prove that he was not "a whit behind the chiefest apostles:" and in fact he here shows, that he laboured and suffered more abundantly than they all, or than any of them did. All the apostles were descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They were neither Hellenists, nor proselytes; and St. Paul was not inferior to them in this respect; though his birth at Tarsus might give some persons occasion to conclude that he was. He had declared that his opposers at Corinth were not ministers of Christ, but of Satan, and he could scarcely seem to speak foolishly, in magnifying his office, and declaring that he was more than they; but it had indeed this appearance, when he proceeded to show that in some respects he was more distinguished, as the minister of Christ, than any other person, even among the apostles; not by superior authority, abilities, miraculous powers, zeal, or holiness; but by his more abundant labours and sufferings, in which he evidently far exceeded all other ministers of Christ on earth. The false apostles had laboured very little, and, instead of suffering for the Gospel, it is very probable that they had risen to eminence, affluence, and authority, by means of it; but by thus showing himself *in these things* to be distinguished above all the other apostles, he tacitly pointed out to the false teachers, and their followers, in what true pre-eminence consisted; and by the contrast made it appear, that those things, in which they gloried, were indeed their shame, (*Note, Matt.* xx. 25—28.)

26 *In* [t] journeyings often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, [u] *in* perils by *mine own* countrymen, [x] *in* perils by the heathen, [y] *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren;

27 In [z] weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, [a] in hunger and thirst, in [b] fastings often, in cold and [c] nakedness.

28 Beside [d] those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, [e] the care of all the churches.

t Acts ix. 26—30. xi 25, 26 xiii. xiv. xv 2—4. 40, 41. xvi. xvii. xviii. 1. 18—23. xix 1. xx. 1, &c Rom. xv. 19. 24—28. Gal. i 17—21. u Acts ix 23—25. 29 xiii 50 xx 3. 19. xxi. 28—31 xxiii 12, &c xxv 3 1 Thes. ii. 15, 16 x i. 8—10. Acts xiv 5 19 xvi 19 24 xix. 23—41 1 Cor xv. 32. y 32 Acts ix. 24 xvii. 5. z 23. vi 5. Acts xx 5—11 34, 35. 1 Thes ii 9. 2 Thes iii 9 a Jer. xxxviii. 9 1 Cor iv. 11, 12. Phil. iv. 12.——b vi. 5 Acts xiii. 2, 3. xiv. 23. 1 Cor. vii 5 ——c Rom. viii. 35. 36. Heb. xi. 37 Jam. ii. 15 16 ——d 23—27.——e Acts xv. 36. 41. xviii. 23. xx. 2. 18—35. Rom i. 14. xi. 13. xv. 16 xvi 4 Col. ii. 1.

29 Who [f] is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, [g] and I burn not?

30 If I [h] must needs glory, [i] I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.

31 The [k] God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, [l] which is blessed for evermore, [m] knoweth that I lie not.

32 In [n] Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me:

33 And through a window in a basket was [o] I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.

f ii. 4, 5. vii 5, 6. xiii. 9. Ezra ix. 1—3. Rom xii. 15. xv. 1. 1 Cor viii. 13. ix 22. xii. 26. Gal. vi. 2. 1 Thes. iii. 5—8. g 13—15. Num. xxv. 6—11 Neh. v. 6—13. xiii. 15—20 23—25. John ii. 17 1 Cor. v 1—5. vi. 5—7 15—18. xi. 22. xv. 12, &c 36. Gal i. 7—10. ii 4—6. 14. iii. 1—3. iv. 8—20. v. 2—4. 2 John 10, 11. Jude 3, 4. Rev ii. 2. 20. iii, 15. 16. h 16—18. xii. 1. 11 Prov xxv. 27. xxvii. 2. Jer. ix. 23, 24. i xii 5—10 Col. i. 24. k i 3. John x. 30. xx. 17 Eph. i. 3 iii. 14. Col i 3. 1 Pet i 3——l Neh. ix. 5 Ps. xli 13. Rom. i 25. ix. 5 1 Tim. i 11. 17. vi. 17.——m *See on*, b. 10.——n 26. Acts ix. 24, 25 ——o Josh ii. 18. 1 Sam. xix. 12.

V. 23—27. The other apostles had indeed been scourged and imprisoned for Christ's sake; yet Paul had endured this pain and disgrace more frequently than they, and had been in danger of death on far more occasions. The Jews had scourged him five times, with the utmost severity of which their law and custom allowed: for they were forbidden to exceed forty stripes, and for fear of a mistake, they always confined themselves to thirty-nine. (*Marg. Ref.*) He had also been thrice scourged by the command of the Roman magistrates, though contrary to their law. He had once been stoned and left for dead, but had been miraculously restored to life. He had thrice been wrecked in his different voyages, and at one time he continued a night and day in the sea, probably on a part of the wreck, in extreme cold, suffering, and peril. This was previous to his voyage to Rome, when he was again wrecked; and many of his other sufferings, recorded in the Acts of the apostles, were subsequent to the writing of this epistle. He often journeyed from one region to another amidst hardships and perils: sometimes his life had been endangered in passing *rivers* or deep waters, that lay in his way; sometimes by robbers, who attempted to plunder and murder him; frequently the Jews assaulted him, being enraged by his preaching to the Gentiles; then the Gentiles attempted to slay him, because his doctrine undermined their idolatry: when he was in any city, his life was in danger from the violence of the mob, or the iniquity of the rulers; in passing deserts, the wild beasts or wicked men, who infested them, exposed him to equal perils; when crossing the sea he was in danger of pirates and tempests; and even when among professed Christians, he was in peril from false brethren. Thus his life was spent in weariness, pain, and suffering; his incessant toil in preaching the Gospel, conversing with the people from house to house, writing his epistles, earning his bread, and attending to his devotions, frequently forced him to pass whole nights without rest. Often he was exposed to hunger and thirst through extreme indigence; and when he had food, his labours and religious duties led him to abstain from it. He was sometimes exposed to cold from the inclemency of the weather, and want of proper accommodations; and often had not suitable and decent raiment to cover him, when he was called to appear in public. Yet he still persevered, without fainting, in his "work of faith "and labour of love."

V. 28—30. Beside *these things*, which were *without*, and mainly related to the apostle's bodily sufferings, his mind was worn down by a multiplicity of affairs, which came upon him daily with the violence of an armed multitude, by the care of all the churches of the Gentiles planted by him and others; this lay upon him, filled him with constant solicitude, and employed him perpetually in forming and executing plans to promote their peace and prosperity, to counteract the designs of false teachers, and to order all their concerns for the best. And in this he so cordially engaged, that he was attentive to the case even of individuals; so that he might ask what single Christian in all the churches was reported to him as weak in the faith, and liable to be discouraged, with whom he did not sympathize as weak also? or who was stumbled and turned aside, and he was not fired with zeal to recover him, and with a holy indignation against those who occasioned the evil? As they had made it necessary for him to glory, so he had taken care, in glorying, not to expatiate on his gifts or the honours which he had received; but on those things which showed his exposed, despised, and suffering condition, the infirmities of his body and mind, his continual need of divine support, his persecutions, reproaches, and deliverances, and such things as implied his weakness, and the power of Christ which rested on him. Nor did he in this at all exceed strict truth, as those that gloried were apt to do; for the God and Father of our Lord Jesus, to whom the glory and praise belonged of all that was done by him, and for him, was witness that he did not lie in any particular, or in any measure. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 32, 33. The event here mentioned took place soon after the apostle entered upon his ministry, and was a specimen of what he had ever since been exposed to. We know nothing more of it than what is here recorded, and in a passage which has been already considered. (*Note, Acts* ix. 23—25.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

Ministers must on some occasions submit to the impu-

CHAP. XII.

The apostle relates his extraordinary revelations, which had rendered such humiliating experiences necessary, as constrained him to glory, only in his own infirmities and trials, and in the all-sufficient power and grace of Christ, 1—10. *As his apostleship had been fully proved among them, the Corinthians ought to have recommended him, and not to have compelled him to this self-commendation,* 11—13. *He was about to visit them again; but was determined to adhere to his disinterested conduct; and to spend himself in fervent love to them, though they should, on that very account, love him the less,* 14, 15. *He shows that those, whom he had sent to them, had acted in the same disinterested manner,* 16—19; *and expresses his fears, that he should be humbled, as well as compelled to use severity, by finding many, who had grossly offended, and had not repented,* 20, 21.

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tation of folly, rather than neglect the care of souls: and when their hearers think their conduct, in particular cases, indiscreet, they should bear with them, especially if it spring from an excess of zeal. They may be jealous over their people with such an affectionate earnestness, as carries them beyond ordinary rules, or personal considerations, while they apprehend that their beloved children are in danger of being by any means corrupted from the simplicity of Christ: and that conduct, which many censure, may be the effect of pure and holy affections, superior to those of other men. It is their great employment and object, to promote the espousals of souls to Christ, and to preserve those, who appear to be thus espoused, from corruption in their principles, spirit, or conduct, that they may present them as a chaste virgin unto Christ. This will excite in them a jealous fear, lest Satan, who by his subtlety beguiled Eve in paradise, should deceive them also. For he hath agents of all descriptions, who are continually at work to impose upon the unstable and unwary. If then the faithful minister seem too suspicious, and become troublesome by his watchfulness and warnings, his people ought, notwithstanding, to bear with him. When any are about to leave those pastors, by whom they seem to have been espoused to Christ, they ought to inquire whether their new favourites can preach another Jesus, another Sanctifier, or another Gospel, than they have already received? And they should not endure those who, *without sufficient cause*, would alienate them from the instruments of God in their conversion. Christians need not wonder, if confident persons represent their faithful pastors as inferior preachers, who are destitute of erudition, eloquence, and power, or in some respects exceptionable or erroneous, as there were not wanting deceivers, who confidently said the same things of St. Paul himself! But it is far better to be "rude in "speech," yet not "in spiritual and experimental know-"ledge;" and to be manifested thoroughly in all things, as walking consistently with the Gospel, than to be admired by thousands for excellency of speech; and to be lifted up in pride, to corrupt the Church with damnable heresies, to distract it by furious contentions, and disgrace the Gospel by malignant tempers and an unholy life. So injudicious are many professed Christians, that high confidence, and the language of importance and authority, will often go further, than the most humble, meek, unassuming, and disinterested deportment! The minister, who is content to be poor, to fare hardly, to be abased, or to earn his bread, that he may exalt others by freely preaching the Gospel to them, is often consigned to neglect, as if guilty of some great offence. While others, who assume a magisterial tone, and exalt themselves, are admitted to that consequence which they assume, provided they have popular abilities, whatever their character in other respects may be. Yet it is in reality an honour to endure want, without ceasing to labour, or desiring to become chargeable, where it might prejudice men against the Gospel. On some occasions a man should determine not to be deprived of this glorying; especially if he at any time judges himself required to mention it. Thus the appearance of evil may be avoided, the mouths of gain-sayers may be stopped, an edifying example may be exhibited, and a contrast made to the conduct of mercenary deceivers. This, however, must be done in love and humility, and as in the presence of God: and it may sometimes be proper to show, that it does not result from pride, by receiving the kindness of others with grateful acknowledgments, where the same reasons do not operate. It often happens in this way, that ministers receive wages, as it were, from one set of people to do service for another: and sometimes the poorer are at the expense of maintaining those that preach to the rich. But the minister needs not scruple this, as if "he robbed other churches:" it reflects no dishonour on him, provided he only requires a decent subsistence; and it will redound to the credit and profit of those who thus supply him: yet when rich professors of the Gospel know this to be the case, they are not *just*, if they do not bear the burden themselves; nor *generous*, if they do not copy so noble an example.

V. 13—20.

Whatever fair show deceivers may make, they will seldom be found like faithful ministers, in labouring without any hope of worldly advantage or honour, from pure love to Christ and the souls of men. This is a part of the apostolical character and office, which by no means accords to the designs of false apostles and deceitful workers. The plausibility of deceivers, and the attractive form which they assume to seduce men from the simplicity of Christ, should not excite our wonder; for Satan is continually transformed into an angel of light, that, under the most specious pretences, he may fill the earth with infidelity, heresy, and ungodliness; and, under the mask of philosophy, morality, extraordinary austerity, or new reve-

IT is not [a] expedient for me doubtless [b] to glory: * I will come to [c] visions and revelations of the Lord.

2 I [d] knew a man [e] in Christ about fourteen years ago, (whether [f] in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: [g] God knoweth,) such an one [h] caught up to [i] the third heaven.

3 And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;)

4 How that he was caught up into [k] paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not * lawful for a man to utter.

5 Of [l] such an one will I glory: [m] yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities.

6 For though [n] I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for [o] I will say the truth: but *now* I forbear, lest any man should think of me [p] above that which he seeth me *to be*, or *that* he heareth of me.

a viii 10. John xvi. 7. xviii. 14 1 Cor vi. 12. x 23.
b 11. xi. 16–30.
* Gr *For I will*, &c.
c 7. Num. xii 6. Ez i 1, &c. xi. 24 Dan. x. 5–10 Joel ii 28, 29 Acts ix. 10–17. xviii. 9. xxii. 17–21. xxiii 11. xxvi. 13–19. Gal i. 12. ii. 2. 1 John v. 20.
d 3 5
e v. 17. 21. xiii. 5. Is. xlv. 24, 25. John vi. 56 xv. 4–6. xvii. 21–23 Rom viii. 1 xvi. 7 1 Cor. i. 30. Gal. i. 22 v. 6.——f v. 6–8. 1 Kings xviii. 12. 2 Kings ii. 16. Ez viii. 1–3. xi. 24. Acts viii 39, 40. xxii. 17 Phil. i 22, 23. Rev. i. 10. iv. 2 ——g 3. *See on*, xi. 11.——h 4. Luke xxiv. 51. 1 Thes. iv. 17. Heb. ix. 24. Rev. xii. 5.——i Gen. i. 14–20. 1 Kings viii. 27. Is. lvii. 15.

k Ez. xxxi. 9. Luke xxiii. 43. Rev. ii. 7.
* Or, *possible*.
l 2–4.
m 9, 10. xi. 30.
n x. 8. xi 16. 1 Cor. iii. 5. 9, 10.
o i. 18. xi. 31. Job xxiv. 25. Rom. ix. 1.
p 7. x. 9, 10.

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lations, he does far more mischief, than by tempting men to gross enormities. It might, therefore, have been previously supposed, that some of his ministers, transformed into the ministers of righteousness, should be inspired to copy his example; but if *their end* were to be according to their abilities, confidence, or notions, they would have a far better hope than they now can have, when it must be "according to their works." If then, any of them could indeed vacate the law of God, the rule of duty, and the standard of sin and holiness, they would secure an important point; but they will find it in full force at the day of judgment; the believer's works, as evidential of his faith and love, will be tried and approved by it; and they, who have habitually done evil under the profession of the Gospel, will be condemned as hypocrites. But there is an equal danger on the other side, and it serves Satan's purposes *nearly* as well, to set up good works against the merits of Christ, and salvation by faith and grace. In short, his ministers will be permitted to preach any doctrine, except the holy law of God, as established by faith in the righteousness and atonement of Christ, and the participation of his sanctifying Spirit; but this is the bane of every false system, and, when clearly exhibited, detects Satan, however transformed into an angel of light. We have great reason for thankfulness, that the apostle was constrained, though with many retractions, to "boast "himself a little;" for, whatever he might fear, or his enemies might say, his confidence in boasting hath thrown such light upon his ministry, character, and history, as will be instructive to the Church to the end of the world. Doubtless the Holy Spirit guided his pen, though he seemed not to speak "after the Lord;" for he did not glory in a carnal, a proud, or a false manner, as many do. Had the Corinthians been as wise as they thought themselves, he would have had no occasion to apologize to them for his conduct; for he did not require those indulgences, which they granted to their false teachers. Indeed, if faithful ministers, who flatter no man, and pay no court to any man's passions, should attempt to treat their people as some do, who, for their own ends, are in some things more complaisant, it would not be endured. It is astonishing, to see how some men bring their followers into bondage; how they devour and take of them; how they insult and reproach them as well as others; and yet how all this is borne with, excused, or palliated! For indeed their doctrine suits the lives and consciences of their hearers, and their example encourages them to similar conduct towards others. Sometimes it may be necessary to take notice of the reproaches of such men, but never to imitate their spirit or conduct.

V. 21—33.

What mere man ever united such, and so many, grounds of glorying as this apostle? How does it fill our minds with astonishment, to meditate on this brief enumeration of his labours, hardships, perils, and sufferings, during a long course of years! of his patience, perseverance, diligence, cheerfulness, and usefulness, in the midst of them! and of his attentive and fervent affection towards all the churches, and every individual believer! Next to the history of Christ himself, the dangers, persecutions, cruelty, and treachery, which this most excellent and useful servant of God, every where, and from all sorts of persons, met with, and the unkindness even of his own converts, form the severest stricture on the folly and wickedness of mankind, that ever was published. We may here see what are the chief preferments in the true Church of Christ; and we may inquire, whether on such terms we should be willing to be "not a whit behind the very chiefest "apostles?" In this glass, our utmost diligence and services appear too minute to be noticed, and our difficulties and trials can scarcely be perceived; the prospect may well shame us out of all our boastings and complaints, and lead us to inquire whether we be really engaged in the spiritual warfare, or are only called the soldiers of Christ. Here we may study patience, fortitude, meekness, and perseverance in well-doing, and confidence in God to protect, deliver, and comfort us, in every possible suffering or danger. Here we may learn to think less of our own ease, interest, indulgence, or reputation, and more of the great concerns of godliness; and to sympathize with the lighter sorrows of our brethren, even when more heavily afflicted ourselves: here we may look, till poverty, reproach, hunger, thirst, watchings, fastings, cold, nakedness, stripes, and imprisonment, appear honourable, and even special privileges, when sustained in a good cause and with a constant mind. Here we may learn to be content with food and raiment, thankful for mean and scanty provisions, indifferent about all worldly things, ardently desirous of doing good to others, and animated with the hope of success in this work, notwithstanding our manifold

7 And [q] lest I should be exalted above measure, through [r] the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me [s] a thorn in the flesh, the [t] messenger of Satan [u] to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

8 For this thing [x] I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

9 And he said unto me, [y] My grace is sufficient for thee: [z] for my strength is made perfect in weakness. [a] Most gladly therefore will I rather [b] glory in my infirmities, that [c] the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 Therefore [d] I take pleasure [e] in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses [f] for Christ's sake: [g] for when I am weak, then am I strong.

q x. 5. xi. 20. Deut. viii. 14. xvii. 20. 2 Chr. xxvi. 16. xxxii. 25, 26. 31. Dan. v. 20. 1 Tim. iii. 6.
r 1—4.
s Gen. xxxii. 25. 31. Judg. ii. 3. Ez. xxviii. 24. Gal. iv. 13, 14.
t Job ii. 7. Luke xiii. 16. 1 Cor. v. 5.
u Matt. xxvi. 67. 1 Cor. iv. 11.
x Deut. iii. 23—26. 1 Sam. xv. 11. 2 Sam. xii. 16—18. Matt. xx 21, 22. xxvi. 39—44. Heb. v. 7.
y 10. iii. 5, 6. Ex. iii. 11, 12. iv. 10—15. Deut. xxxiii. 25—27. Josh. i. 9. Is. xliii. 2. Jer. i. 6—9. Matt. x. 19, 20. Luke xxi. 15. 1 Cor. x. 13. xv. 10. Col. i. 28, 29. 1 Tim. i. 14. Heb. iv. 16.
z Ps. viii. 2. Is. xxxv. 3, 4. xl. 29—31. xli. 13—16. Dan. x. 16—19. Eph. iii. 16. Phil. iv. 13. Col. i. 11. Heb. xi. 34.
a 10. 15. Matt. v. 11, 12.
b 5. xi. 30.
c 2 Kings ii. 15. Is. iv. 5, 6. xi. 2. Zeph. iii. 17. Matt. xxviii. 18, 20. 1 Pet. iv. 13, 14.
d i. 4. iv. 8—10. 17. vii. 4. Acts v. 41. Rom. v. 3. viii. 35—39. Phil. i. 29. ii. 17, 18. Col. i. 24. Jam. i. 2. 1 Pet. i. 6, 7. iv. 13, 14.
e *See on*, xi. 23—30.
f iv. 5. 11. Matt. v. 11. x. 18. Luke vi. 22. John xv. 21. 1 Cor. iv. 10. Rev. ii. 3.
g *See on*, 9. xiii. 4. 9. Eph. vi. 10.

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infirmities. These we should especially look at, if we are never constrained to glory; we should ever keep in view our obligations to the Lord, from whom all our distinctions are received; we should strictly adhere to truth, as in his presence, and we should refer all to his glory, as "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed "for evermore."

NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1—6. The peculiarity of the apostle's circumstances rendered that conduct necessary, which otherwise would not have been expedient; and which, it is probable, his opposers would censure, or even deride. He would, nevertheless, proceed to speak concerning visions of the divine glory, and revelations of heavenly things. It may be supposed that the false teachers at Corinth made high pretensions in these matters; and insinuated that Paul was not distinguished by them, as the other apostles were. In mentioning his extraordinary vision, or revelation, he modestly spoke in the third person; but there can be no doubt that he meant himself. He knew a man in Christ, (*Marg. Ref.*) who fourteen years before had a most extraordinary vision. Whether he was in the body or not, at that time, God alone knew; but his outward senses were entirely closed, and his whole perception was by the powers of his mind; but whether heavenly things were brought down to him, so to speak, as his body lay entranced, (as the case often seems to have been with the ancient prophets,) or whether his soul was dislodged from the body for the time, and actually taken up into heaven; or whether he was taken up in body and soul together, he knew not. (*Marg. Ref.*) This language evidently proves, that the apostle most firmly believed the soul to be distinct from the body, and capable of perception, activity, and enjoyment, in a state of separation.—However these things might be, this man was suddenly caught up into the third, or the highest heaven; above the lower region of the air and the starry heavens, to the place where the Lord immediately reveals his presence and glory, and receives the adoration of his heavenly hosts. Yea, this man, with whom he was so intimately acquainted, was taken up into Paradise, the place of felicity, of which Eden was the type, and there heard such words as man could not speak if he might, and as it would have been unlawful to speak if he could, it being the purpose of God, that the discoveries made of himself in that glorious world should not be more fully declared on earth than they had been. Many approved commentators suppose these to have been two distinct visions; that Paradise is a different place from the third heavens, and that in the latter he saw Jesus at the right hand of the Father, and in the former he conversed with departed saints. But, as the happiness of the "spirits of just men made perfect" consists in being "present with the Lord," there seems to be no Scriptural ground for this distinction. (*Marg. Ref.*) The language is indeed varied, yet only one vision appears to be intended; but in that one vision he doubtless had an abundance of revelations. Of this man, who was so highly favoured, at least equally with any of the ancient prophets, he would glory; though in himself, as to any thing that was properly his own, he would not glory, except in his infirmities. In his present circumstances, indeed, he was desirous of glorying in such matters, and of mentioning other visions that had been made to him, yet he should not act foolishly, as he could do it with perfect truth, (which probably was not the case with the false teachers.) He would, however, forbear speaking further on that subject, lest some of his friends should think more highly of him than his manifest conduct and ministry authorized, and should thus be tempted to honour him too much, and perhaps to undervalue other faithful ministers in the comparison. As fourteen years had passed, since the apostle had this astonishing vision, and he had not, as it appears, before mentioned it, he must be allowed to have been exceedingly reluctant to glory in the honour conferred on him. The vision seems to have been vouchsafed to him, especially for his own support and encouragement, amidst his various labours and sufferings; and as no revelation of divine truth, needful to be known and believed by Christians, or ministers, was made to him, it was not only *impossible*, but even *unlawful*, if it could have been done, to relate what he had heard and seen.—As two distinct words are used, it is most natural to suppose, that they were intended to convey two distinct ideas.

V. 7—10. The apostle did not forget that he was a poor sinner, wholly dependent on mercy and grace, amidst all his honourable distinctions: so that his extraordinary and multiplied revelations were soon followed by as remarkable trials, lest they should prove an incentive to spiritual pride. What he saw in the third heavens must have been in its own nature of a humbling tendency; (*Job* xlii. 5, 6. *Is.* vi. 1—5:) yet, when he came among his brethren, he would be apt to think, (however otherwise abased,) that none of them had seen, or heard, what he had seen and heard; or been favoured with such visions of God as this in the third heavens. Thus the vision might

CHAP. XIII.

The apostle declares his purpose of inflicting miraculous punishments, on those who persisted in opposing his authority, 1—4. *He calls them to self-examination,* 5; *and to disarm him of his power to use sharpness, by their previous repentance,* 6—10. *He concludes with exhortations, salutations, and benedictions,* 11—13.

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this kind takes place in those whom he loveth, some "thorn in the flesh," will be surely given them, and some messenger of Satan let loose to buffet them; but the delusions of enthusiasts tend only to pride, without any counterpoise. It is, however, very surprising, that corrupt *nature* should, as it were, learn pride in heaven, and *grace* should be taught humility, even by Satan and his messengers. However painful the process may be, the wise Christian will be thankful to be kept from being exalted above measure, and he will be more ready to speak of his sins and follies than of his extraordinary discoveries and consolations, as he will not desire that any one should think of him above what he seeth him to be. Whatever there be in a man's experience, whether of outward trials or of inward conflicts and temptations, which tends to counterbalance more encouraging dispensations, and to mortify his pride, he may very properly consider it as a "thorn in the flesh," given to him to prevent worse consequences. And it is especially matter of gratitude, when this prevention is effected without his being left to commit actual sin, or to dishonour the Gospel. When we are buffeted by Satan, we should apply to Him who "suffered being tempted, that he might be able to succour "those that are tempted;" and we should be frequent, as well as instant, in beseeching him, that those temptations and trials may depart, which appear to impede our usefulness, or to endanger the credit of our profession. Yet we must be careful not to conclude that our prayers are rejected, when the desired deliverance is delayed, as he may see those conflicts salutary, which we deem ruinous. His wisdom must be trusted, as well as his truth and love; and when we strive against sin, bear up under discouragements, and attend to our duty, in dependence on him, we may rest satisfied "that his grace will be "sufficient for us, and that his strength will be made "perfect in our weakness." He frequently answers prayer by reconciling our minds to a humiliating trial, and by increasing our strength for that conflict which we were desirous of declining; and sometimes Christians have such views of his glory, and such confidence in his grace, that they can most gladly glory in their infirmities, assured that his power will rest upon, and be honoured in and by them. Thus a man may even take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, necessities, persecutions, and distresses, for Christ's sake; and though we may not have arrived at this vigour of faith and love, yet, if we are indeed believers, we have also found, that when we most felt our own weakness, we were peculiarly strong in the Lord; and when we began to think ourselves strong, we have been left to discover, and perhaps to expose, our own weakness.

V. 11—21.

They who do not give proper commendation to such as have faithfully laboured for their good, but prefer every new voice to that of their own pastors, often compel them to glory, and then perhaps censure them for it. But whatever the Lord may give us, or do by us, we are nothing in ourselves but sin and folly; so that the deepest self-abasement and self-renunciation not only consist with the consciousness of the Lord's special goodness towards us, but are intimately connected with it. It is a great thing for ministers to say before God, and to their people, "we "seek not *yours*, but *you*. Alas! in what numerous instances must the words be transposed, in order to be true, as the preachers seek only the property, and not the salvation of their hearers! But the more disinterested our labours are, the more apostolical they must be allowed to be; and it is generally desirable to avoid being burdensome to our congregations; for far more will "forgive us this "wrong," than the very appearance of being mercenary. Indeed, we should, as far as we can, imitate the conduct of affectionate parents, who seek to enrich their children, and not to be enriched by them. But how hard is it, gladly to spend and be spent for those who make unkind returns, and who seem to love those least who most love them! We are soon vanquished in contests of this kind; and may hence infer, how far short we are of the apostle's measure of grace, who yet, long after this, confessed that he had not already attained; (*Phil.* iii. 12, 13;) and we may thus learn to pray for an increase of faith, love, and patience. No excellency of spirit or conduct can silence calumny; and if we were even as holy as Paul, some would revile us as crafty men, who took others by guile. It is well, when we can disprove such slanders, and when fellow-labourers walk in the same spirit and steps. We should not however be too anxious to excuse ourselves, being satisfied with a clear conscience towards God, yet we ought to do all things for the edification of our brethren, and the recovery of such as have been drawn aside. But how can ministers be expected to prove such as their people desire, when they witness among them such contentions, envies, slanders, whisperings, boastings, and tumults, as not only grieve and humble them, but also disgrace the Gospel? Alas! they are often cast down, and sent to bewail the crimes of those whom they fondly hoped would be a comfort to them; and they are frequently distressed on account of their own mistakes or infirmities, which they fear have tended to prevent their usefulness. But how grievous is it, that such evils should prevail among the professors of the Gospel, and that we should still have to lament over many, who have sinned, and have not repented of the "uncleanness, and fornication, and "lasciviousness, which they have committed!" Yet we need not despond on this account, for it was so even in the apostle's days. But while we observe that "the "enemy hath done this;" we should not forget to add, that it was by means of antinomian and self-conceited teachers.

THIS *is* [a] the third *time* I am coming to you. [b] In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

2 I [c] told you before, and foretel you, as if I were present, the second time; and, [d] being absent, now I write to them which [e] heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that if I come again, I will not spare:

3 Since [f] ye seek a proof of [g] Christ speaking in me, [h] which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you.

4 For though [i] he was crucified through weakness, [k] yet he liveth by the power of God. For [l] we also are weak * in him, [m] but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

5 [n] Examine yourselves, whether ye be [o] in the faith; prove your own selves: [p] Know ye not your own selves, how that [q] Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be [r] reprobates?

6 But [s] I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates.

[a] *See on*, xii 14. [b] Num. xxxv. 30. Deut. xvii 6. xix. 15. 1 Kings xxi. 10. 13. Matt. xviii. 16. xxvi. 60, 61. John viii. 17 18. Heb x. 28. [c] i 23. x 1, 2 8—11. xii. 20. 1 Cor. iv. 19—21. v 5. [d] 10. [e] xii 21. [f] x. 8—10. [g] ii. 10. Matt. x. 20 xviii 18—20 Luke xxi. 15. 1 Cor. v 4, 5. [h] ii. 6. iii 1—3 xii. 12. 1 Cor. ix. 1—3 [i] Luke xxii. 43, 44. John x. 18. 1 Cor. xv. 43. Phil. ii 7, 8. Heb. v. 7. 1 Pet. iii. 18.

[k] Acts ii 36. iv 10—12. Rom. vi. 4. 9, 10. xiv 9. Eph. i. 19—23. Phil. ii 9—11. 1 Pet iii. 18. 22. Rev. i 17, 18. [l] iv. 7—12 x. 3, 4. 10. 1 Cor. ii. 3. * Or, *with him.* Phil iii. 10. 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12. [m] Acts iii. 16. Rom. vi. 8—11. [n] Ps xvii 3 xxvi. 2. xix 59. cxxxix. 23, 24. Lam. iii. 40. Ez xviii 28 Hag i. 5. 7. 1 Cor xi. 28 31. Gal. vi 4. Heb iv. 1 xii. 15 Rev. ii 5 iii. 2, 3.—— [o] Col. i. 23 ii 7. 1 Tim. ii. 15. Tit. i. 13 ii 2. 1 Pet v 9 —— [p] 1 Cor. iii. 16 vi. 2. 15 19 ix. 24 Jam iv 4 [q] vi. 16 John vi 56. xiv 23 xv 5 xvii 23 26. Gal. ii 20. iv 19. Eph. ii. 20—22. iii 17 Col i 27 ii 19. 1 Pet ii. 4 5 —— [r] 6, 7 Jer vi. 30 Rom. i. 28. 2 Tim iii. 8. Tit. i 16 1 Cor. ix. 27 Heb. vi. 8. *Gr* —— [s] 3, 4. 10 xii. 20.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1—4. (*Note*, xii. 14.) As the law had prescribed that no accused person should be condemned, unless two or three witnesses testified against him, (*Marg. Ref.*) so the repeated warnings given by the apostle, of his purpose to come and inflict punishment on the impenitent offenders at Corinth, would, as it were, testify against them, and make way for those judgments. Or rather, when at length he should come, he would proceed against them according to that law, or to the rule laid down by Christ for his disciples. (*Notes*, *Matt.* xviii. 15—18.) In the former epistle he had before told them of his purpose: in the preceding part of this epistle he had again warned them, as if present with them; and here again at the conclusion, being yet absent, and giving them a little longer space to repent, he now wrote, to assure those who had already sinned and continued untractable, and all others who might countenance them, that *if*, or *when*, he came again, he would not spare the offenders, nor appear so timid and weak as they before had concluded him to be: especially as some of them boldly demanded further proof of Christ's speaking by him as his apostle; though this had already been confirmed by no feeble evidence, but by his mighty power working in and among them, in various ways. 'Christ showed his 'power among them, by enabling St. Paul to preach the 'Gospel to them, "in demonstration of the Spirit and of "power," 'so efficaciously, as to convert them to the 'faith; in that variety of gifts conferred on them, toge'ther with the Gospel, by which "the testimony of "Christ was confirmed:" 'by his power, conspicuous 'in seconding St. Paul's delivery of the incestuous Corin'thian up to Satan:' and 'by the chastisements they 'suffered for communicating in the Lord's supper un'worthily.' (*Whitby.*) For though Jesus was crucified, as if he had been only a weak, helpless, and contemptible man, and was despised, as unable to save himself, yet he was raised from the dead and lived in glory, through the power of God, to put all enemies under his feet. In like manner, the apostle and his brethren appeared weak and despicable, as being made like the Saviour, and the power which they spake of seemed to be dead, because they did not exercise it; yet they were assured that it would revive, and that they should be evidently quickened, and endued with the power of God, exerted in their behalf towards the disobedient Corinthians, by inflicting miraculous judgments upon them. The language here used to the refractory Corinthians contains the strongest proof imaginable, that the apostle was conscious he spake and acted by a divine authority, and that he feared no detection, and was certain that his Lord would put all his opposers to confusion.

V. 5, 6. Instead of presumptuously judging the apostle and demanding his credentials, it behooved the persons concerned, and indeed all of them, to examine themselves, whether they really "were in the faith," or not, whether they had indeed more than a formal profession and a dead faith. Let them then prove their tempers, conduct, and experience, by the standard of God's word, as gold is assayed or tried by the touchstone; for he feared that many of them were self-deceived in this important concern. After all their boasting of knowledge, would they continue ignorant of themselves, of their own state, character, and hearts? Or that Jesus Christ was indeed in them, by the in-dwelling of his Spirit, by his image renewed on their souls, by his kingdom set up in their hearts, and by possessing their supreme love and affection, unless they were to that day mere professors, who would at last be disapproved and rejected, as the dross is by the refiner? Some expositors render the clause, "Christ is "among you, except, &c." but this conveys no precise idea. The apostle could not mean to intimate, that Christ was not at all present among the Christians at Corinth; for this would have contradicted all the declarations which he made concerning them, as a Church; and the presence of Christ among them in this sense could not prove that those individuals, whom he warned, were true believers, and approved by God; but this was the precise point, which he wished them *personally* to examine. In determining this question, they would also decide another, as far as they were individually concerned; for as many of them, as could clearly ascertain that "Christ dwelt in "their hearts by faith," must consider themselves as living demonstrations that Paul was a true apostle, for "the seal of his apostleship were they in the Lord:" and they could not disprove his claim, without owning themselves to be without proof of conversion. He trusted, therefore, that in this way many knew that Christ had approved and owned his ministry, and all the rest would soon know this in another manner. *Reprobates.* 'Thus the

7 Now [t] I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear [u] approved, but that ye should do that which is [x] honest, though we be [y] as reprobates.

8 For [z] we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.

9 For we are glad [a] when we are weak, and ye are strong: and this also we wish, [b] *even* your perfection.

10 Therefore [c] I write these things, being absent, [d] lest, being present, I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.

t 9. 1 Chr iv. 10. Matt. vi. 13 John xvii 15. Phil. i. 9—11 1 Thes. v 23. 2 Tim iv. 18 u vi 4. x 18 Rom. xvi 10. 1 Cor. xi 19. 2 Tim ii. 15. Jam. i 12. *Gr.* x viii 21. Rom. xii. 17. xiii. 13. Phil iv. 8. 1 Tim ii. 2. 1 Pet ii. 12. y vi. 8, 9. x. 10. 1 Cor iv. 9—13. z 10. x. 8. Num. xvi 28—33. 1 Kings xxii. 28. 2 Kings i. 9—13. ii. 23—25. Prov xxvi 2. Mark ix. 39. xvi 17—19. Luke ix. 49—56 Acts iv 28—30. v. 1—11. xiii. 3—12. xix. 11—17. 1 Cor v. 4, 5. 1 Tim. i. 20. Heb. ii. 3, 4.——a 8. xi. 30. xii. 5—10. 1 Cor iv. 10——b 7. 11. vii. 1. Eph. iv. 13. Phil. iii. 12—15 Col i. 28. iv. 12 1 Thes. iii. 10 2 Tim iii 17. Heb xii 23. xiii. 31. 1 Pet v. 10.——c ii. 3. x 2. xii. 20, 21. 1 Cor. iv. 21.——d *See on,* 2 8.

11 Finally, brethren, [e] farewell. [f] Be perfect, [g] be of good comfort, [h] be of one mind, [i] live in peace; and [k] the God of love and peace shall be [l] with you.

12 Greet [m] one another with an holy kiss.

13 [n] All the saints salute you.

14 [o] The [p] grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, [q] and the love of God, [r] and the communion of the Holy Ghost, *be* with you all. [s] Amen.

e Luke ix. 61. Acts xv. 29. xviii. 21. xxiii. 30 Phil. iv. 4. 1 Thes. v. 16. *Gr.* f 9. Matt v. 48. John xvii. 23. Jam. i. 4. 1 Pet. v. 10. g i 4. Mark x. 49. Rom xv. 13. 1 Thes. iv. 18. 2 Thes. ii 16, 17. h Rom. xii. 16. xv. 5, 6. 1 Cor. i 10. Phil i. 27. ii. 1—3. iii. 16. iv. 2 1 Pet iii. 8. i Gen. xxxvii 4. xlv. 24. Mark ix 50. Rom. xii. 18. xiv. 19. 1 Thes v. 13. 2 Tim ii. 22. Heb xii. 14. Jam. iii. 17, 18. 1 Pet iii 11.——k Rom xv. 33. xvi. 20. Phil iv 9. 1 Thes. v. 23. Heb xiii. 20. 1 John iv. 8—16.——l 14. Matt i. 23. 2 Thes. iii 16. Rev. xxii. 21——m Rom. xvi. 16. 1 Cor. xvi. 20. 1 Thes. v. 26 1 Pet v. 14.——n Rom. xvi 16 21—23 Phil. iv 21, 22. Philem. 23, 24 Heb. xiii. 24. 1 Pet. v. 13 2 John 13 3 John 14.——o Num. vi. 23—27. Matt. xxviii. 19. Rev. i. 4, 5.——p John i. 16, 17 *See on.* Rom. i 7. xvi. 20 1 Cor. xvi. 23——q Rom. v. 5. viii. 39. Eph. vi 23. 1 John iii 16 Jude 21.——r John iv. 10. 14 vii 38, 39 xiv 15—17 Rom. viii 9 14—17 1 Cor. iii. 16 vi. 19. xii. 13 Gal. v. 22, 23. Eph ii. 18. 22. v. 9. Phil. ii. 1. 1 John i. 3. iii. 24——s *See on,* Matt vi. 13. xxviii. 20. Rom. xvi. 20. 27. 1 Cor. xiv. 16.

'apostle calls in this place; not those who are not divinely 'elected to eternal life, (for they who still continue in 'their sins, not being yet effectually called, are not directly to be considered as "vessels of wrath;" 'nor those 'who after their calling, fall into grievous sins;) but such 'as are not at present *approved*.' (*Beza.*) It does not appear to me, that either the original word, nor our English word, *reprobates*, is ever in Scripture used as the opposite to *elect;* and as to *reprobation*, it is, I apprehend, a Scriptural idea, (for they who are not *chosen* must be rejected:) but not a Scriptural word in any sense. How many declamations, then, on this subject, might be spared! (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 7—10. The apostle prayed for the Corinthians, that they might do no more evil, but repent of what they had done; not that he and his friends should appear approved, by the submission of all parties to his authority, but that they might do what was right, and becoming them, though it should occasion him to be disapproved and censured: or even to be thought destitute of apostolical authority, because he had no occasion given him of exercising it. For indeed he and his brethren could do nothing in the use of these miraculous powers, against the truth of the Gospel, being invested with them only that they might defend the truth. But he loved their souls far more than his own reputation; and therefore he should be glad to be weak in *this respect*, by their strength of faith and grace removing all occasion of displaying his power; and indeed the great wish of his heart was for their perfect re-establishment in the faith and holiness of the Gospel, as a man is perfectly recovered from a dangerous malady, or from the breaking or dislocation of his bones.—Therefore he wrote these things before he came to Corinth, that they might have time for this complete recovery; lest contrary to his inclination, he should be compelled to use sharpness, according to his apostolical power, which the Lord had intrusted to him; that in the use of it he might promote the edification of believers, and bring sinners to repentance, and so prevent their final destruction.

V. 11—14. The apostle at length closed this most instructive epistle with his friendly salutations, and affectionate desires and prayers for the present and future welfare of the Christians at Corinth; exhorting them to be sincere, entire, established in the faith, and unreservedly the disciples of Christ; exciting them to be joyful in the Lord, and of good courage amidst all their temptations, and also to exhort and animate one another; calling on them to lay aside contentions, that they might all be of one heart and judgment, delighting in, and attending to, the same things, and living together in peace; and assuring them that in this way, "the God of love and peace," the Source and Pattern of love and peace, would manifest his presence among them and bless them. (*Marg. Ref.*) As a token of their mutual forgiveness and love, let them salute each other with a holy kiss. (*Marg. Ref.*) He assured them, that all the saints where he then was desired affectionately to salute them; and, finally, he desired that the free favour, mercy, and salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ, the special love of God the Father to them, as the objects of his choice, and his adopted children, and the participation of all the gifts, graces, and consolations of the Holy Ghost, might be with them all. That so, all blessings from the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in whose One name they had been baptized, might really be conferred on all of them, and constantly enjoyed by all of them, without exception, to the glory of the three Persons in the Sacred Trinity, according to the parts which they sustain in the great work of man's redemption.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

◆

All rigorous measures should be preceded by long patience and many warnings, when the case will admit of them, and with caution and deliberation, upon sure grounds, and with firmness of mind. They who will not be convinced by the abundant evidences already afforded, that Christ speaketh by his faithful ministers, will at length experience a very awful demonstration of it. These cannot appear more weak and despicable in the eyes of carnal men, than Jesus did to the chief-priests, when he hung upon the cross; yet he liveth, and exerciseth "all "power in heaven and earth;" and when he shall come to judgment, every denunciation of vengeance uttered by his servants, according to his word, will be found to be living and powerful for the condemnation of despisers.

We should therefore diligently and impartially examine ourselves, whether we are in the faith; and, instead of imagining that it is *always unbelief to doubt of our acceptance*, we should daily bring the whole of our faith, experience, comfort, affections, words, and works, to be assayed by the touchstone of the Scriptures, that we may get well acquainted with ourselves, obtain an assurance that will not shrink from investigation, and possess that "hope which maketh not ashamed, because the love of "God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost." For except "Jesus Christ be in us," by his Spirit, his image, and the governing power of his love, our faith is dead, and we are as yet disapproved by our Judge. While ministers give these warnings, they should also look well to themselves, that they may have a good hope that they shall not thus be rejected; but, in general, they who are most presumptuous in judging others, have most reason to suspect and examine themselves.

V. 7—13.

We should earnestly pray to God for those whom we caution, that they may "cease to do evil, and learn to do "well;" though their good conduct, "as becometh the "Gospel of Christ," should expose us to censure for our suspicions of them. We should be glad for others to be strong in the grace of Christ, though that should be the means of exposing our weakness; and we should long for the perfection of knowledge, holiness, and comfort in behalf of those who have imbibed a strong dislike to us; even if this should proportionably confirm, and increase men's prejudices against ourselves. In short, all our interests and feelings, except our present holiness and future felicity, should be despised, when they come in competition with the honour of Christ, and the prosperity of his Church. The miraculous powers of the apostles could not be used against the truth, but only in its defence; yet, abilities, gifts, authority, and influence, as well as the censures and excommunications of the Church, may be employed against the cause of Christ, and the edification of his people; yea, to the destruction of the possessors, and of others with them: we should then pray for grace to preserve us from such abuses, and to enable us, and all concerned, to make a proper improvement of all our talents.—If we would have the God of peace and love to be with us for our spiritual advantage and consolation, we should study to be steadfast in the faith of Christ, to act consistently with it, to be united in heart and soul with all our brethren, and to follow peace with all men. Then we may hope that "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the "love of God the Father and the communion of the Holy Spirit, will be with us all;" that through us 'glory 'may be to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, 'as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, 'world without end, Amen.' And what more can we desire for ourselves, or our brethren, than this frequently repeated apostolical benediction? May we then at all times, when these words are in our lips, or spoken in our hearing, so enter into the meaning of them, with fervent affections and enlarged desires and expectations, that the blessings implied in them may be upon us, and all our fellow-worshippers, now and for evermore! Amen.

THE
EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO THE
GALATIANS.

The Galatians, or Gallogrecians, were the descendants of the Gauls, who migrated from their own country, to seek for new settlements; and who, after a variety of disasters, got possession of a considerable district in Asia Minor, near to Lycaonia, Lystra, and Iconium. It is supposed, that they retained their native language and customs, at the time when the Gospel was first preached among them. Learned men have shown it to be probable, *that this was, during the first progress of Paul and Barnabas, through those regions:* (Acts, xiv:) *for, though Galatia is not mentioned, yet, "the regions round about Lycaonia," may be supposed to include Galatia. But some attempts to fix the date of their conversion to an earlier period, are wholly destitute of scriptural proof, and unsupported by any solid argument. It is plain, that the Galatians were, generally, idolatrous Gentiles before their conversion. The apostle, was not able to spend much time among them, because of his multiplied engagements; yet he asserts, in a way which challenges refutation, that he conferred miraculous gifts on them. But soon after he left them, some professed converts to Christianity, who were zealous for the Mosaic law, intruded among them; drawing them off from the true Gospel, to depend on ceremonial observances, and to the vain endeavour of establishing their own righteousness. The way in which the apotsle, with the greatest decision and apparent severity, opposes this false Gospel, will appear as we proceed: but certainly it shows, that he considered the very, life and soul of Christianity to be at stake. Yet his opposition to this self-righteous perversion of Christianity, does not, in the smallest degree, lead him to overlook its holy and practical tendency: and, in this respect, the epistle before us forms a striking contrast to the over zealous and vehement earnestness of numbers, for a part of Christianity; while another part, of equal importance, is overlooked, if not disparaged. Learned men maintain different opinions, as to the time when this epistle was written. Most, however, agree, that the apocryphal postscript which dates it from Rome, contains a direct untruth. It is probable, that it was written during the apostle's residence at Corinth; though some fix the date of it to the time, during which the apostle abode at Antioch, after his first progress through Asia Minor with Barnabas, and after the council at Jerusalem; but before he set off the second time, with Silas and Timothy, when the decrees were delivered to the Churches. The former opinion is, however, more generally maintained; and indeed it is not* certain, *that the apostle had been in Galatia, before his second progress through Asia Minor: and the objection to the epistle's being written at a later period, arising from the decrees which had been sent by the apostles to the Churches, which might, it is thought, have superseded the necessity of it, seems of little weight. The apostles had indeed decided against the ceremonial law being imposed on the Gentile converts; but they had not shown that the Gentiles, by voluntarily submitting to it, went about to establish their own righteousness, and virtually renounced the Gospel. Ancyra, Pessinus, Tavium, and Germa, are mentioned by geographers, as cities of Galatia; nay, Iconium is by some numbered among them: and St. Paul is supposed to have founded the Churches in these and other cities in that district.*

CHAP. I.

Paul asserts his divine appointment to the apostolical office, 1. *He salutes the churches, and praises God,* 2—5. *He sharply reproves the Galatians for so soon turning aside to a false gospel; and denounces an awful curse on all that preached any other doctrine, than what they had received from him,* 6—10. *He declares that he had his authority and instructions from Christ; and shows what his conduct had been before his conversion, and what it was afterwards,* 11—24.

PAUL, [a] an apostle, ([b] not of men, [c] neither by man, [d] but by Jesus Christ, [e] and God the Father, who [f] raised him from the dead;)

2 And [g] all the brethren which are with me, unto [h] the churches of Galatia:

3 [i] Grace *be* to you, and peace from God the Father, and *from* our Lord Jesus Christ,

4 Who [k] gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us [l] from this present evil world, [m] according to the will of God and [n] our Father:

5 To [o] whom *be* glory for ever and ever. [p] Amen.

6 I [q] marvel that ye are [r] so soon removed from him, [s] that called you into [t] the grace of Christ, [u] unto another gospel:

7 Which is not another; [x] but there be some that trouble you, and would [y] pervert the gospel of Christ.

8 But [z] though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, [a] let him be [b] accursed.

9 As we said before, [c] so say I now again: If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you [d] than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

10 For [e] do I now [f] persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? [g] for if I yet pleased men, I should not be [h] the servant of Christ.

a *See on,* Rom. i. 1. 1 Cor. i. 1.
b 11, 12 17.
c Acts i. 16—26. xiii. 2—4.
d Acts ix. 15, 16 xxii. 10 14—21. xxvi. 16 — 18 Rom i 4, 5. 2 Cor. iii 1—3. Eph iii 8. 1 Tim. i. 11—14. 2 Tim. i. 1 Tit. i. 3.
e Matt xxviii 18—20 John v 19. x. 30. xx 21.
f Acts ii. 24. 32. iii. 15. Rom iv. 24, 25. x. 9. xiv. 9 Eph i 19, 20. Heb. xiii. 20. 1 Pet. i 21. Rev. i 5. 18 ii. 8
g Phil. iv 21.
h Acts ix. 31. xv. 41 xvi. 5, 6. xviii 23. 1 Cor. xvi 1.
i *See on,* Rom i 7. 2 Cor xiii. 14
k ii. 20 Matt. xx. 28. xxvi. 28. Mark x. 45. Luke xxii. 19. John x. 11. Rom iv. 25 Eph. v. 2. 1 Tim ii. 6. Tit. ii 14. Heb. ix. 14. x 9, 10. 1 Pet. ii 24 iii. 18. 1 John ii. 2. iii. 16. Rev i. 5,
l vi. 14. John xii. 31. xiv. 30. xv. 18, 19. xvii. 14, 15. Rom. xii. 2 2 Cor iv. 4. Eph. ii 2. vi. 12. Heb. vi 5. Jam. iv. 4. 1 John ii. 15—17. v 4, 5. 19, 20. Rev. v. 9. vii. 9.
m Ps. xl. 8. Matt. xxvi. 42. Luke xxii 42. John v. 30. vi 38. xiv. 30, 31. Rom viii. 3 32 Eph. i. 3, 11. Heb. x 4—10.
n Matt vi. 9. Rom i 7. Eph. i. 2. Phil. iv. 20. 1 Thes. iii. 11. 13. 2 Thes. ii. 16.
o 1 Chr. xxix. 13. Ps. xli. 13. lxxii. 19. Is xxiv 16. xlii. 12. Matt. vi. 13. Luke ii. 14 Rom. xi. 36 xvi. 27. Eph. i. 12. Phil. iv. 20. 1 Tim. i. 17. 2 Tim iv. 18. Heb. xiii. 21. 1 Pet. v 11. 2 Pet. iii. 18. Jude 25. Rev. iv. 9—11 v. 12. vii. 12 xiv. 7.
p *See on,* Matt. xxviii. 20.
q Mark vi. 6. John ix. 30.
r iii 1—5 iv 9. 15. v. 7. Ps. cvi. 13 Is. xxix 13. Jer ii 12, 13.
s v. 8. 1 Cor iv. 15. 2 Thes. ii. 14 2 Tim i 9. 1 Pet. i. 15. 2 Pet. i 3
t Acts xv. 11. Rom. v. 2. 1 Tim. i. 15. 2 Tim. ii. 1. Rev. xxii. 21
u Rom. x. 3. 2 Cor. xi. 4.——x ii. 4. iv. 17. v. 10. 12. vi 11, 12. 17. Acts xv. 1—5 24. xx. 30. Rom. xvi. 17, 18.——y Jer. xxiii. 26 Matt. xxiv. 24 Acts xiii 10 2 Cor. ii 17 iv. 2 1 Tim iv. 1—3. 2 Tim ii. 18. iii. 8, 9. iv 3, 4 Tit. i. 10, 11. 2 Pet ii. 1—3 1 John ii 18, 19. 26 iv. 1. 2 John 7 10. Jude 4. Rev. ii. 2. 6. 14, 15. 20. xii 9 xiii. 14. xix 20. xx. 3.——z 9 2 Cor. xi 13, 14. 1 Tim. i 19. 20. Tit. iii. 10. Rev. xxii 18, 19.——a iii. 10. 13. Gen. ix 29. Deut xxvii. 15—26. Josh ix 23. 1 Sam xxvi. 19. Neh xiii 25. Mat. xxv 41. 2 Pet. ii 13. b Mark xiv 71. Acts xxiii. 14. Rom. ix 3 1 Cor xii 3 xvi. 22. *Gr.*——c 2 Cor. i 17. xiii. 1, 2. Phil. iii 1. iv. 4.——d Deut. iv. 2. xii. 32 xiii. 1—11. Prov. xxx. 6. Rev. xxii. 18, 19——e Acts iv. 19, 20 v. 29. 2 Cor. v. 9—11. 1 Thes ii 4.——f Matt. xxviii 14. Acts xii 20 Rom. ii 8 *Gr.*——g Matt. xxii. 16. Rom xv. 1, 2 1 Cor. x. 33. Eph vi. 6. Col. iii. 22. Jam. iv. 4.——h *See on,* Rom. i. 1.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. (*Note, Acts* xiii. 1--3.) It is highly probable, that the Judaizing teachers in Galatia expressly denied Paul to be an apostle; or, at least, that he was equal to Peter and the other apostles. He therefore began his epistle by calling himself an apostle, and declaring that he was not sent forth by any human authority, nor yet by the intervention of any man, as even Matthias had been, " but by Jesus Christ, and by God the Father, who raised him from the dead." That as Christ received his mediatorial kingdom from the Father, so Paul received his apostleship from Christ, and from God the Father by him; and though he was not appointed to that office before the death of Jesus, as most of the other apostles were, yet his authority was equally valid, being personally conferred on him by his *risen* Lord and Saviour. Ananias baptized Paul; but he neither appointed him to the apostleship, nor instructed him for it. With him all the brethren, (probably the ministers were intended,) who were then with the apostle, joined in this epistle, as testifying the facts, and concurring in the doctrines, contained in it. ‘ Perhaps the apostle meant to distinguish himself from those, who were constituted by the apostles, and sent by them to different places, being peculiarly named *evangelists*. Of this kind were Timothy, Titus, Luke, and other companions of Paul, who are celebrated in his epistles, and the Acts of the apostles.’ (*Beza.*)

V. 3--5. The epistle was addressed " to the churches of Galatia," or the several congregations of professed Christians, which had been collected in that province; but, as they had departed from the faith in the fundamental article of justification, the apostle did not call them " saints," for he stood in doubt of them. After his usual salutation, he added, that Jesus " gave himself" a willing and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of men, " that he might deliver" all believers from the condemnation, pollution, maxims, fashions, and conduct of " this present evil world," according " to the will" and appointment " of God our Father," to whom the whole glory ought to be, and would be, referred for ever. This deliverance could not be effected consistently with the glory of God, except by the redemption of Christ, and the acceptance, reconciliation, and grace, that are through him: if then the Galatians renounced their dependence on Christ, they must continue enslaved to this present evil world, and be condemned with it, for no outward forms or observances could deliver them from it, or give them the victory over it, (1 *John* v. 4, 5.) Some indeed interpret the words, which we render " this present evil world," of the Mosaic dispensation, which was then become a mere carnal system, connected with the love and spirit of the world, the fear of men, bondage to sin, and exposedness to condemnation. But the preceding explanation is far more extensive and natural: most of the Galatians were Gentiles before their conversion, and even the ritual law of Moses is never called *evil* in Scripture, much less the whole Mosaic dispensation.

i See on. 1. 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10. xi. 23. xv. 1—3. Eph. iii. 3—8.

11 But I certify you, brethren, [i] that the Gospel which was preached of me, is not after man.

12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

13 For [k] ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion,

k Acts xxii 3—5. xxvi. 4, 5.

V. 6—10. It is remarkable, in how different a manner the apostle addressed the Galatians, from what he afterwards did the Corinthians. We have seen that he used the utmost caution, and the most delicate and consummate management, in undermining the influence and counteracting the delusions of the false teachers at Corinth: but he attacked the error of the Galatians in a direct and open manner, without any circumlocution. The Corinthians had indeed "built hay, straw, and stubble" upon the good Foundation; but the Galatians were attempting to lay a wrong foundation: the former "might be saved "as by fire," notwithstanding their errors and abuses; but the latter must perish, unless recovered from their infatuation. In the former case the errors had been introduced more plausibly, and had diffused their baleful influence more gradually: the tares were so mingled with the wheat, that they could not be plucked up by a rough hand without the greatest danger, and much caution was requisite, lest Satan should get still further advantages. But in Galatia the error was simple and fundamental: it was a virtual renunciation of the Gospel, and destructive in its very nature. The persons who propagated "another Gospel" in Galatia, were as determined enemies to true Christianity, as the false apostles at Corinth, and more evidently so; but they were not equal to them in ingenuity: the detection of their error lay within a small compass; their example was of a most dangerous tendency; their progress was likely to be very rapid unless effectually checked, and therefore the apostle opened his subject in the language of astonishment at the conduct of the Galatians. He had been employed to call them by his ministry "into the grace of Christ," or a professed dependence for acceptance on the free mercy of God, through the merits and sacrifice of Christ, and by faith in him. He had fully instructed them in this important subject, and confirmed it by miracles and the gifts of the Spirit conferred on them, and they had appeared cordially to embrace this salvation: he could not therefore but be surprised, that they should so soon be induced to disclaim his ministry and renounce his doctrine, by turning to another Gospel. As it was more evident at first sight, that the Galatians had been removed from the ministry and doctrine of Paul, than it was that they had renounced Christianity, and as he stood in doubt whether they had been efficaciously called into the grace of Christ, so I apprehend we are rather to understand him as speaking of the *instrument* of their outward calling, than of the Agent in effectual vocation. Indeed, their new scheme was not another Gospel, nor any Gospel at all, but a most fatal delusion, shutting up under condemnation all those who adhered to it. This the apostle hoped would not be their case, as the immediate blame was to be cast on certain persons, whose aim was to trouble, perplex, and mislead the minds of the Gentile converts, and to pervert the Gospel of Christ, out of a blind and proud zeal for the Mosaic dispensation. They, no doubt, appeared to the unstable and unwary Galatians, to speak very plausibly concerning obedience to the law, as joined with faith in Christ in order to justification; but he must in the strongest and plainest terms declare, that whoever preached any Gospel contrary to that which he had preached to them, and they had received, or even added any thing to it on the grand question of justification, would be, and ought to be *accursed*, as one that remained under the curse of the law, and kept others under it, and as acting in direct opposition to Christ and the glory of God in his salvation. Nay, this would be, yea, let it be, the case, even if Paul himself, or any of the apostles, should depart from their former doctrine, and endeavour to establish any other foundation for a sinner's hope than they had done. Indeed, were it possible for an angel to come from heaven, and to preach a doctrine contrary to the free justification of a sinner by faith in the merits of Christ alone, he must at that moment become an apostate spirit, a rebel against God, an enemy to Christ, and accursed in himself. So that abilities, morality, plausibility, or even miracles, were not to be regarded in this case. Nor let this be considered as the language of intemperate zeal; for he would repeat it with solemnity, and again denounce accursed, by his apostolical authority, every one who thus attempted to lay so false a foundation, that they might learn to dread and abhor those delusions which they had unwarily encouraged. For could they suppose, that, after so many years of labour and suffering in the cause of Christ, he only meant to persuade men to adopt his own private sentiments that he might ingratiate himself with them, instead of pleading the cause of God, and approving himself to him? Indeed, if this had been his object, he should never have entered on the service of Christ, or so long continued in it; and if, in so fundamental a doctrine, he accommodated his discourse to the pride and prejudices of men's hearts, he could not act as the servant of Christ, who cannot be pleased with those things which suit the carnal minds and worldly wisdom of men. As the apostle became all things to all men, that he might please them for their edification, and as he even tolerated difference of sentiment and conduct, in various instances, respecting the Mosaic law; so we must conclude that this decisive language only related to that fundamental doctrine, of which he was about to treat, or to such others as are of similar evidence or importance. It does not behoove us to use the same authoritative language, or to denounce anathemas on those who differ from us; yet we may properly show men how evidently the apostle's words conclude those under the curse, who teach sinners to rely for justification, in the least measure or degree, on any thing except the righteousness and atonement of Christ. *Should not be,* &c. (10.) 'This is a cutting 'reproof to all those ministers, who either alter or 'conceal the doctrines of the Gospel, for fear of dis'pleasing their hearers, or to gain popularity.' (*Macknight.*)

[l] how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it;

14 And [m] profited in the Jews' religion above many my [*] equals in mine own nation, [n] being more exceedingly zealous of the [o] traditions of my fathers.

15 But when [p] it pleased God, [q] who separated me from my mother's womb, [r] and called *me* by his grace,

16 To [s] reveal his Son in me, [t] that I might preach him among the heathen; [u] immediately I conferred not with [x] flesh and blood:

17 Neither [y] went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and [z] returned again unto Damascus.

18 Then after three years [a] I [†] went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.

19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save [b] James the Lord's [c] brother.

20 Now the things which I write unto you, [d] behold, before God, I lie not.

21 Afterwards [e] I came into the regions of Syria and [f] Cilicia;

22 And was unknown by face unto [g] the churches of Judea, which were [h] in Christ:

23 But they had heard only, That [i] he which persecuted us in times past, now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed;

24 And [k] they glorified God in me.

l Acts viii. 3. ix. 1, 2. 13, 14. 21. 26. xxii. 4, 5. xxvi. 9—11. 1 Cor. xv. 9. Phil. iii. 6. 1 Tim. i. 13.
m Is. xxix. 13. lvii. 12.
* Gr. *equal in years.*
n Acts xxii. 3. xxvi. 5. Phil. iii. 4—6.
o Matt. xv 2, 3. 6. Mark vii. 3—13. Col. ii. 8. 1 Pet i. 18.
p Deut. vii. 7, 8. 1 Sam. xii. 22. 1 Chr. xxviii. 4, 5. Matt. xi. 26. Luke x. 21. 1 Cor. i. 1. Eph. i. 5. 9. iii. 11.
q Is. xlix. 1. 5. Jer i. 5. Luke i. 15, 16. Acts ix. 15. xxii. 14, 15. Rom. i. 1.
r Rom. i. 5. viii. 30 ix. 24. 1 Cor. i. 9. 24 xv. 10. 2 Thes ii. 13, 14. 1 Tim. i. 12—14. 2 Tim. i. 9. 1 Pet. v. 10.——s Matt. xvi. 17. 1 Cor. ii. 9—13 2 Cor iv 6. Eph. i. 17, 18. iii 5—10 ——t ii. 7—9. Acts. xxii. 21. xxvi. 17, 18. Rom. i 13, 14. xi. 13 xv. 16—19 Eph iii 1. 8. Col i. 25—27. 1 Thes. ii. 16. 1 Tim. i. 7. 2 Tim i. 11.————u 11, 12. ii 1. 6 Deut. xxxiii 9 Luke ix. 23—25. 59—62. Acts xxvi. 19, 20. 2 Cor. v. 16.————x Matt. xvi. 17. xxvi. 41. 1 Cor. xv. 50. Eph. vi. 12. Heb. ii. 14.——y 18. Acts ix. 20—25.
z 2 Cor. xi 32, 33. A. D 38.
a Acts ix 26—29. xxii. 17, 18.
† Or, *returned.*
b Matt. x. 3. Mark iii. 18. Luke vi. 15. Acts i. 13. *James the son of Alpheus.* 1 Cor. ix. 5. Jam. i. 1. Jude 1.
c Matt. xiii. 55. Mark vi. 3
d *See on,* 2 Cor. xi. 10, 11. 31.
e Acts ix. 30 xi. 25, 26. xiii. 1. xv. 23. 41. xviii. 18. xxi. 3.
f Acts vi. 9. xxi. 39. xxii. 3. xxiii. 34.
g Acts ix. 31. 1 Thes ii. 14.
h *See on,* 1 Cor. i. 30. Phil. i. 1. 1 Thes. i. 1. 2 Thes. i. 1.
i Acts ix. 13, 14. 20, 21. 27 1 Cor. xv. 8—10. 1 Tim. i. 13—16.
k Num xxiii. 23. Luke ii. 14. vii. 16. xv. 10. 32. Acts xi. 18. xxi. 20. 2 Cor. ix. 13. Col. i. 3, 4. 2 Thes. i. 10. 12.

V. 11—14. The reason of the awful denunciation, which the apostle had made, was contained in the assurance, that "his Gospel was not after man;" neither of human invention, nor suited to the dispositions and opinions of mankind; for he had not received it from any human teaching, but it was immediately revealed to him by Jesus Christ. This might be evidenced by facts; for they had often heard of his character and conduct in former years, when he professed the Jews' religion, and how his bigoted zeal had induced him to exceed the measure of all other opposers, in furiously persecuting the church, which he wasted as a wolf doth the sheep, or as a victorious army plunders and destroys the city which it has taken. He had also been well instructed in the religion of the Jews, and had made greater proficiency in his studies than most of those who were his equals in age, rank, and education; as well as far exceeded them in zeal for the traditions of the elders, along with the law of Moses. (*Notes, Matt.* xv. 1—20.) It could not therefore be supposed that he should at once, and contrary to all his interests, both embrace Christianity, and preach it first to his countrymen, and soon after to the Gentiles, without regarding the Jews' religion, unless some adequate cause had intervened to produce the extraordinary change. 'For, says he, it is well known in what school I 'was educated from my youth; namely, among the prin'cipal enemies of the Gospel. And, also, that I even 'excelled in the religion of a Pharisee; and thus, from 'being a Pharisee, I suddenly became the apostle of the 'Gentiles; so that no time intervened, in which I could 'be taught by man.' (*Beza.*) 'A revelation of the 'facts and doctrines of Christianity immediately from 'Christ himself, without the assistance of any human 'teacher, so wonderfully agreeing in all its branches with 'that which Christ had taught on earth, both before and 'after his resurrection, was so extraordinary an event, and 'of so great importance to those whom St. Paul visited, 'and to whom he wrote, that one cannot wonder he 'should think proper to assert it in so solemn a manner.' (*Doddridge.*) The marked distinction between being taught by man, and "by the revelation of Jesus Christ," is a proof of our Lord's Deity. 'In this respect, Paul 'seems to have been, in a measure, superior to the other 'apostles whom Christ instructed on earth after the 'manner of men.' (*Beza.*)

V. 15—24. When it pleased God, (who had chosen him to be an apostle, even from his mother's womb, and had, by his purpose, set him apart for that service,) to call him by his efficacious grace unto the knowledge and faith of the Gospel, and thus of his abundant mercy to reconcile him unto himself by Jesus Christ: and when, along with the outward extraordinary circumstances of his conversion, it had also pleased God to reveal his Son, in the glory of his Person and salvation, to his understanding and heart, to display his power, love, and grace, in the conversion of so prejudiced and violent an enemy; that he might make his name more widely known on earth, by sending him as an apostle to preach Christ to the Gentiles. (*Acts* xxvi. 17, 18.) When this gracious change had taken place, he immediately prepared for obedience, without consulting any sort of men, or conferring with the dictates of his own natural reason, about the consequences of his conduct to his interest, credit, ease, or life itself. He did not go up to Jerusalem to receive instructions, or to obtain a commission from those who had been apostles, before his extraordinary conversion and appointment to that service; but he proceeded to exercise his ministry without delay, and very soon went into Arabia for that purpose. Afterwards he preached at Damascus, till he was driven thence by persecution. At length after three years he went to Jerusalem, to visit Peter as a brother in Christ, to confer with him, and to relate the gracious dealings of God, and what he had wrought by him; but neither he nor James attempted to add any thing to the instructions or authority that he had received from the Lord; and for the entire truth of all that he had stated, he solemnly appealed to God. After a short time he left Jerusalem; and the other churches in Judea did not so much as

CHAP. II.

The apostle shows for what purpose he, after many years, went up to Jerusalem, 1, 2; *and that Titus, who attended him, was not circumcised, on purpose to assert the freedom of the Gentile converts from the law,* 3—5. *No additional knowledge was communicated to him by the other apostles; but they acknowledged his divine mission to the Gentiles,* 6—10. *At Antioch, he openly withstood Peter, who dissembled, as to communion with the Gentile converts, for fear of those from among the Jews,* 11—13; *expostulating with him, because he who himself sought justification by faith in Christ, led others to seek it by the works of the law,* 14—16. *The apostle by the law was become dead to the law, that he might live to God; and thus neither made Christ the minister of sin, nor frustrated the grace of God,* 17—21.

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know him personally; but the account of his wonderful conversion excited them to adore the power and grace of God towards so terrible a persecutor; and to bless his name for so great a deliverance vouchsafed to his afflicted Church. (*Notes*, &c. *Acts* ix. 1—31.) *Separated*, &c. (15.) 'This further includes a purpose from God to call 'him from heaven, in the midst of his madness against 'Christians; and his foresight that he would immedi'ately convert at his call; which two being first supposed, '(in God's eternal purpose and prescience,) it must needs 'follow to be an act of his unmerited free-choice from all 'eternity. But this was a designation only to the apostolical office, &c.' (*Hammond.*) This, however, shows that God's eternal purpose, and his prescience, do not interfere with man's free agency and responsibility. St. Paul would not have ascribed his conversion to himself, but to the grace of God; and so would the compilers of our articles, 'they, through grace, obey the call.' *In me.* (16.) This may be rendered *to me.* The same preposition is used just after, and translated *among*, it might be *to*, the heathen. The apostle, however, speaks of immediate prophetical revelation; and not of ordinary divine teaching. *James*, &c. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'Since we are 'told, (*Acts* ix. 19;) that after Saul recovered his sight 'and strength, he was certain days with the disciples 'at Damascus, during which he preached Christ in the 'synagogues; we must admit, that he spent a few 'days in preaching at Damascus, and then retired into 'Arabia, to receive further revelations, &c.' (*Macknight.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—5.

All authority and ability to preach the Gospel must come from Jesus Christ, and from God the Father, who hath raised him from the dead. In all ordinary circumstances, indeed, men are employed as instruments in qualifying and ordaining ministers; but, without the grace, teaching, and unction of the Spirit of Christ, all the rest must prove ineffectual. We ought to pray for "grace and "peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ," in behalf even of those of whom we doubt whether they be true saints. The love of Christ, in giving himself for our sins, and the hopes and motives which his redemption inspires, are effectual to deliver the believer from this present world, as well as from the wrath to come. This was intended by the divine Redeemer: it accords to the will of God, and is requisite for the display of his glory; and the consciousness of being rescued and separated from those who were our companions in sin, made victorious over the fear of men and the love of the world, enabled to refuse conformity to it, and to live a spiritual and heavenly life on earth, forms the proper evidence of justification in the righteousness of Christ and through faith in him; yet numbers, who profess evangelical doctrines, have no inclination to this part of salvation. But, as they are not delivered from this present evil world by the sanctification of the Spirit, it is presumptuous in them to expect exemption from its condemnation by the blood of Jesus.

V. 6—10.

It is truly astonishing, how soon hopeful converts are often removed from the ministry of those by whom they were first "called to the grace of Christ;" and how easily they are induced to embrace other *Gospels*, either more flattering to self-righteous pride, or more favourable to self-indulgence. These, indeed, are not the Gospel, but the devices of Satan to deceive the unstable, to trouble the injudicious, and to pervert Christianity. While we strenuously maintain, that every kind and degree of Antinomianism eventually tends to dishonour Christ and destroy true religion, we must also declare, in the most decided manner, that all dependence on good works, real or supposed, for justification, is still more fatal to the individuals who persist in it, after the truth has been fully and repeatedly set before them. No wonder that the preachers of morality and good works, as the foundation for the sinner's hope of acceptance, or in any degree conducive to his justification, are so evidently unsuccessful in their attempts to make men virtuous; for if they had apostolical endowments, yea, angelic capacities, eloquence, and purity, as they, their whole system, and all who cleave to it, lie under the awful and explicit curse of God, this must blast all their labours, and finally ruin their souls, unless they are previously convinced of their fatal mistake. While we zealously preach and diligently practice good works *for evangelical purposes*, let us be even still more careful, if possible, not to put them in the place of "that righteousness of God, which is unto and "upon all that believe;" and not to advance any thing which may betray others into so dreadful a delusion. Instead of presumptuously applying the apostle's words to those who differ from us, or in any other way than by a general declaration of the truth, let us for ourselves keep

A. D. 52.

THEN [a] fourteen years after, [b] I went up again to Jerusalem with [c] Barnabas, and took [d] Titus with *me* also.

2 And I went up [e] by revelation, [f] and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but * privately to them [g] which were of reputation, lest by any means [h] I should run, or had run, in vain.

3 But [i] neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:

4 And that [k] because of false brethren [l] unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our [m] liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might [n] bring us into bondage:

5 To whom [o] we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; [p] that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

a i. 18.
b Acts xv. 2—4.
c 13. Acts iv. 36, 37. xi. 25. 30. xii. 25 xiii. 2. 50 xv. 25 36—39. 1 Cor. ix. 6.
d 3. 2 Cor. viii. 16. 23. Tit i. 4.
e Ex. xviii. 9—23. Acts xvi. 9, 10. xviii. 9 xxiii 11.
f 9. Acts xv. 4. 12 1 Cor. i. 23 ii. 2. *See on*, i 16.
* Or, *severally*.
g 6 9 Ec. x. 1. Acts v. 34. Phil. ii. 29
h Matt. x 16. 1 Cor ix. 26. Phil. ii. 16. 1 Thes. iii. 5 ——i v. 2—6. Acts xv. 24 xvi. 3 1 Cor. ix. 20, 21.
k Acts xv. 1 24. xx. 30. 2 Cor. xi 13. 26. John iv. 1.
l 2 Tim. iii. 6. 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2. Jude 4
m iii. 23—25. v. 1 13. Ps. li. 12 cxix. 45 John viii. 31—36. 2 Cor. iii. 17. 1 Pet. ii 16. 2 Pet. ii. 19.
n iv. 3. 9, 10. 25. Is li. 23 2 Cor. xi. 20.
o iii. 1, 2. Acts xv. 2. Col ii. 4—8. Jude 3.
p 14. iv. 16. Eph. i. 13 Col. i. 5. 1 Thes. ii. 13.

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at the utmost distance from this terrible anathema, and caution all men against those who thus pervert the Gospel of Christ. In so important a cause we must not regard the friendship or fear the frowns of men, nor seek their favour by the persuasive words of human wisdom; but be satisfied with desiring the acceptance and blessing of God, in our endeavours to vindicate his truth. Indeed, none are the servants of Christ, who seek *to please men*, as their object; and few, who actually please men in general, give sufficient evidence that they honestly and faithfully serve Christ; for how can he be pleased with that testimony and conduct which is acceptable to carnal men, in whom the god of this world dwells and works? Ministers therefore should be careful not to receive or preach a carnalized gospel, and not to rest in human teaching; but to study the written revelation of Jesus Christ, and to pray continually for the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.

V. 11—24.

The conversation of many eminent Christians and ministers was once most contrary to the truth and grace of the Gospel. Zealous Pharisees and furious persecutors have been made monuments of the Redeemer's power and love; and though their apparent profiting before their conversion only tended to their greater condemnation, yet it hath afterwards been over-ruled for the glory of God, and their more abundant usefulness. The Lord suffers many whom he hath chosen for his work to proceed in opposition to him for a course of years; but when he calls them by his grace, and reveals the glory and preciousness of Christ to their souls, their enmity is subdued, their lusts dethroned, their hearts changed, and they willingly devote themselves to his service. When his command is concerned, they will not confer with flesh and blood, but will renounce all worldly prospects, and venture all consequences for his sake. And though in ordinary cases it would be presumptuous for new converts, or young ministers, to disregard the counsels of such as have been long employed in the work of Christ, yet that love to Christ and the souls of men, which renders them superior to lucrative considerations, and ready to endure hardships in order to spread the Gospel, is a good evidence that the Lord is preparing them for future usefulness. In speaking of the Lord's dealings with us, and the services for which he hath enabled us, we should scrupulously adhere to the truth, as in the sight of God; and when they, who opposed and would have destroyed the faith, are brought to embrace and preach it, we are called upon to glorify God on their behalf, though they be unknown by face to us.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1—5. It appears from the history, that Paul and Barnabas went up from Antioch, to carry the alms of the Christians in that city to the elders at Jerusalem, (*Acts* xi. 29, 30.) But they had, at that time, no special business with the apostles, and it is not certain that they saw any of them. The journey, however, here mentioned, most evidently is that recorded by the historian, when they went up on purpose about the very question which St. Paul was here debating with the Galatians. (*Notes, Acts* xv.) Most expositors date this journey fourteen years after the apostle's conversion, which scarcely allows sufficient time for all the intervening transactions; and it seems more obvious to compute the years from the first journey before-mentioned. (i. 18.) There is, however, but little certainty in the computation of times, even by the most learned chronologers, as to the date of the apostle's conversion, subsequent history, and the writing of his epistles; and exactness in this respect is comparatively of little importance. By the direction of God, who immediately revealed himself to the apostle, or some other prophet, on this occasion, he and Barnabas went to Jerusalem about this very question; and this was the only instance in which there had been the least appearance of inferiority in him to the other apostles. At that time he fully declared the whole of his Gospel among the Gentiles, to them and to other eminent persons at Jerusalem; but he did this privately, lest, if he had openly avowed it to the whole Church, the strong prejudices of the multitude against him and the Gentiles, and for the Mosaic law, should have excited commotions, and led to such measures as might have tended to prevent his future usefulness, and subvert the Churches which he had already planted. It would at length be fully known both that he admitted the Gentiles into the Church without circumcision, and that he did not consider the Mosaic law as binding on the consciences even of the Jewish converts. But, as his object was to obtain the sanction of the Church at Jerusalem to his doctrine, in order to silence the Judaizing teachers, it was very prudent to open the business privately to the apostles, that, being proposed and supported by them, it might come before the other elders with more weight than Paul himself could give it, in so pre-

6 But of those [q] who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were [r] it maketh no matter to me: [s] God accepteth no man's person: for they who seemed *to be somewhat*, [t] in conference added nothing to me:

7 But contrariwise, [u] when they saw that [x] the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as *the gospel* of the circumcision *was* unto Peter;

8 (For [y] he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same [z] was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)

9 And when [a] James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be [b] pillars, perceived [c] the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of [d] fellowship; that [e] we *should go* unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

10 Only *they would* [f] that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

q 2. 9. vi. 3. 2 Cor. xi 5. 21—23. xii 11. Heb. xiii. 7. 17.
r 12—14. Job xxxii. 6, 7. 17—22. Matt xxii 16. Mark vi 17—20. xii 14 Luke xx. 21. 2 Cor v. 16
s *See on*, Job xxxiv 19 Acts x. 34 1 Pet. i. 17.
t 10 Acts xv 6—30.
u 9. Acts xv. 12. 25, 26. 2 Pet. iii. 15.
x *See on*, i 16. Acts xiii 46—48. xviii. 6. xxviii. 28. 1 Thes ii. 4.
y Acts i. 8. ii. 14—41. iii. 12—26. iv. 4. v. 12. 15 viii. 17.
z iii. 5 Acts xiii. 2—11. xiv. 3—11. xv. 12. xix 11, 12. 26. xxi 19 1 Cor. i. 5—7. ix. 2. 2 Cor. xi. 4, 5.
a Acts xv. 7. 13. 22—26.
b 2 6. 12—14. Matt xvi. 18 Rev. iii. 12. xxi 14—20
c Rom i 5. xii 3 6. xv. 15. 1 Cor. xv. 10 Eph iii 8. Col i 29 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11.
d 2 Cor. viii 4. 1 John i. 3.
e Acts xv 23—30.
f Acts xi. 29, 30. xxiv. 17 Rom. xv. 25—27. 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2. 2 Cor viii. ix. Heb. xiii. 16. Jam. ii. 15, 16 1 John iii. 17.

11 ¶ But when Peter was come [g] to Antioch, [h] I withstood him to the face, [i] because he was to be blamed.

12 For before that [k] certain came from James, [l] he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, [m] he withdrew, and separated himself, [n] fearing them which were of the circumcision.

13 And [o] the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was [p] carried away with their dissimulation.

14 But when I saw that they [q] walked not uprightly according to [r] the truth of the gospel, [s] I said unto Peter before *them* all, [t] If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews; [u] why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

15 We *who are* [x] Jews by nature, and not [y] sinners of the Gentiles,

16 Knowing [z] that a man is not justi-

g Acts xv 30—35.
h 5. 2 Cor. v. 16. xi. 5. 21—23. xii. 11 1 Tim. v. 20. Jude 3.
i Ex. xxxii. 21, 22. Num. xx. 12 Jer. i. 17. Jon. i. 3. iv. 3, 4 9. Matt. xvi. 17, 18. 23 Acts xv 37—39. xxiii. 1—3 Jam. iii. 2. 1 John i. 8—10.
k 9 Acts xxi. 18—25.
l Acts x. 28. xi. 3. Eph ii. 15 19—22. iii. 6.
m Is lxv. 5 Luke xv 2. 1 Thes. v. 22
n Prov xxix. 25. Is. lvii. 11. Matt. xxvii. 69—75.
o Gen. xii. 11—13. xxvi. 6, 7. xxvii. 24. Ec. vii. 20. x. 1. 1 Cor v. 6. viii. 9—11 xv. 33.
p Job xv. 12. 1 Cor xii. 2. Eph. iv 14. Heb. xiii. 9
q Ps xv 2. lviii. 1. lxxxiv. 11. Prov. ii 7. x 9.
r *See on*, 5. Rom. xiv 14. 1 Tim. iv. 3—5. Heb. ix. 10.
s *See on*, b. 11 Lev xix. 17. Ps. cxli. 5. Prov. xxvii. 5, 6.——t 12, 13. Acts x. 28 xi 3—18.——u 3 vi. 12. Acts xv. 10. 19—21 24 28, 29——x Matt. iii 7—9. John viii. 39—41. Rom. iv. 16. Eph. ii 3.
y Mark vii. 26—28. Acts xxii 21, 22. Rom. iii 9. Eph ii. 11, 12. Tit iii. 3.——z 19. iii. 10—12 v. 4 Job ix. 2, 3. 20. xxv. 4. Ps. cxxx. 3, 4. Luke x. 25—29. Acts xiii. 38, 39. Rom. iii. 19, 20. 27, 28. iv. 2. 13—15. Phil. iii. 9.

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judiced an audience. Yet, while he used this precaution, he would not consent that Titus should be circumcised, contrary to his judgment and inclination: and it is probable, that he took that excellent Gentile convert with him on purpose, that, in the case of one on whom he could depend, he might show his steadfastness to his principles, on so critical an occasion. (*Notes*, *Acts* xvi. 3.) For both his journey to Jerusalem and his conduct there, especially in respect of Titus, were intended to counteract the designs of the false brethren, the pretended Christians, who had, in an unsuspected manner, got admission into the Church at Antioch; and who came as spies to observe the degree of liberty, which the Gentile converts, and even those of the Jews, used, in respect of the law, according to the truth and will of Christ: in order that they might bring the Gentiles into bondage to the legal ceremonies, as well as oblige the apostle and his coadjutors to be more observant of them. He was indeed always disposed to make allowance for men's prejudices, and to deal gently with weak consciences, in order to promote the Gospel, (*Notes*, 1 *Cor*. ix. 19—23:) but he would not give place at all, by way of subjection to the law, when they imposed it on men's consciences, and represented it as necessary to salvation. Nay, he strenuously opposed all such attempts, in order that the truth of the Gospel, which these Jewish teachers were labouring to pervert and corrupt, might remain in the Gentile churches.

V. 6—10. The false brethren disparaged Paul, as if no account was to be made of him; but Peter, James, and John, seemed to be somewhat in their estimation, in order that by using their names they might the more successfully oppose the truth: for the opinion of others concerning them, not their own estimate of themselves, is exclusively meant. But the apostle declared, that it was no matter to him what they or others were, as to their endowments, authority, or reputation: for God did not thus partially accept of men's persons, or determine right and wrong, truth and falsehood, by such rules. However, therefore, he loved and honoured them as brethren, he would not put them in Christ's stead, or acknowledge that they had any authority over him: nor indeed, when he conferred with them, had they added any thing to his knowledge of the Gospel, or authority to preach it, or even to his spiritual gifts and miraculous powers. On the contrary, they were convinced that Christ had immediately appointed him to be his principal minister, in preaching the Gospel among the Gentiles; even as Peter was the leading person in the work carrying on among the Jews: and had qualified him as fully, and wrought by him as mightily, in the one case, as he had by Peter in the other. So that these three apostles, who seemed to many persons to be the only pillars on whom every thing depended, saw and acknowledged the grace of God bestowed on him, and allowed of him and Barnabas, as fellow-labourers of equal authority and ability with themselves; being satisfied that they should labour principally among the Gentiles, while themselves would at present continue among the Jews. Only, considering the low condition of the Jewish converts, and the expenses which they had incurred soon after the day of Pentecost, they desired them to remember, and raise some contributions for *their* poor, among the Gentile converts; which Paul was very ready to do, and accordingly did without delay, and with great earnestness, notwithstanding their prejudices against him. The event of this conference in other respects was well known.

fied by the works of the law, [a] but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even [b] we have believed in Jesus Christ; that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: [c] for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

17 But if [d] while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also [e] are found sinners, [f] *is* therefore Christ the minister of sin? [g] God forbid.

18 For [h] if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

19 For I [i] through the law am [k] dead to the law, [l] that I might live unto God.

20 I am [m] crucified with Christ: [n] nevertheless I live; yet not I, [o] but Christ liveth in me: and [p] the life which I now live in the flesh, [q] I live by the faith of [r] the Son of God, [s] who loved me, and gave himself for me.

21 I [t] do not frustrate the grace of God: for if [u] righteousness *come* by the law, then [x] Christ is dead in vain.

a iii. 13, 14. 22—24. iv. 5. Rom. i. 17. iii. 21—26. 30. iv. 5, 6. 24, 25. v. 1, 2. 8. 9. viii. 1—3 30—34 1 Cor. vi. 11. 2 Cor. v 19—21 Phil. iii 9. Heb. vii. 18, 19.
b 20. John vi. 68, 69. xx. 21. Acts iv. 12. 1 Pet. i. 3 8, 9. 18—21. ii. 24. iii. 18. 2 Pet. i. 1. 1 John i. 7. ii. 1, 2. Rev. vii. 9 14.
c *See on*, z. Ps. cxliii. 2.
d Rom ix. 30—33. xi. 7.
e 11. Rom vi. 1, 2 1 John iii 8 9.
f Matt. i. 21. Rom. xv. 8. 2 Cor. iii. 7—9 Heb. vii 24—28 viii. 2. 1 John iii. 5 ——g *See on*, Rom. iii 4 6.——h 4, 5. 12—16 21 iv. 9—12. v. 11. Rom. xiv. 15. 1 Cor. viii. 11, 12.
i iii. 10. 24. Rom. iii. 19. 20. iv. 15 v. 20. vii 7—11 14. 22, 23. x. 4, 5.
k Rom vi. 2 11. vii. 4 6 9 Col. ii. 20. iii. 3. 1 Pet. ii. 24.
l 20. Rom xiv 7, 8. 1 Cor x 31. 2 Cor. v. 15. 1 Thes. v. 10. Tit. ii. 14. Heb. ix 14. 1 Pet. iv. 1, 2 6
m v. 24. vi. 14. Rom. vi. 4—6. viii 3; 4. Col. ii. 11—14.
n Rom. vi. 8. 13. viii 2. Eph. ii. 4, 5. Col. ii. 13 iii. 3, 4.——o John xiv. 19. 20. xvii 21. 2 Cor iv. 13 xiii. 3. 5. Eph. iii. 17 Col. i. 27 Rev iii 20.——p 2 Cor. iv. 11. x. 3 1 Pet. iv. 1, 2.——q 16. iii. 11 John vi. 57. Rom i. 17. v 2 2 Cor. i 24 v 7. 15. Phil. iv. 13. 1 Pet. i. 8.——r John i 49. iii. 16 35 vi. 69 ix. 35—38. Acts viii. 37. ix. 20. 1 Thes. i. 10. 1 John i 7. iv. 9, 10. 14 v. 10—13. 20 ——s i 4 Matt. xx 28. John xv. 13 Rom. viii. 37 Eph. v. 2. 25. Tit. ii. 14. Rev. i 5 ——t 18 Ps. xxxiii. 10. Mark vii 9. *Marg* Rom. iii. 31 ——u *See on*, 16. iii. 21. v. 2—4. Rom. x. 3. xi. 6 ——x Is. xlix. 4. Jer. viii. 8 1 Cor. xv. 2. 14. 17.

V. 11—16. The wisdom of God, in permitting the transaction here recorded, is very conspicuous; for it demonstrably proves the pope's pretended infallibility and supremacy, as derived from Peter, (no one can tell in what manner,) to be the most groundless fiction imaginable; and it tends exceedingly to establish the doctrine of justification by faith alone. After the decree of the council at Jerusalem, Peter on some account went down to Antioch, and, knowing that the Mosaic law was no longer obligatory on the conscience, he did not scruple to eat and converse freely with the Gentiles: yet when certain Jewish converts came from James to him, he separated from the Gentiles, lest he should incur the censure of the Jews. Thus he showed more fear of man, than regard to the truth of the Gospel; he confirmed the prejudices of the Jewish converts, and strengthened the hands of the Judaizing teachers; he weakened the influence of St. Paul and other ministers; he set an example of dissimulation, which was followed by the other Jews, and which even seduced Barnabas himself, who had been St. Paul's coadjutor among the Gentiles; and he threw additional hindrances in the way of their conversion. This sufficiently proved him to be both *fallible* and *sinful* in himself, though he was guided by the Spirit of God to deliver the Gospel to mankind, free from error or corrupt mixture. As, however, he was so evidently blameable, Paul, though probably a much younger man, and called to the apostleship long after him, deemed himself bound openly to withstand him. A private remonstrance would not suffice on so public and important an occasion; and he would not speak against him behind his back. But he took an opportunity, in the presence of the whole Church, to expostulate with him concerning his disingenuous conduct; demanding of him, how it was that he, being a Jew, should in many respects and on many occasions live like the Gentiles, without observing the Mosaic law? and yet should inconsistently employ the influence of his example, to induce, and even to compel, the Gentile converts to submit to circumcision and obey that law? For they, who were *naturally* of the stock of Israel, and thus had been born and educated Jews, and who had formerly been strictly observant of the *Mosaic* law, and not idolatrous sinners like the Gentiles, being at length fully convinced, that a man could not be justified before God by his own obedience, in any sense, (*Notes, &c. Rom.* iii,) but that this blessing must be obtained by the faith of Jesus Christ, even they had renounced all dependence on the law, and fled to Christ by faith, that they might be justified in him alone, without the works of the law. Why then should Peter and other Jewish converts draw the attention of the Gentiles to the legal ceremonies, and intimate to them, that they were not fully brought into the Church of Christ, because they did not submit to them, when this served to sanction those teachers, who instructed them to depend upon them in part at least for justification? Whereas they well knew, that by the works of the law no flesh could be justified before God. The *occasion* of this declaration was doubtless taken from the ceremonial law: but the argument, as it respects justification, is equally conclusive against all dependence on the works of the moral law, as absolutely inconsistent with the Gospel-method of justification. This certainly took place some years before the apostle's last journey to Jerusalem, as recorded by St. Luke, and it is an additional argument in support of the view before given of St. Paul's conduct on that occasion. (*Note, Acts* xxi. 18—26.) The conduct of Peter, on this trying occasion, seems to have been peculiarly excellent. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 17—21. It is not agreed, whether the apostle's address to Peter continues to the end of the chapter; or where it terminates, if it does not: but the doctrine is just the same, however this may be decided. If then, while the apostles renounced their legal confidence, and sought to be justified by Christ, it should at length be found that they were yet in their sins, through the insufficiency of his righteousness and atonement to justify them, except they returned back to the law, and taught others to do the same, it would follow, that Christ was "the minister of sin," and the Gospel "the ministration "of condemnation," instead of the ministration of the Spirit and of righteousness. But, God forbid that such things should be spoken of Christ, and his Gospel! This appears to be the meaning of the verse, as it stands connected in the apostle's argument. At first sight indeed it may seem rather to relate to the sins which are found in those, who profess to be justified by Christ; which are not to be charged on the doctrine, or the insufficiency of his grace to sanctify them, as if he were the minister

CHAP. III.

The apostle sharply reproves the Galatians for departing from that doctrine, which had been fully preached to them, and confirmed by the gift of the Holy Spirit, 1—5. *He proves his doctrine concerning justification, from the example of Abraham, and the testimony of scripture,* 6—9; *from the tenour and curse of the law, and the redemption of Christ,* 10—14: *and from the Abrahamic covenant, which the law could not disannul,* 15—18. *He shows the subserviency of the law to the covenant of grace; being as a shoolmaster to prepare men for Christ,* 19—24; *and that all believers are delivered from the law, and made the spiritual seed of Abraham,* 25—29.

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of sin, and allowed men to continue in it; or as if there was any need to go back to the law on that account. The former interpretation, however, is most approved, and indeed justly. If then Paul, or the other apostles, should, either by doctrine or example, countenance the opinion, that the law must be obeyed, in order to justification, thus building again what they had destroyed, they would become transgressors, and liable to condemnation. And if the Jewish Christians should return back to a dependence on the law, they would vainly attempt to erect again that old building, which they had destroyed, in order to make Christ their Foundation. (*Notes, Rom.* x. 1—4.) which would again bring them under condemnation, and leave their sins both unpardoned and unsubdued. But this was very different from the apostle's own experience in this matter: for through his knowledge of the strictness, extent, spirituality, excellency, and sanction of the moral law, as well as of the typical import of the ceremonies, he was become "dead to the law;" he expected no help from it in the matter of justification; he was divorced from it as a legal covenant, that he might welcome Christ and his salvation. The union betwixt him and the law, *in this sense*, was finally dissolved, as the marriage relation is by death. He hoped and feared nothing from it, any more than a dead man did from his friends or his enemies. But the effect of this was not a careless, lawless life: on the contrary, this was necessary, in order that he might live to God, and be accepted by him, and devoted to him, through the motives, encouragements, and grace of the Gospel. Indeed, he was even *crucified* with Christ; the demands of the law on him had been answered by his Surety, in his obedience unto the death upon the cross; and his union with Christ had made him die to all legal dependences, as well as to the love and friendship of the world, the delights and interests of sin, and all those carnal principles from which his former activity arose.—Nevertheless, he lived in a new and evangelical hope, by the communication of a divine life to his soul, by new capacities of enjoyment, and new motives and principles of action. Yet it was not so much he that lived, as Christ who lived in him by his Spirit, and his power and grace, regulating his judgment and affections, transforming him into his own image, and employing him as the instrument of his glory. So that the life, which he then lived in the body, surrounded with worldly objects and temptations, was not conducted upon carnal principles, or by a regard to external things, but by faith in the Son of God; as he depended on him for all things, and aimed to do all according to his will and in subserviency to his glory. And to this he was influenced by the consideration, that this glorious Saviour had loved him when a bitter persecutor, and had given himself a sacrifice for his sins. So that, though he neglected no acceptable obedience, and declined no self-denying service, yet he attended to all his duties from such principles and for such purposes, that he did not frustrate or set aside the grace of God, by attempting in any measure to justify himself by his works; being fully assured, that if righteousness could have been obtained by any obedience of man to the law, consistently with the glory of God, then Christ had died without any necessity, and to no purpose. As, therefore, no Christian could suppose, that so stupendous a plan as that of redemption was formed and executed without any occasion; so it must also be concluded, that righteousness could, in no degree, be obtained by a sinner, on account of his obedience to the law. This holds equally true of the moral, as of the ceremonial law. It was of small moment whether men observed the latter, or not, except as they depended on it: and the concluding part of the apostle's argument related to the moral law, at least equally with the ceremonial. (*Notes, Rom.* vi.) "I through the law "have died by the law, so that I must live by God." (19.) 'We all, through breaking law, have died by the curse of 'law, so that if we live, we must live by the free gift of 'God, and not by law.' (*Macknight.*) If this learned and laborious writer had made it clearly intelligible, what he meant by '*have died* by the curse of the law,' his novel interpretation would have required further notice.—But the author owns himself unable to affix any precise meaning to the words used in this and in several places of his translation and paraphrase; and certainly the word *breaking* is here a direct *addition* to the text, which is not at all necessary, or indeed admissible.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

While we simply depend upon God to prosper our labours, we should use every prudent method of obviating misapprehensions, and counteracting the designs of opposers, "lest by any means we should run in vain;" and this may commonly be connected with decided firmness in important cases. False brethren and teachers are generally brought in *unawares;* we must expect spies in our congregations, who come on purpose to find something to cavil at or object to, in order to deprive us of our Christian liberty, by bringing us into bondage to legal terrors or human impositions, or, through extravagant notions of liberty, to keep men in slavery to sin and Satan. We must not give place, in such matters, "by way of sub-

O [a] FOOLISH Galatians, [b] who hath bewitched you, that [c] ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes [d] Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

2 This only would I learn of you. [e] Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or [f] by the hearing of faith?

3 Are ye so foolish? [g] having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

4 Have [h] ye suffered * so many things in vain? if *it be* yet in vain.

5 He therefore [i] that ministereth to you the Spirit, and [k] worketh miracles

a 3. Deut. xxxii. 6. 1 Sam. xiii 13. Luke xxiv. 25. Eph. v 15. 1 Tim. vi. 4. *Marg*

b i 6 iv. 9. v. 7, 8. Matt. xxiv. 24 Acts viii. 9—11. 2 Cor xi. 3 13—15 Eph iv. 14 2 Thes. ii. 9—12. 2 Pet. ii. 18 Rev iii. 18. xiii. 13, 14. xviii 3.——c Acts vi 7. Rom. ii. 8. vi 17 x. 16 2 Cor. x 5. 2 Thes i. 8 Heb. v 9. xi. 8. 1 Pet. i. 22. iv 17——d 1 Cor i 23, 24. ii. 2 xi. 26 Eph iii. 8

e 5. 14. Acts ii 38 viii 15 x 44—47. xi 15—18. xv. 8 xix 2—6 1 Cor. xii 7—13. 2 Cor xi 4. Eph i 13, 14. Heb. ii. 4. 1 Pet. i. 12.

f Rom i. 17. x. 16 17.

g iv. 7—10 v. 4—8. vi. 12—14. Heb. vii. 16—19. ix. 2 9, 10.

h Ez. xviii. 24. Heb. vi. 4—6. x. 32—36 2 Pet. ii 20—22. 2 John 8.

* Or, *so great.*

i *See on*, 2. 2 Cor. iii 8.

k Acts xiv 3 9, 10. xix. 11, 12. Rom. xv. 19. 1 Cor. i. 4, 5. 2 Cor. x. 4. xii. 12 xiii. 3.

"jection," in any measure; lest the truth of the Gospel should be obscured or disgraced. False brethren often pretend an undue regard to some ministers of established reputation, in order to run down others of equal ability and faithfulness, whose line of duty requires them to proceed in a somewhat different manner. But they should be shown, "that God accepteth no man's person;" and that all the servants are as nothing, in comparison of their common Lord, who will never approve of those who "call any man master upon earth," that they may disparage others, who are labourers together with him. The question is not, who said or did such and such things; but merely, what was said and done, and whether it accords to the word of God, or not? Frequently those ministers, whom captious or injudicious persons magnify against others, in conference, add nothing to them: nor indeed do they materially differ from them; except as the different descriptions of men, among whom they labour, induce them to conduct their work with some apparent variation. And they generally see that God hath called them to their different spheres of usefulness, and become mutually desirous, by love and good offices, to strengthen each other's hands; while many ignorantly suppose, or maliciously pretend, that they are opposing one another. But whether our differences be real or imaginary, we should all be forward to remember the poor; especially such as have impoverished themselves for the sake of the Gospel, even should they retain any prejudices against us.

V. 11—16.

"The fear of man bringeth a snare," to an extent which few are fully aware of; and we need not wonder to see pious persons ashamed or afraid openly to countenance those, whom they inwardly favour; or boldly to avow themselves on controverted points, when their opinions are unpopular; for even Peter was induced thus to prevaricate! But even a man equal to an apostle, or "the "chiefest of the apostles," who "walks not uprightly "according to the Gospel," is to be blamed, and withstood to his face, when the matter is evident and important: for the more eminent he is, the greater mischief will follow from the example; so that other distinguished persons will be carried away by such a sanctioned dissimulation. Public offences must be publicly reproved, that the evil may be effectually counteracted. We must cease from man, and know no one after the flesh, if we would follow the Lord fully; for "verily every man in his best "estate is altogether vanity." Christ is the only infallible Head of his Church: all pretenders to this title on earth are antichrists; and they who cannot endure to be blamed, or to acknowledge themselves mistaken, are of a very unchristian temper. Men are seldom aware of the magnitude, or fatal consequences, of their errors or carnal compliances; yet they should be fairly pointed out to them, that they may be put upon their guard. Whatever be our nation, religious profession, education, or outward character; yet, if we are real and established Christians, we know that "by the works of the law shall no flesh be "justified:" this conviction hath led us to believe in, and rely on, Christ, that we might be justified by faith in him: and whilst we adhere to this principle, all our worship and obedience will be entirely disregarded in the grand concern of our justification, and be wholly performed from other motives and to other purposes.

V. 17—21.

We should make Christ the minister of sin, were we to suppose that his merits were insufficient to justify the believer; even as others make him the minister of sin, by allowing themselves in disobedience, from a presumptuous confidence of being justified by his righteousness, and saved without being sanctified. The believer, through the law, is become "dead to the law," not that he may continue in sin, but that "he may live unto God," (*Notes, Rom.* vi. vii.) and the more simply he relies on Christ for every thing, the more devotedly does he walk before him in all his ordinances and commandments. He is crucified with Christ to the world and sin, as well as to all legal dependences; he is united with Christ and conformed to him; he, as it were, rises, lives, and ascends with him; yea, Christ lives and reigns in him, and speaks and acts by him: and, as far as he is brought under this sacred influence, his words and works resemble those of his Lord, and all his powers are employed in his service. He lives here on earth by faith in the Son of God, which worketh by love, induceth obedience, and effects a progressive transformation into his holy image: and this proportionably enables him to use the language of full assurance, and to say, "he loved me, and gave himself "for me." Thus he neither abuses nor "frustrates the "grace of God;" for this proposition, "that if right"eousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in "vain," is the bane of all self-justifying schemes, however refined or ingenious they be: and all, who cleave to them, would certainly have deemed this language to be enthusiasm, if the apostle had not used it as his own experience, and if it had first been spoken by some zealous modern defender of the doctrine of grace, against the objections of Pharisees and the perversions of Antinomians.

among you, *doeth he it* [l] by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

6 Even [m] as Abraham believed God, and it was * accounted to him for righteousness.

7 [n] Know ye therefore, that [o] they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

8 And [p] the scripture, [q] foreseeing that [r] God would justify the heathen through faith, [s] preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, [t] In thee shall all nations be blessed.

9 So then [u] they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

10 For [x] as many as are of the works of the law are [y] under the curse: for it is written, [z] Cursed *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

11 But [a] that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is* evident: for, [b] the just shall live by faith.

12 And [c] the law is not of faith: but [d] the man that doeth them shall live in them.

13 Christ hath [e] redeemed us from the curse of the law, [f] being made a curse for us: [g] for it is written, [h] Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree:

14 That [i] the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles [k] through Jesus Christ; that we [l] might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

12.
m 9. Gen xv 6 Rom iv 3–6. 9, 10 ix. 32, 33. Jam. ii 23.
* Or, *imputed.* Rom. iv. 6. 11. 22 24 2 Cor. v. 19—21.
n Ps. c. 3 Luke xxi 31. Heb. xiii. 23.
o 26 — 29. John viii. 39 Rom iv. 11—16. 24. ix 7, 8
p 22. iv 30. John vii. 38 42. xix 37. Rom. ix. 17 2 Tim. iii 15—17.
q Acts xv 15—18
r Rom. iii. 28—30 ix 30.
s Heb. iv. 2
t 16 Gen xii 3 xviii. 18. xxii 18. xxvi. 4. xxviii. 14 xlix 10 Ps. lxxii 7. Is. vi. 13. lxv. 9. Acts iii 25, 26. Rev. xi. 15.
u 7.8.14 29. Rom. iv. 11. 16 24.
x 11. *See on,* ii 16. Luke xviii. 9—13. Rom iv. 15. vii. 9—13. viii 7 ——y Deut. xi. 26—28. xxix. 20 Is. xliii 28. Matt. xxv. 41.——z Deut. xxvii. 26. Jer. xi. 3. Ez. xviii. 4. Rom. iii. 19, 20. vi. 23. Jam. ii. 9—11.

a 1 Kings viii. 46. Job ix. 3. xl. 4. xlii. 6. Ps. xix. 12. cxxx 3, 4. cxliii. 2. Ec. vii. 20 Is. vi 5. liii. 6. lxiv. 6. Jam iii 2 1 John i. 8—10. Rev. v. 9. vii. 14, 15.
b Hab. ii 4. Rom. i 17. Heb. x 38.
c Rom iv. 4, 5. 14. 16. ix. 30—32. xi 6
d Lev. xviii. 5. Neh. ix. 29. Ez. xx. 11. 13. Matt. xix. 17. Luke x. 25—28 Rom. x. 5, 6
e *See on,* 10. iv. 5 Is. liii 5—7. 10—12 Dan ix. 24. 26. Zech. xiii. 7 Matt. xxvi. 28. Rom. iii. 24—26. iv. 25 viii 3, 4. 2 Cor. v. 21. Eph. v. 2. Tit. ii. 14. Heb vii 26, 27. ix. 12 15. 26. 28. x. 4—10. 1 Pet i. 18—21 ii. 24. iii 18. 1 John ii. 1, 2. iv 10 Rev. i 5 v. 9 xiii 8.——f 2 Kings xxii 19 Jer. xliv. 22. xlix 13. Rom. ix 3 ———g Deut. xxi 23. 2 Sam xvii. 23. xviii. 10. 14, 15 xxi. 3. 9. Esth. vii. 10 ix 14. Matt xxvii 5. 1 Pet. ii 24.——h Josh x 26, 27.——i *See on,* 6—9. 29. Gen xii. 2, 3. Is. xli. 8. li. 2, 3. Rom. iv. 3—17 ———k 16. Gen. xxii. 18 Is xlix. 6. lii 10 Luke ii. 10, 11 Acts ii 39 iii. 25, 26. iv. 12. Rom x 9 - 15. 1 Tim ii. 4—6. l 2. 5 iv 6 Is. xxxii. 15 xliv 3, 4. lix. 19—21. Jer xxxi 33 xxxii 40 Ez. xi 19. xxxvi. 26, 27. xxxix. 29. Joel ii 28 29. Zech. xii. 10 Luke xi 13. xxiv. 49 John vii 39. Acts i 4, 5 ii 33 38 v. 32. x. 45—47 xi. 15, 16. Rom. viii 9—16. 26, 27. 1 Cor. xii 13. 2 Cor. i 22. Eph. i. 13, 14. ii. 18. 22. iii. 16. iv. 30. 1 Pet. i. 22. Jude 19, 20.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1—5. Having authenticated his ministry and doctrine by the statement of facts, the apostle proceeded more directly to argue the point with the Galatians, whom he sharply reproved, as destitute of wisdom and understanding, in thus unaccountably turning away from the truth of Christ. He demanded, therefore, who had fascinated them by the sorcery of their insidious insinuations? Who had induced them to refuse obedience to the truth, which required them to seek justification by faith in Christ alone? For it certainly could be owing to nothing less than fascination *for them* to seek it by the works of the law, seeing the Gospel had been so fully explained and earnestly enforced upon them; and all things relating to the sufferings of Christ, and the need, motive, intenseness, and benefit of them, had been set before them in so pathetic, affectionate, and lively a manner, by the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the Lord's supper, that Jesus Christ had, as it were, been evidently set forth as crucified before their eyes and in the midst of them. And could it be imagined that the impressions which seemed to be thus made upon their minds should so soon be utterly erased? The argument, however, might be reduced to a very compendious decision: he only desired to know from them, whether they had received the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit by the laying on of the hands of those preachers who proselyted them to the Jewish law, or from him who brought them the joyful report of free salvation by faith in Christ. As they must know that they received these gifts by him, and not by their legal teachers, could they be so absurd as to suppose that they had indeed begun to worship and serve God, in a spiritual and acceptable manner, by the preaching of a doctrine warranted by the Holy Spirit, but that the work had been left imperfect, and was now to be completed by teachers who possessed no miraculous powers, at least could impart none to others; and who only instructed them in mere external ordinances, a bodily exercise, of which carnal men were as capable as the most spiritual man on earth! They had endured many persecutions, especially from the Jews; and would they at length prove their profession of Christianity to be vain, and lose all the benefit of their sufferings, by renouncing the grace of the Gospel, to rely in part at least on legal observances? The apostle hoped that it would not yet be thus in vain; but it certainly must be so, unless they could be recovered from the fatal mistake. He must therefore again demand of them, Whether the supply of the Spirit and miraculous powers had been given them from the Lord, by means of the preachers of legal observances, or by the ministers of the Gospel? This open appeal to the Galatians, who were under the influence of such as opposed the apostle's authority, is a strong demonstration that these gifts were actually communicated to them by his ministry. The abruptness and repetitions of his questions prove that his mind was greatly agitated by their misconduct, and show how important he deemed their mistake; and we cannot doubt but that he regarded all their profession and sufferings to have been altogether in vain, in case they persisted in it. This is of vast importance in the argument; for submission to the ceremonial law, though burdensome, would not have been a renunciation of the Gospel, if it had not implied a dependence on their own works, instead of Christ's righteousness and atonement; and this dependence must be equally incompatible with the grace of the Gospel, even when the obedience itself is necessary from other motives, and for other purposes.

V. 6—14. (*Notes, Gen.* xv. 6. *Rom.* iv.) The example of Abraham was sufficient to determine that they, who expected justification by faith alone, were his children, and interested in the blessings promised to him; and the Holy Spirit, who inspired the writers of the Scriptures, foreseeing the calling of the Gentiles, and their justification by faith in Christ, preached the Gospel to Abraham in few words, when it was said, "In thee m Rom. vi. 19. 1 Cor. xv. 32. 15 Brethren, [m] I speak after the manner of men; Though [n] *it be* but a man's n Heb. ix. 17.

" shall all nations be blessed;" that is, ' By virtue of ' their relation to the promised Seed, which shall descend ' from thee, sinners of all nations shall, by faith, be made ' completely happy in the favour of God and the enjoyment ' of everlasting life.' So then they who sought acceptance in this way of believing were blessed after the example of believing Abraham; but as many as were induced to seek acceptance by their own obedience to the works of the law, and all who in any way remained under that covenant, abode under the curse, according to the testimony of the law itself. (*Note, Deut.* xxvii. 26.) The passage here quoted, follows a variety of curses denounced against transgressors of the *moral* law; which shows that this was principally referred to. Indeed, the legal dispensation, considered as a covenant of works, was intended: believers always were under the covenant of grace by faith in the Saviour, as promised from the beginning, and prefigured by the sacrificing of innocent animals; unbelievers always made the whole a complex covenant of works; and the nation of Israel was under the Sinai-covenant, in respect of the land of Canaan and their peculiar privileges. But after the promulgation of the Gospel, the whole became entirely a covenant of works, even as much as that of Adam; and under such a covenant, in one form or other, all men continue as the rational and accountable creatures of God; and, being transgressors of his law, even according to their own obscure notions of it, they are exposed to the curse and wrath of God, and remain under it, unless they believe in Christ. But as the apostle was arguing with *Judaizers*, so he led their attention to the written law itself, which could not confer the blessing, but must denounce the curse upon them, for they had not " confirmed it," or " continued" from the beginning of their lives " in all " things written in the law," so as to perform a perfect obedience to them. It was therefore evident at the first glance, that no man could be justified by a law that peremptorily demanded this absolute and sinless perfection, which no mere man ever yet rendered to it; but it was further evident, as God had declared another way of justification and eternal life: (*Note, Hab.* ii. 4. *Rom.* i. 17.) and the way of faith, by which alone the most righteous of our fallen race can live before God, is perfectly distinct from, yea, opposite to, that of the law, which never proposes life but upon the terms of perfect obedience. (*Notes, Lev.* xviii. 5. *Matt.* xix. 17—22. *Mark* xii. 28—34. *Luke* x. 25—29. *Rom.* x. 5—11.) Every one, therefore, who has not performed this condition, is under a curse; but Christ hath redeemed his people from that curse of the law, or bought them off by a price paid for them, having been willingly made a curse in their stead. For, as it was the purpose of God thus to deliver men from wrath by the ignominious and agonizing sufferings of his beloved Son upon the cross, and all the punishment which he then endured, so he declared that kind of punishment to be accursed, and an emblem of his most dreadful vengeance, when it was written, " Cursed is every one that hangeth " on a tree;" (*Note, Deut.* xxi. 23.) that so, when the holy and divine Saviour was suspended on the cross, it might appear that he endured the curse of the law in our stead. Thus the way was opened for the blessing of Abraham, even the righteousness of faith, and friendship with God, to be conferred, not only on the Jews, but on the Gentiles also, through Christ, and by faith in him: and that they too might receive the promised gifts of the Spirit by faith, to seal to them the truth of the Gospel, and his sanctifying grace, and their own free justification. (*Note, Acts* ii. 14—21.) It is evident that the apostle supposed the Gentiles to be under the curse of the law as well as the Jews, but in another form; else they would not have needed this redemption and justification. *The just*, &c. (11.) Or, " The just by faith shall live." This is the more exact translation;" and as " the righteous" ness of faith" does not secure men from temporal death, in any form or at any time, so deliverance from eternal condemnation, and eternal life in heaven, must be intended. *Curse of*, &c. (13.) As Christ died, not to deliver us from temporal death, but from " the wrath to " come," it is manifest that the curse of the law, whether the law of Moses, or any law which men are supposed to be under, is eternal damnation, not temporal or temporary punishment. Christ did not suffer eternal damnation; for, being God as well as man, his temporary sufferings constituted an infinite satisfaction to divine justice, and a display of the evil of sin, and the honour of the divine law. Many expositors, who contend against the imputation of Christ's righteousness to believers, in disputing against Socinians, argue for the vicarious sufferings of Christ in our stead. Now, what is this but *imputation?* He, though perfectly holy, paid the debt which we vile sinners had contracted. " It was exacted, and he be" came answerable. We, vile sinners, on believing, are " made the righteousness of God in him," and receive the inheritance which he merited. Thus there is a reciprocal imputation. But as the imputation of sin did not render the Saviour either criminal or polluted, but had its effect merely in his receiving the punishment which we deserved, so the imputation of his righteousness does not render us either free from criminality or pollution, but merely entitles us to the reward of his righteousness. We have still the same need of humiliation and repentance, of sanctification, and personal obedience, and holiness, without which we have no evidence that we are made the righteousness of God in him. ' I wonder that Jerome ' and Erasmus should labour and seek for I know not ' what figure of speech, to show that Christ was not ' called accursed. Truly in this is placed all our hope: ' in this the infinite love of God is manifested: in this ' is placed our salvation, that our God, properly and ' without any figure, poured out all his wrath on his own ' Son; caused him to be accursed, that he might receive ' us into favour. Finally, without any figure, Christ was ' made a curse for us, in such a manner, that unless he ' had been truly God, he must have remained under the ' curse for ever, from which for our sakes he emerged. ' For, indeed, if the obedience of the Son of God be figu' rative and imaginary, so must our hope of glory be.' (*Beza.*) *The Spirit.* (14.) The departure of the Spirit of life and holiness, when Adam sinned, left him spiritually dead, and proved him a condemned criminal; the

* covenant, yet *if it be* confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto.

16 Now [o] to Abraham, and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many: but as of one, And to thy Seed, [p] which is Christ.

17 And [q] this I say, *That* the covenant that was confirmed before of God [r] in Christ, the law, [s] which was four hundred and thirty years after, [t] cannot disannul, [u] that it should make the promise of [x] none effect.

18 For [y] if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: [z] but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise.

19 ¶ Wherefore [a] then *serveth* the law? [b] It was added because of transgressions, [c] till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made: *and it was* ordained [d] by angels [e] in the hand of a mediator.

20 Now [f] a mediator is not *a mediator* of one, [g] but God is one.

21 *Is* [h] the law then against the promises of God? [i] God forbid: [k] for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily [l] righteousness should have been by the law.

22 But the scripture hath [m] concluded all under sin, [n] that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given [o] to them that believe.

* Or, *testament.*

o 8 Gen. xii. 7. xiii 15, 16. xv. 5. xvii 7, 8. xxi. 12, 13. xxii. 17, 18. xxvi 3, 4. xxvii. 13, 14. xlix 10.

p 27—29 Rom. xii. 5 1Cor xii 12 27. Eph iv. 15, 16. v. 29, 30. 32. Col ii. 19. iii. 11.

q v. 16. 1 Cor. i. 12. vii 29 x. 19. 2Cor ix. 6. Eph. iv 17. Col ii. 4.

r Gen. xv. 18 xvii. 7, 8 19 Luke i 68—79 John i, 17 viii. 56—58 Rom. iii. 25. 2 Cor. i 20 Heb xi. 13 17—19 39, 40. 1 Pet i 11, 12. 20.

s Gen. xv 13 Ex xii 40, 41 Acts vii. 6.

t 15. Job xl. 8. Is. xiv 27. xxviii 16 Heb vii. 18.——u 21. Num. xxiii. 19. Heb. vi. 13—18 ——x v. 4 Num. xxx. 8. Ps. xxxiii. 10 Rom. iii 3. 1 Cor. i. 17.——y 10 12. 26. 29. ii. 21. Rom. iv. 13—16 viii. 17.——z *See on*, 16 Ps. cv. 6—12 42 Mic. vii. 18—20. Luke i. 54, 55. 71, 72. Heb. vi. 10—15.—— a Rom iii. 1, 2. vii. 7—13.

b 21—24. Deut. iv. 8 9 Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20. Luke xvi. 31. John v. 45—47. xv. 22. Rom. ii. 13. iii. 19, 20. iv. 15. v 20, 21. vii 8—13. 1Tim. i. 9.

c 16. 25. iv. 1—5.

d Deut. xxxiii. 2. Acts vii. 53. Heb. ii. 2 5

e Ex. xx. 19—21. xxiv. 1—12. xxxiv. 27—35. Lev. i. &c. Deut. v. 23—31. ix. 13—20. 25—29. xviii. 15—19. Ps. cvi. 23 John i. 17 Acts vii. 38.

f Job ix 33 Acts xii 20. 1Tim. ii 5.

g 17 Gen. xv. 18. xvii 1, 2 Rom. iii. 29, 30.

h Matt. v. 17—20. Rom. iii. 31. vii. 7—13.

i ii. 17. *See on*, Rom. iii. 4. 6.

k ii. 19 21. *See on*, Rom. iii. 20.——l Rom. iii. 21, 22. ix. 31. x. 3—6. Phil. iii. 6—9. Heb. xi. 7.——m 8—10. 23 Ps cxliii. 2 Rom. iii 9—20. 23. v. 12. 20. xi. 32 ——n 14—17 29. Rom iv. 11—16. v. 20, 21 2 Tim. i. 1. Heb vi. 13—17. ix 15. 2 Pet. i 4. iii. 13. 1 John ii. 25. v. 11—13 ——o Mark xvi. 16 John iii. 15—18. 36. v. 24. vi. 40. xi. 25, 26. xii. 46. xx. 31. Acts xvi. 31. Rom. x. 9. 1 John iii. 23, 24. v. 1.

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gift of the Spirit of life and holiness in Christ Jesus, is the source of spiritual life, and the seal of his justification. The miraculous or extraordinary gifts of the Spirit cannot, therefore, be exclusively meant.

V. 15—18. The apostle proceeded to ground another argument upon the case of Abraham. Speaking of the high concerns of God's dealing with his creatures, after the manner of men's dealing with each other; he reminded the Galatians, that even a covenant between men, when fully ratified, could not be disannulled, or have any new conditions added to it, without the explicit consent of all parties. Now the formal ratification of the covenant with Abraham, and its express promises to him and his Seed, took place long before the Mosaic law; and could not therefore be altered or disannulled by it. Neither did the Lord include all the descendants of Abraham in these promises, as so many distinct kinds of seed: but they were limited to him, and *his Seed* in the singular number, which implied that Christ was principally meant, and others only as related to him. (*Marg. Ref.*) So that the unbelieving descendants of Jacob were no more interested in the most valuable promises, than the posterity of Ishmael and Esau: while all believers, though of gentile extraction, being one with Christ, were included in the Abrahamic covenant, without any concern in the Mosaic law or the Sinai-covenant. Now this covenant confirmed with Abraham, in respect of Christ and his salvation, the law, which was not given till four hundred and thirty years after the calling of Abraham, could not disannul, that the promise should be rendered of none effect, (*Note, Ex.* xii. 40, 41.) For if the inheritance of heaven, (which was typified by that of Canaan,) had depended on the law, and men's personal obedience to it; it could not have been secured to believers by the promise given to Abraham; and the new conditions added to his covenant would virtually have disannulled it.

V. 19—22. If then the promises were made to Abraham and his Seed, and all believers in him, without any dependence on the law; what purpose did the law answer, and why was it promulgated? To this objection the apostle answered, that it was added to the covenant with Abraham, and subserved the accomplishment of it in various particulars, previously to the coming of Christ; though it made no alteration as to the manner of a sinner's acceptance. The whole system served, "because of trans-"gressions," to restrain the nation of Israel from universal idolatry and wickedness, and to preserve the worship of God among them till the coming of Christ: the moral law was useful to convince men of sin, to show them their need of repentance, of mercy, and of a Saviour; the ceremonial law shadowed forth the way of acceptance and holiness, and believers were thus enabled to maintain communion with God, by faith in the promised Messiah. Thus it pleased God, that things should remain, till the coming of that Seed of Abraham, to whom especially the promises had respect; and the law was promulgated, and formed into a national covenant, at mount Sinai, by the ministration of angels, and by the intervention of Moses as a typical Mediator. (*Notes, Ex.* xix. xx. xxiv.) It was, however, well known, that a Mediator was not appointed to act merely in behalf of one party, in any covenant, but of two at least: yet only one party in the Abrahamic covenant was present when the law was given, even God himself. For the nation of Israel was not the other contracting party in that covenant; unbelievers among them had no share in the principal blessings of it; and all believers in every age and nation were concerned in it, by virtue of their union with the Seed to whom the promise was made. So that Moses might mediate another covenant between God and Israel: but he was not authorized to alter or disannul the Abrahamic covenant; which therefore continued in force with all believers, after the giving of the law, exactly as before. This does not mean, that Christ was not present, as JEHOVAH, and the great Agent in the giving of the law: but only that he acted in his *legislative*, and not in his *mediatorial* character, or as representing the whole body of believers. If this then were the case, it might further be inquired, Whether the law was contrary to the promises of God, and the accomplishment of them to those who

23 But before [p] faith came, we were kept [q] under the law, shut up unto [r] the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

24 Wherefore [s] the law was our school-master *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be [t] justified by faith.

25 But after that [u] faith is come, [x] we are no longer under a school-master.

26 For [y] ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

p 19. 24, 25. iv. 1—4 Heb. xii. 2.
q iv. 4, 5. 21. v 18 Rom iii 19. vi. 14, 15. 1 Cor. ix. 20, 21.
r Luke x. 23, 24 Heb xi. 13 39, 40. 1 Pet. i. 11, 12
s 25. ii. 19. iv. 2, 3. Matt. v. 17, 18 Acts xiii 38, 39. Rom. iii. 20—22. vii 7—9. 24, 25. x. 4. Col. ii 17 Heb. vii 18, 19. ix. 8—16. x 1—14.
t *See on*, ii. 16.
u 22.———x iv. 1—6 Rom. vi. 14. vii. 4. Heb. vii. 11—19. viii 3—13. x. 15—18.———y iv 5, 6. John i. 12, 13. xx. 17. Rom. viii 14—17. 2 Cor. vi. 18. Eph. i. 5 v. 1. Phil ii. 15 Heb. ii 10—15 1 John iii. 1, 2. Rev. xxi 7.

27 For [z] as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have [a] put on Christ.

28 There is [b] neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither [c] male nor female: [d] for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 And if ye *be* [e] Christ's, then are ye [f] Abraham's seed, [g] and heirs according to the promise.

z Matt xxviii 19, 20. Mark xvi. 15, 16. Acts ii. 38. viii. 36—38. ix 18. xvi 15. 31—33. Rom. vi. 3, 4. 1 Cor. xii. 13. Col. ii. 10—12 1 Pet. v. 21.
a Job xxix. 14. Is. lxi. 10. Luke xv. 22. Rom. iii 22. xiii 14. Eph. iv. 24. Col iii. 10.
b Rom. i. 16 ii. 9, 10 iii. 29, 30. iv. 11, 12. ix. 24. x. 12—15. 1 Cor. vii. 19 Eph. iii. 5—10 Col iii 11 ———c 1 Cor vii. 14.———d John x. 16. xi. 52 xvii 20, 21. 1 Cor. xii. 12 Eph ii. 13—22 iv. 4. 15. 16 ———e v 24. 1 Cor iii. 23: xv 23 2 Cor. x. 7.———f 16 28 iv 22—31 Gen. xxi. 10—12 Rom. iv. 12. 16—24. ix. 7. 8 Heb xi. 18 ———g iv. 7 28. Rom iv 13, 14. viii. 17. 1 Cor. iii. 22. Eph. iii 6. Tit. iii. 7. Heb. i 14. vi 17 xi 7. Jam ii. 5. Rev. xxi. 7.

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lived under that dispensation? To this the apostle answered, "God forbid!" 'let that thought be rejected with 'abhorrence.' The Sinai covenant was *distinct* from the Abrahamic; the moral law, as the standard of duty from the Gospel; the foundation of a sinner's hope, and the shadows of the ceremonies from Christ the Substance; but they were not *contrary* to each other, when properly understood. Nay, the law in every sense subserved the promises, and the performance of them to believers: it was good in itself, and for the ends proposed by it; but it was never intended to give life to sinners. For if there had been such a law given as could have answered this end, verily righteousness, or justification unto life, would have been by the law, and the whole plan of redemption by Christ would have been superfluous. But whether the Mosaic dispensation, as unconnected with the Gospel, or the moral precepts and sanctions, or the ceremonies, or any other part of the Old Testament, was duly attended to, its uniform tenour concluded, or shut up, all men of every nation or character under sin, under the guilt of their actual transgressions, and the power of their evil propensities, as in a strong prison, from which no law could give them deliverance. This was intended to recommend the Gospel, that the promise of pardon, righteousness, liberty, grace, and eternal life, by faith in the promised Saviour, being proposed to men when shut up as condemned criminals in a prison, without hope or possibility of escape, might be freely performed to all who by faith acceded to the proposal; while all others must be left under the condemnation and the power of sin, without remedy.—(*Notes, Rom.* i. ii. iii.) *All under sin.* (22.) The original word is neuter: 'All men, and whatever can proceed 'from man, so that it is more emphatical than if it had 'been masculine.' (*Beza.*)

V. 23—25. Before the great Object and Author of faith was come, and the doctrine of faith fully declared, the nation of Israel, the visible Church, was kept under the legal dispensation; and not only were unbelievers shut up under the curse of the law as at other times, but even believers were held in a state of comparative darkness and bondage. Through the promises and ceremonies they received a measure of light and encouragement, and thus they looked forward to that brighter day which was predicted; while the nation at large was shut up by the institutions and sanctions of the law, and so restrained from total apostacy, till the coming of Christ and the full revelation of the doctrine of faith. So that the Church, considered as a complex body, was in a state of pupilage and minority under the old dispensation; and the law served as a pedagogue or tutor, to instruct it in the introductory lessons of religious knowledge by many hard tasks and burdensome restraints, imposed with much salutary severity. This was so ordered, that Christ and his salvation might be the more welcome, and that the very rigour of the law might bring men to him, that they might be justified by faith. But when the great Object and doctrine of faith were publicly introduced, the Church was no longer to continue under a school master; but was to be admitted to a nobler liberty, and instructed in a more open and enlarged manner. As therefore children are glad to be released from the confinement and discipline of a school, so believers should welcome the liberty and privileges of the Gospel; and it was peculiarly absurd for Christians to be attached to the state of confinement under which the ancient Church had been held, and the yoke of the legal dispensation. This admits of an obvious accommodation to the believer's experience, and the first use of the moral law in bringing men to Christ; but the above is the evident scope of the apostle's argument. 'God 'also fully pardoned the sins of the upright Jews, and 'freed them from the punishments of the other life; but 'not by virtue of the blood of bulls and goats, but by 'virtue of their faith in the Messiah, owned by them to 'be the Messiah, their Righteousness.' (*Whitby.*)

V. 26—29. Even the Gentile converts were made at once the children of God by faith in Christ, and admitted to the full privilege of that high relation, by an interest in his atonement and righteousness. For as many of them as had been baptized, according to Christ's appointment, and thus admitted into his Church, if indeed they were what this profession implied, had put on Christ as their robe of righteousness. It is generally supposed that the apostle alludes to the custom of baptized persons putting off their old garments, and putting on new, clean, or white raiment, after they had been baptized; but it is by no means certain that this custom prevailed at so early a period; at least the sacred writers do not mention it. Indeed, the connexion of the twenty-seventh verse with that which precedes, shows that the faith in Christ, which was publicly professed in baptism, and not the mere outward administration, whether the baptized person had faith or not, was especially intended. 'God now looking on them, there appears nothing but 'Christ; they are, as it were, covered all over with him, 'as a man is with the clothes that he hath put on; and 'hence in the next verse it is said, they are all one in

CHAP. IV.

The church had been under the law, as an heir under a guardian, 1—3. *Christ came to redeem those that were under the law, and to give both Jews and Gentiles the adoption of sons,* 4—7. *The apostle shows how absurd the conduct of the Galatians was; in that, after having been delivered from idolatry by the gospel, they willingly subjected themselves to the bondage of the law: and he expresses his fears of them,* 8—11. *He tenderly expostulates with them, for becoming alienated from him, to whom they had expressed the most fervent love; ascribes this to the influence of false teachers, and shows the ardour of his soul in longing for their salvation,* 12—20. *He illustrates this subject of the two covenants, by showing, that the history of Sarah and Hagar was an allegorical representation of them,* 21—31.

'Christ Jesus, as if there were but that one person.' (*Locke.*) The learned writer indeed connects this high privilege with the *profession* of the Gospel; but it cannot be connected with a hypocritical profession. 'The false 'apostles might urge, that circumcision was used even 'from Abraham; but the apostle answers, that baptism 'has succeeded to circumcision.' (*Beza.*) 'Baptism 'under the Gospel, as the rite of initiation, is as effectual 'for making us the sons of God, as circumcision was 'under the law.' (*Macknight.*) We may also add, 'and no more.' (*Note, Rom.* ii. 28, 29.) From the time, when any persons "believe in their hearts unto "righteousness, and with their mouths make confession "to salvation," all other distinctions vanish; they are all members of the mystical body of Christ, and entitled to all its blessings, without any need of the Mosaic law. So that if the Galatians did indeed belong to Christ, by faith and the participation of his Spirit, they were become the spiritual seed of Abraham, and heirs of all the blessings covenanted to him; and had therefore no need of being proselyted to the Jewish law, or concerned in the abrogated Sinai-covenant. The question, concerning the baptism of infants, is not at all affected by the apostle's language in this passage: for the same way of arguing, by which some have attempted to prove that they ought not to be baptized, because incapable of believing, would also prove them incapable of salvation, (*Mark* xvi. 16. *Eph.* ii. 7, 8;) and also that the male infants of Israel ought not to have been circumcised. That question must be determined by arguments of a more appropriate nature.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—5.

The faithful preaching of the Gospel so exhibits Christ crucified, as the great Object of the sinner's faith, hope, and admiring gratitude, and so shows the nature, glory, and preciousness of his sufferings, from love to our souls, that he is, as it were, evidently set forth before men's eyes, as dying upon the cross for their sins. But how small a portion of the preaching in Christendom answers this description, or tends thus to excite men's affections towards the gracious Redeemer, needs not be told. Alas! who hath infatuated and bewitched men's minds, that they should so generally turn away from this fundamental doctrine, to listen to metaphysical subtleties, moral harangues, superstitious observances and forms, or enthusiastical reveries? It is plain, that the god of this world, by various instruments, who mutually despise each other, hath "blinded men's eyes, lest the Gospel of the glory of "Christ should shine into them," and they should learn to trust in a crucified Saviour, "God manifested in the "flesh." But we must observe, with still greater grief and astonishment, the folly of numbers, who have often heard the Gospel most faithfully and pathetically preached, and yet have at length been fascinated, by plausible deceivers, to refuse obedience to the truth. We cannot indeed appeal to miracles and extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit; but we may boldly demand, Where are the fruits of the Spirit most evidently brought forth? among those who preach justification by the works of the law, or those who preach the doctrine of faith? They who have begun to fear God, to seek mercy, to pray, and to renounce sin, under the preaching of the Gospel, must be very foolish, if they think to make further proficiency by returning to legal dependencies, or resting on carnal and external observances. It is most grievous to see those who have gone through sharp convictions, and even endured persecutions for attending on the Gospel, afterwards turning aside, and giving cause to fear that they have suffered so many things in vain: and indeed any affliction endured, without profit derived from it, should be considered as a cause for sorrow and humiliation.

V. 6—14.

We should aim to be "followers of those who, through "faith and patience, inherit the promises," and have obtained a good report: and for this end, we should study the Object, nature, and effects of Abraham's faith. They who partake of his faith shall surely inherit his blessing; and if we can ascertain that this is our case, we may be sure of sharing all his privileges. But who can, in any other way, escape the curse of the holy law? Who hath continued in all things written in it, to do them? Who dares demand life on this ground? Let us learn to distinguish accurately in this matter: "The law is not of "faith:" every law of God, and every legal covenant, must be perfectly distinct from the covenant of promise through faith in Jesus Christ: and if we confound these things, we shall find a curse instead of a blessing. The redemption of all, who ever were or shall be saved, was paid by the great surety of the new covenant, when he was "made a curse for us, and bare our sins in his own "body on the tree:" but the sufferings of this holy One of God more loudly warn sinners to flee from the wrath

NOW I say, *That* [a] the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;

2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

3 Even so we, [b] when we were children, were [c] in bondage under the * elements of the world:

4 But when [d] the fulness of the time was come, [e] God sent forth his Son, [f] made [g] of a woman, [h] made under the law;

a iii. 23 29. Gen. xxiv. 2, 3. 2 Kings x. 2. xi. 12. xii 2.

b iii. 19. 24, 25.

c 25. 31. ii. 4 v. 1. Matt. xi. 28. John viii 31—36 Acts xv. 10 Rom. viii. 15

* Or, *rudiments* 9. *Marg.* Col ii. 8. 20. Heb. vii 16

d Gen xlix 10. Dan ix 24—26 Mal iii 1. Mark i. 15. Acts i. 7. Eph. i. 10. Heb. ix. 10.——e Is. xlviii 16, 17. Zech ii 9—11. John iii. 16, 17. vi 38, 39. viii. 42. x. 36 1 John iv. 9, 10 14. f Is. ix 6, 7 Mic. v 2 Zech vi. 12. Luke ii. 10, 11. John i 14. Rom i 3 ix. 5 Phil ii. 6—8. 2 Tim iii 16. Heb. ii. 14 x 5—7. 1 John iv. 2 ——g Gen iii. 15. Is vii. 14. Jer. xxxi. 22 Mic v 3. Matt i 23 Luke i. 31 35 ii. 7.——h Matt. iii. 15. v. 17. Luke ii 21—27. Rom. xv. 8 Col ii 14.

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to come, than all the terrors of Sinai, or the curses of the law itself; for how can it be expected, that God will spare any man to whom sin is imputed, seeing he spared not his own Son, when our sins were charged upon him? Yet doth Christ, at the same time, as from the cross, most freely beseech sinners to take refuge in him, and with accents of the tenderest love invites even the Gentiles to accept of the blessing of Abraham, and to seek for the promise of the Spirit by faith in him!

V. 15—22.

No subsequent transactions, or external alterations, can disannul or add to that covenant, which engages eternal life to every believer; that promise cannot be made of none effect. Yet let us not think that the law was given in vain; the legal covenant and the ceremonies have answered their end, and, being fulfilled in Christ, are no more in force; yet are they still replete with instruction to believers, though a better covenant is made with them, through that great Mediator, whom "all the angels of "God worship." But, as the law of Moses was never contrary to the promises of God to Abraham and his Seed, but served as a school-master, to bring the Church to Christ for justification by faith, so it would be most absurd to suppose that the holy, just, and good law of God, the universal standard of duty, is contrary to the Gospel of Christ, as it is in every way subservient to it, when properly understood and used. If a law was ever given to fallen man, which could give eternal life, this must be it, and then righteousness is by the law; but, instead of this, it brings in the whole world guilty before God, and shuts up every man under sin, without hope or remedy from any other quarter than the Gospel; while the excellency of its precept demonstrates the justice of the sinner's condemnation. Here Christ finds transgressors, and the promise of eternal life is freely given by him to all that believe.

V. 23—29.

Men in general, even under the dispensation of the Gospel, continue shut up as in a dungeon, in love with their chains, being blinded, intoxicated, and lulled asleep by Satan, through worldly pleasures, interests, and pursuits. But the awakened sinner discovers his dreadful condition, and the more he examines, or labours to escape, the fuller conviction he receives that he cannot effect his own deliverance; then he learns, that the mercy and grace of God form his only hope; and, though his measure of doctrinal knowledge may be scanty, he is "shut up to the "faith, that will shortly be revealed" to him. The precepts and sanction of the law urge him on to duty, and restrain him from sin, even while they discourage him and fill him with terrors; and thus, by a kind and beneficial severity, the law is made use of by the convincing Spirit, to show the sinner his need of Christ, and to bring him to rely on his merits, that he may be justified by faith. Then he ceases to be under the tuition of the law as a schoolmaster, and to be alarmed by its terrors, (except as he lives beneath his privileges;) yet the precept becomes, by the teaching of the Spirit of Christ, his guide in the delightful path of evangelical obedience, his beloved rule of duty, and his standard of daily self-examination; in this use of it he learns continually to depend more simply on the Saviour's merits, and it puts energy into his prayers, and endears the promises to his soul. Thus we become the children of God by faith in Christ, and, being baptized into him by the converting grace of the Holy Spirit, we put on Christ, and stand accepted in him; and all, who thus belong to him and are one with him, are the children of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise. But no outward forms or profession can ensure these blessings, for "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, "he is none of his."

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1—3. The argument and illustration of the preceding chapter are here continued. The heir of a large estate, during his minority, is excluded from the possession of it, and kept in subjection to guardians and tutors, who lay restraints upon him, as if he was a servant; though in fact he is the proprietor of the whole inheritance: and this continues till the time appointed by his father, in his will or otherwise, for his coming of age, and being put in possession of the estate. Thus the Church was held in apparent bondage under the Mosaic law, till the coming of Christ, as being in its childhood, and under tuition. These observances are called, "the elements of this world;" they taught the simplest rudiments of religious knowledge, as the alphabet contains the first principles of science: and the burdensome external ceremonies of that dispensation were suited to the ideas of worldly men, and in many things similar to the rites of other nations, rather than adequate means of spiritual worship, or adapted to those who were matured in spiritual judgment and affections. The splendid temple, the priests in their sacred vestments, the multiplied sacrifices and religious festivals, and other things of the same kind, when their typical meaning and use were neglected, were greatly coincident with the gross apprehensions of carnal men concerning God and his worship. Thus unbelievers had always abused them; and even believers were held in comparative darkness and bondage, by so many external observances.

5 To [i] redeem them that were under the law, [k] that we might receive the adoption of sons.

6 And because ye are sons, [l] God hath sent forth [m] the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, [n] crying, Abba, Father.

7 Wherefore [o] thou art no more a servant, [p] but a son; and [q] if a son, then an [r] heir of God through Christ.

8 Howbeit, then [s] when ye knew not God, [t] ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

9 But now, after that [u] ye have known God, or rather [x] are known of God, [y] how turn ye * again to the weak and beggarly † elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

10 Ye [z] observe days, and months, and times, and years.

11 I [a] am afraid of you, [b] lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

i 21. iii. 13. Matt. xx 28. Acts xx. 28. Eph. i 7 v 2. Col. i 13—20. Tit ii. 14 Heb. i. 3 ix. 12. 15. 1 Pet. i. 18—20. iii. 18. Rev. v. 9. k 7 iii 26. John i. 12. Rom. viii. 19 23. ix. 4, 5 Eph. i. 5 l Luke xi 13. John vii. 39 xiv. 16—18 Rom. v 5 viii 15, 16. Eph. i. 13. iv. 30 m John iii. 34 xv. 26 xvi. 7 Rom. viii. 9. 1 Cor. xv 45. Phil i 19. 1 Pet i 11 Rev xix. 10 ——n Is xliv. 3—5. Jer iii. 4 19 Matt. vi 6—9. Luke xi. 2 Rom. viii. 26, 27. Eph. ii. 18 vi 18 Heb. iv. 14—16. Jude 20 ——o 1. 2. 5, 6. 31. v. 1 ——p *See on*, iii 26. ——q *See on*, iii. 29. ——r Gen xv 1. xvii 7, 8. Ps. xvi 5 lxxiii 26 Jer x. 16 xxxi. 33 xxxii 38—41 Lam. iii. 24 1 Cor iii. 21—23 2 Cor. vi. 16—18. Rev xxi. 7. ——s Ex v. 2. Jer x 25. John i. 10. Acts xvii. 23. 30. Rom. i 28. 1 Cor. i. 21. Eph. ii 11, 12. iv. 18. 1 Thes. iv. 5. 2 Thes. i. 8 1 John iii. 1.

t Josh. xxiv. 2. 15. Ps cxv. 4—8. cxxxv 15—18. Is. xliv. 9—20. Jer. x. 3—16. Acts xiv. 12—15 xvii. 29. Rom. i. 23. 25. 1 Cor. viii. 4. x. 19. 20. xii. 2. 1 Thes. i. 9. 1 Pet. iv. 3 u 1 Kings viii. 43. 1 Chr. xxviii 9. Ps. ix. 10. Prov. ii 5. Jer. xxxi. 34 Hab ii. 14. Matt xi. 27. John xvii. 3. 1 Cor. xv 34. 2 Cor iv 6. Eph. i. 17. 2 Pet. ii. 20 1 John ii 3, 4 v. 20 ——x Ex xxxiii. 17. Ps. i 6. John x. 14. 27. Rom. viii, 29 1 Cor. viii 3. xiii. 12. 2 Tim. ii. 19. ——y Col ii, 20—23. Heb. vii. 18 ——* Or, *back*. Heb. x. 38, 39. ——† Or, *rudiments* 3 *Marg*. ——z Lev. xxiii. xxv. 1—13. Num. xxviii. xxix Rom xiv. 5. Col ii 16, 17 ——a 20 2 Cor. xi. 2, 3 xii 20, 21. ——b ii 2 v. 2. 4. Is. xlix. 4. Acts xvi. 6. 1 Cor xv. 58. Phil. ii. 16. 1 Thes. iii. 5. 2 John 8.

V. 4—7. When the fulness of time was arrived for the coming of the Messiah, which God had chosen in his purpose and made known by prophecy, and which the state of the Jewish nation, and of mankind in general, showed to be peculiarly suitable for the introduction of a new and more enlarged dispensation, then God sent forth his own Son, One with him in the divine nature, to become manifest in the flesh, assuming human nature into personal union with the Deity, by his miraculous conception in the womb of the virgin, that he might be made, or born, (as some copies read it,) of a woman, and be emphatically *her seed*, (*Gen.* iii. 15,) by receiving his human flesh of her substance. ‘ He was therefore the ‘ Son of God, *even*, yea, *properly*, in respect of his ‘ Deity.’ (*Beza.*) Thus he was also made under the law, being born of a Jewess, and the reputed Son of a Jew, and circumcised; that so being under it as a covenant of works, he might, as the Surety of the Church, in every way answer its full demand. This was done voluntarily, without any previous obligation. As the Son of God, he was not bound to be subject to any law; as a perfectly holy man, he was not bound to submit to the ceremonial law, which in every thing implied man's sinfulness. But he was pleased for more than thirty years to tabernacle here on earth, in perfect obedience to the whole law; and at length to give himself as a spotless sacrifice of infinite value, to redeem sinners from the curse of the broken law, and to redeem the Church from the ceremonial law, which was a kind of bond given for future payment by the Surety, of the debt due to divine justice for the sins of those who had obtained forgiveness by faith in the promised Saviour. Thus, instead of the yoke of ceremonial obedience and that slavish spirit which in many cases it inspired, believers received and possessed the adoption of children, and had the liberty and privileges of adults, instead of the restraints and rigorous subjection of minors. And because this was the state of Gentile as well as Jewish converts, God had sent forth the Holy Spirit, as given through his Son, to quicken, seal, and comfort them, as his beloved children, enabling and encouraging them, with filial love and confidence, to call upon him as their Father, of whatever nation they were. Seeing, therefore, the apostle hoped that this was the case of the Galatians in general, though there might be exceptions, (for he addressed them individually, every person of this character, of whatever country or language, was no longer a servant, to worship and obey God from slavish fear or mercenary hope; but a child of God, and an heir of heaven through Christ, to walk with him in love, filial reverence, and confidence. (*Note, Rom.* viii. 15—17.)

V. 8—11. The preceding argument proved, that even Jewish converts were redeemed from the yoke of the ceremonial law, as well as from the curse of the legal covenant. How absurd then would it be for Gentiles to have recourse to that abrogated system! The Galatians had formerly been ignorant of the one living and true God, and had then performed religious service to mere creatures, or imaginary beings, which by *nature* were not gods: and external observances might accord very well to such objects of worship. But, having at length been brought to the knowledge of God, by their conversion to Christianity, or rather having been thus known and owned by him, through the spiritual gifts bestowed on them, how could they think of turning again to such carnal services as they had forsaken, as if desirous of being in bondage to them? The Jewish ceremonies were mere rudiments of religious knowledge suited to the childhood of the Church: they were, in themselves, weak and inefficacious, low and poor; and thus incapable of communicating spiritual riches to mankind: after the coming of the Messiah, they lost all their use and obligation; they became as worthless even as the superstitions of Paganism, and, when put in the place of Christ, they were equally inconsistent with true religion. In this sense only could the Galatians be said "to turn again to the weak and beggarly elements;" for they had not before been under the ceremonial law: but, when delivered from idolatry, they were about to substitute the abrogated Jewish ceremonial in the place of the heathen superstitions; and to bring themselves into bondage to Judaizing teachers and Pharisaical traditions, after having been emancipated from the Pagan priests. Their observation of Jewish sabbaths, new-moons, festivals, and sabbatical years, had the appearance of an apostacy to Judaism, so that the apostle was afraid that they would totally depart from the faith, and that his labours for their eternal salvation would be in vain. ***Beggarly***, &c. (9.) ‘ Thus he calls these rites in themselves, and con‘sidered apart from Christ.’ (*Beza.*) ‘ St. Paul calls ‘ them "weak and beggarly elements," ‘ whereby it

12 ¶ Brethren, I beseech you, [c] be as I *am*; for I *am* as ye *are*: [d] ye have not injured me at all.

13 Ye know how, [e] through infirmity of the flesh, I preached the gospel unto you [f] at the first.

14 And my temptation which was in my flesh [g] ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as [h] an angel of God, *even* [i] as Christ Jesus.

15 * Where is then [k] the blessedness ye spake of? [l] for I bear you record, that, [m] if *it had been* possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.

c ii. 14. vi. 14 Gen. xxxiv. 15. 1 Kings xxii. 4. Acts xxi. 24. 1 Cor ix. 20—23 Phil iii 7, 8.
d 2 Cor ii 5.
e 1 Cor ii 3. 2 Cor. x. 10 xi 6. 30. xii 7—10. xiii 4.
f i. 6. Acts xvi 6.
g *See on*, [illegible] Job xii. 5. Ps. cxix. 141. Ec. ix 16. Is liii. 2, 3. 1 Cor i 28 iv 10. 1 Thes iv. 8
h 2 Sam. xiv. 17. xix. 27. Zech xii 8. Mal. ii. 7. *Heb* Heb. xiii. 2.
i Matt. x. 40. xviii 5. xxv. 40. Luke x 16 John xiii. 20 2 Cor v 20 1 Thes. ii 13
* Or *what was then*, &c.——k iii 14 v. 22. vi. 4. Luke viii 13. Rom. iv. 6—9. v 2. xv. 13.——l Rom. x. 2. 2 Cor. viii. 3. Col. iv. 13.——m 19. Rom. ix. 3. 1 Thes ii. 8. v. 13. 1 John iii. 16—18.

16 Am I therefore [n] become your enemy, [o] because I tell you the truth?

17 They [p] zealously affect you, *but* not well: yea, they would exclude † you, that ye might affect them.

18 But [q] *it is* good to be zealously affected alway in *a* good *thing*, and not only [r] when I am present with you.

19 My [s] little children, [t] of whom I travail in birth again until [u] Christ be formed in you;

20 I desire [x] to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I ‡ stand in doubt of you.

n iii 1—4. 1 Kings xviii. 17, 18. xxi. 20 xxii 8. 27. 2 Chr. xxiv. 20—22 xxv. 16. Ps. cxli. 5 Prov ix. 8. John vii. 7. viii. 45.
o ii. 5 14 v. 7.
p vi. 12, 13 Matt xxiii. 15. Rom. x. 2. xvi 18. 2 Cor xi 2. 13—15 Phil ii. 21 2 Pet ii. 3. 18
† Or, *us*. 1 Cor iv 3 18
q Num. xxv. 11—13 Ps. lxix 9. cxix. 139 Is. lix. 17. John ii. 17 Tit ii. 14. Rev. iii 19.
r 20. Phil. i. 27. ii 12.
s 1 Cor. iv. 14, 15 1 Tim. i 2. Tit. i. 4. Philem 10. 19 Jam i 18. 1 John ii. 1. 12, 13. v 21——t Num. xi. 11, 12. Is. liii. 11 Luke xxii 44 Phil. i 8. ii 17. Col. ii 1. iv. 12. Heb. v. 7. Rev. xii 1, 2.——u Rom. viii 29 xiii 14. Eph iv. 24. Phil ii. 5. Col. i. 27 iii. 10——x 1 Cor. iv. 19—21. 1 Thes. ii. 17, 18 iii 5.——‡ Or. am *perplexed for you*. 11.

'should seem, they were empty of all spiritual meaning. 'I answer, such they were become indeed, when Christ 'was once come; when the grace signified in them was 'brought out into the light, when the inwrapped pro-'mises were unfolded and revealed, they were then as 'empty shells, and like carcasses whose soul was gone. 'So long as a shell contains a kernel unseen, so long it is 'full; when it comes forth to outward view, then the 'shell is empty. Even so it is with the elements of the 'law.' (*Mede.*) The best illustration of the absurd conduct, which the apostle ascribes to the Galatians, may be found in the Church of Rome, in which the worship of saints and angels succeeded to that of the inferior deities; the superstitious, and often licentious, festivals, which were multiplied among them, to those that were used in Pagan Rome. In short, almost every part of the idolatrous worship of Pagan Rome has its counterpart in that of Antichristian Rome; as may be seen by any man, who will take the pains to compare many passages in Virgil, and other poets, with the rituals of the Church of Rome.

V. 12—16. 'The apostle tempers whatever he might 'seem to have said more sharply than usual, by an ad-'mirable, and therefore no doubt a divine, management; 'so declaring his good-will to the Galatians; that when 'they read it, unless they were wholly desperate, they 'could not but acknowledge his lenity with tears.' (*Beza.*) Being desirous of considering the Galatians as his brethren in Christ, he affectionately entreated them to be as he was, as cordial in love to him, as he was to them; or rather, of one mind with him respecting justification and the Mosaic law: for "he was as they were;" though he had been zealous for the law, (as they were become!) yet he now trusted only in Christ; and put no more confidence in the law, than if he had been a Gentile; and he entreated them in this to imitate him. He did not charge them with having at all injured him, or speak any thing out of resentment, though they had wronged themselves in departing from his doctrine. They remembered his first coming among them, when his personal infirmities seemed to unfit him for preaching the Gospel, or likely to render his ministry unacceptable: yet he was enabled to proceed, though greatly tried, and tempted to discouragement. They had not, however, despised him on that account, or rejected his testimony; but, seeing that his doctrine was confirmed by undeniable proofs, and feeling its energy on their consciences, they received him, though thus infirm and tempted, even as if he had been an angel sent from God, or as if Christ himself had come in person to preach to them. (*Note*, &c. 2 *Cor.* xii. 7—10.) Doubtless the apostle here spake of "his thorn in the flesh," which must therefore have been some perceivable infirmity, that exposed him to inward temptations and to the contempt of his enemies; and indeed it is absurd to explain this of his persecutions, which were no plausible reason why he should be despised, but the contrary. *What was then* the felicity of which they spake, as communicated by the hope and comforts of the Gospel? Or what must now have become of that blessedness, that they had recourse to the legal covenant, which could only enslave and condemn them? Their inward satisfaction in Christ had at that time so inspired them with love to his minister, that he could testify for their willingness even to have plucked out their own eyes, and to have given them to him, if this could possibly have removed his infirmities, or conduced to his benefit. And was he so soon become their enemy? the object of their aversion and resentment? If so, it must be because he had persisted in telling them the truth, both in respect of the way of salvation, and of their perilous deviation from it.

V. 17—20. The Judaizing teachers showed great attention to the Galatians, and expressed the most zealous affection for them; but this did not arise from proper principles, nor was it expressed in a proper manner. Yea, they would even exclude *them* from the liberty and salvation of Christ, in order to confirm them in a blind attachment to their doctrine. Some *copies*, (not *manuscripts*,) read, "they would exclude us:" they wanted to alienate them from the apostle, that they might possess an undivided authority over them from carnal motives. But, instead of showing such warm affection all at once towards these deceivers, it would be good for the Galatians to be constantly zealous in a good thing, even for the truth and cause of pure Christianity; and not only while the apostle continued among them, as had been the case with many of

21 ¶ Tell me, [y] ye that desire to be under the law, [z] do ye not hear [a] the law?

22 For it is written, [b] that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond-maid, the other by a free-woman.

23 But he *who was* of the bond-woman was [c] born after the flesh; [d] but he of the free-woman *was* by promise.

24 Which things are [e] an allegory: [f] for these are [g] the two * covenants; the one from the mount † Sinai, [h] which gendereth to bondage, which is [i] Agar.

25 For this Agar [k] is mount [l] Sinai in [m] Arabia, and ‡ answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with [n] her children.

26 But [o] Jerusalem which is above, is [p] free, which is the [q] mother of us all.

27 For it is written, [r] Rejoice *thou* [s] barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the [t] desolate hath many more children, than she which hath an husband.

28 Now [u] we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

29 But as then, [x] he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him *that was born* [y] after the Spirit, [z] even so *it is* now.

30 Nevertheless, [a] what saith the scripture? [b] Cast out the bond-woman and her son: for [c] the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman.

31 So then, brethren, [d] we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free.

y 9 iii. 10. 23, 24. Rom. vi. 14. vii. 5, 6. ix. 30—32. x 3—10
z Matt. xxi 42—44 xxii. 29—32 John v 46, 47.
a John x. 34 xii. 34 xv. 25 Rom iii. 19.
b Gen. xvi. 2—4. 15 xxi 1, 2. 10.
c Rom. ix. 7, 8.
d Gen xvii. 15—19. xviii. 10—14 xxi. 2 Rom. iv 18—21 ix. 8, 9. Heb. xi. 11, 12
e Ez. xx 49. Hos. xii. 10. Matt. xiii 35. 1 Cor. x. 11 *Gr.* Heb. xi. 19
f 25 Luke xxii. 19, 20. 1 Cor. x. 4.
g iii 15—21. Heb. vii. 22 viii. 6—13. ix. 15—24 x. 15—18. xii. 21. xiii 20
* Or, *testaments.*
† Gr. *Sina.*
h v 1. Rom. viii. 15.
i Gen. xvi. 3, 4 8 15, 16. xxi. 9—13 xxv. 12. *Hagar.*
k 24.
l Deut. xxxiii. 2. Judg. v. 5. Ps lxviii 8. 17. Heb. xii. 18.——m i. 17 Acts ii 11.——‡ Or, *is in the same rank with.* Rom. xi. 7—11. Rev xi. 8.——n Matt. xxiii. 37. Luke xiii. 34. xix. 44 ——o Ps lxxxvii. 3—6. Is ii. 2, 3 lii. 9. lxii. 1, 2. lxv 18. lxvi. 10. Joel iii. 17. Mic. iv. 1, 2. Phil. iii. 20. Heb. xii. 22 Rev. iii 12. xxi. 2. 10—27.
p 22. v. 1 John viii 36. Rom. vi 14. 18. 1 Pet. ii. 16.
q Cant. viii. 1, 2. Is. 1 1, Hos. ii 2. 5. iv 15. Rev. xvii. 5.
r Is. liv. 1—5.
s 1 Sam ii. 5. Ps. cxiii. 9
t Ruth i. 11—13. iv. [illegible]—16 2 Sam xiii. 20 Is. xlix. 21 1 Tim. v. 5.
u 23 iii 29. Acts iii 25 Rom. iv. 13—18 ix. 8, 9.
x Gen xxi 9.
y John iii. 5. Rom. viii. 1. 5. 13.
z v. 11. vi. 12—14. Matt. xxiii. 34—37. 1 Thes. ii. 14, 15. Heb. x. 33, 34.
a iii. 8. 22. Rom. iv. 3. xi. 2. Jam. iv 5
b Gen xxi. 10—12. Rom. xi. 7—11.
c John viii. 35. Rom. viii. 15—17
d v. 1. 13. John i. 12, 13 viii. 36. Heb. ii. 14, 15. 1 John iii. 1, 2.

them. Some render the clause, "It is good to be "zealously affected towards a good man," &c. (meaning himself,) but this is not in the apostle's manner, and scarcely reconcileable to the Greek idiom. He would, however, consider them as his dear children, though in a state of infantine imbecility; and as he had laboured and suffered in earnestly seeking their conversion from idolatry, so he might be said "a second time to travail in "birth" for them. He was as earnest for their recovery from their present delusion, as he had been for their conversion from idolatry: his heart was even filled with anguish from his anxiety about them; and he suffered pangs like those of a travailing woman, which seemed as if they must continue till "Christ was formed in them," in proof that they had put on Christ as their robe of righteousness; for their legal observances were no more like the genuine holiness and obedience of true believers, than their legal dependence resembled the faith of God's elect. He therefore longed to be with them, that he might witness this happy change, and that he might alter his words of reproof for those of encouragement and commendation, or change his voice as different circumstances and characters required, which could not so well be done in an epistle. For he stood in doubt of them, or hesitated as to what he should think of them; whether they had been truly converted or not, and was anxious to know what the event of their present delusions would be.

V. 21—31. As many of the Galatians absurdly desired to be under the law of Moses, from a mistaken interpretation of the Old Testament, so the apostle demanded whether they did not observe what was written in the law, or in the books of Moses; (*Marg. Ref.*) for the history of Abraham contained an apt emblem of the two covenants. (*Notes*, &c. *Gen.* xvi. xxi.) Ishmael was born of Hagar, in the ordinary course of nature, and in consequence of a carnal project; but Isaac was born of Sarah, a free-woman, the wife of Abraham, by the miraculous performance of God's promise, when she was naturally past child-bearing. These things were intended as an allegory of the Sinai-covenant, and of that made with Abraham in Christ for the benefit of all believers. That part of the nation of Israel, which were not interested in the covenant made with Abraham by faith, were indeed outwardly a part of Abraham's family and of the visible Church; but, like Ishmael, they were born in servitude, all their obedience was of a slavish nature, and their privileges external and carnal: nor could the legal covenant deliver them from this state: for Hagar, (whose name signifies *a Rock* in the Arabic,) the bond-woman, was the emblem of mount Sinai in the deserts of Arabia, which country was afterwards peopled by her descendants, being without the boundaries of the promised land. From that mountain the law was given, and there the legal covenant was ratified. It therefore corresponded to Jerusalem and its inhabitants, as the outward worshippers of God, in the ordinances performed at the temple; for as far as they continued under the legal covenant, especially when they had rejected Christ and the Gospel, they were mere slaves, and not the children of God. But the heavenly Jerusalem, the true church, as coming from above, espoused to Christ, and represented by Sarah, is in a state of freedom; and this church is the mother of all true believers, who are born of the Spirit. And that this church should mainly consist of Gentile converts, had long before been figuratively predicted. (*Notes*, *Is.* liv.) Believers, therefore, whether Jews or Gentiles, like Isaac, were the children of promise: they were not only brought into the church, as descended from Abraham, or proselyted to an external profession; but they were supernaturally made a part of the true seed of Abraham, in virtue of the promise made to him, that "in his Seed "should all the nations of the earth be blessed." But as Ishmael, a slave by birth, and in no wise entitled to the inheritance, had mocked and persecuted Isaac, who was miraculously born of Sarah, according to the promise, to be Abraham's heir; so the Jews, who continued volun-

CHAP. V.

The apostle exhorts the Galatians to stand fast in their christian liberty; and shows that, by being circumcised, they would in fact renounce Christ, 1—6. *He disclaims preaching circumcision himself, and condemns it in others,* 7—12. *He cautions them not to abuse their liberty, but by love to serve one another; for love is the fulfilling of the law,* 13—15. *Exhorting them "to walk in the Spirit," he shows the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit,* 16—18. *He enumerates the works of the flesh, and the fruits of the Spirit,* 19—23. *He shows that true christians have crucified the flesh; again calls on them to walk in the Spirit, and warns them against vain-glory and envy,* 24—26.

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tarily in bondage under the legal covenant, at that time persecuted the Christians, who were born of the Spirit as Abraham's seed, according to the meaning of the Holy Ghost, and to whom alone true liberty and the heavenly inheritance belonged. But as the Galatians might read in the Scripture, that God himself had commanded Hagar and Ishmael to be sent away from Abraham's family, that the son of the bond-woman might not share the inheritance with Isaac; even so the Jewish nation would soon be cast out of the Church, and all who continued under the legal covenant would be excluded from heaven. If then the exclusive privileges of all believers were such by the covenant of grace, what an absurdity was it for the Gentile converts to desire to be under the law, which could not deliver the unbelieving Jews from bondage and condemnation! We should not have discovered this allegory in the history of Sarah and Hagar, if the apostle had not shown it to us; and much sobriety and discretion should be used in thus applying Scriptural narrations; yet this transaction was so remarkable, the coincidence so exact, and the illustration so instructive, that we cannot doubt but it originally was intended by the Holy Spirit as an allegory and type of those things to which the inspired apostle referred it; and it should be observed, that it was intended as an illustration of the subject under consideration, rather than as a direct argument.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

While we are thankful for deliverance from "the elements of this world," by the light, liberty, and privileges of the Gospel, we should cheerfully submit to the restraints and corrections of our heavenly Father, in this our state of education for perfect felicity; and patiently wait the time appointed by him for our admission to it; and we ought to delight in the easy yoke of our Redeemer, whose service is perfect freedom. For who can enough admire the condescending compassion of the Son of God, in "being born of a woman, and made under the "law," that, by obedience unto the death upon the cross, he might redeem us wretched rebels from every fatal curse, galling yoke, and slavish terror; that so we might receive the adoption of children, and the Spirit of adoption, emboldening us to worship God as our Father, to walk with him in holy communion, and to rejoice in the hope of his everlasting felicity! May we, by this filial temper and conduct, at all times evince our adoption; and may "the Holy Spirit thus witness with our spirit, that "we are the children and heirs of God!" Once we knew not God; and though outward circumstances kept most of us from gross idolatry, yet we idolized the world, and sought our happiness from it. If then we now so know God in Christ, as to reverence, love, trust in, and obey him, it is the effect of his *knowledge* of us as the objects of his choice, and *owning* us as ransomed by the blood of his Son. What then have we to do any more with worldly idols? What occasion for superstitions and human inventions, as if we desired to be still in bondage? Surely, all those things must be weak and beggarly elements which God hath no where required of us! And though Christians may "observe a day to the Lord," yet an evident attachment to such things may well induce a fear concerning men's spiritual state; and it should always be remembered, that if ministers lose their faithful labours, their hearers lose their precious souls. Idolatry consists in worshipping what *by nature is no God*: surely then, the worship of saints and angels is turning again to heathenism; and every scriptural example of worship rendered to Christ, demonstrates that he is, *by nature*, "God over all, blessed for "evermore."

V. 12—20.

Ministers ought, as much as possible, to waive their personal complaints against the people; and to show more fear lest they should injure themselves, than lest they should behave amiss to them. It behooves us, when we think ourselves unkindly treated, to recollect the instances in which we experienced the candour and affection of our hearers, and when they overlooked those infirmities which we feared would have occasioned the rejection of our message. We may also remind them, when they seem about to turn aside, of those tender and sweet seasons, when they welcomed the message delivered by such poor worms, as if an angel, or even Christ himself, had spoken to them; and when their hearts were so full of blessedness, that they scarcely knew how sufficiently to express their gratitude to the instruments of their hopes and consolations. Contrasting these happy seasons with that coldness and disaffection which sometimes follow, without any apparent reason, we may with efficacy inquire, What is become of their blessedness? And whether we be looked on as enemies, because we tell them the truth? Alas! this is often the case, not only with mere professors, but even with misguided believers, when for a time they are seduced by those who zealously affect them, but not well; who would alienate them from their faithful pastors, to attach them to themselves; or who

[a] STAND fast therefore in [b] the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not [c] entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

2 Behold, [d] I Paul say unto you, [e] that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

3 For I [f] testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is [g] a debtor to do the whole law.

4 Christ [h] is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are [i] justified by the law; [k] ye are fallen from grace.

5 For we [l] through the Spirit [m] wait for [n] the hope of righteousness by faith.

6 For [o] in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but [p] faith which worketh by love.

a Prov. xxiii 23. 1 Cor. xv 58. xvi. 13 Phil i. 27. 1 Thes. i i 8 2 Thes iij. 15. Heb. iii. 6. 14. iv 14. x. 23 35—39. Jude 3. 20. 21 Rev. ii. 25 iii. 3 b 13 ii. 4 iii 25 iv. 26 31. Ps. li. 12 Matt. xi 28 -- 30. John viii 32 — 36 Rom. vi 14. 18 vii. 3 6. viii 2 1 Cor. vii. 22. 2 Cor. iii. 17. 1 Pet. ii. 16. 2 Pet. ii. 19 ——c ii 4. iv. 9. Matt. xxiii. 4 Acts xv. 10. Col. ii 16—22. Heb. ix 8—11. d 1 Cor. xvi. 21 2 Cor. x 1 1 Thes ii. 18. Philem. 9 ——e 4. 6. ii 3—5. Acts xv. 1 24. xvi 3, 4. Rom. ix. 31, 32. x. 2, 3. Heb. iv 2.——f Deut. viii 19. xxxi 21. Neh ix 29, 30. 34 Luke xvi. 28 Acts ii. 40. xx. 21. Eph iv. 17. 1 Thes iv. 6. 1 John iv. 14. g iii. 10. Deut. xxvii. 26. Matt. xxiii 16. 18. *Gr.* Jam ii. 10, 11.

h 2. ii. 21. Rom. ix. 31, 32. x. 3—5. i Rom. iii. 20. iv. 4, 5. k i. 6—9. Rom. xi. 6 Heb vi. 4—6 x. 38, 39. xii. 15. 2 Pet. ii. 20—22. iii. 17, 18. Rev ii 5. l John xvi. 8—15. Eph. ii. 18. m Gen. xlix. 18. Ps. xxv. 3 5. lxii. 5. cxxx. 5. Lam iii. 25, 26. Hos. xii. 6. Rom. viii. 24, 25. 1 Thes. i. 10. 2 Thes. iii. 5.——n Rom v 21. Phil. iii. 9. 2 Tim. iv. 8. Tit. ii. 13.——o 2, 3. iii. 28. vi. 15 Rom. ii. 25—29. iii 29—31. 1 Cor. vii. 19 Col. iii. 11.——p Matt xxv. 31—40. 2 Cor. v 14. 1 Thes. i. 3. Heb. xi. 6. 17—19. Jam. ii. 14—26. 1 Pet. i. 8. 1 John iii. 14—20. iv. 18—21.

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would even hazard their souls to promote their own credit, or that of their sect. At such times their most affectionate warnings and Scriptural arguments often give offence, and increase alienation. This is a most trying situation to the faithful minister. He cannot cease to feel for, and long after, his deluded children. Though he could bear to lose their affections, he cannot be willing that they should lose their souls: he must remind them, that their zealous affections should be towards more substantial good, than new notions and new teachers, as in the sight of God, and not merely in the presence of their ministers. Thus many know experimentally the apostle's meaning, when he said "that he travailed in birth again," of his spiritual children, till "Christ was formed in them;" as the anguish on account of those, who they had hoped were converted, is greater than their earnestness for their conversion; and their prayers and endeavours are more fervent, as fearing "lest their last state should be worse "than the first." Nothing is so sure a proof of a sinner's justification, as "Christ formed in him," by the renewal of the Holy Spirit: nor can this be hoped for, while men depend on the law for acceptance with God. The faithful minister desires to change his voice of reproof for that of commendation; and not only to instruct, but to speak confidently of those concerning whom he stands in doubt, and who therefore certainly ought to stand in doubt of themselves.

V. 21—31.

They who desire to be under the law should hear what the law says to them; and this would in every case teach them to flee from it to the grace of the Gospel. For not only do allegories and types instruct us, but the plainest language imaginable declares the two covenants, that from Sinai and that of Christ, to be perfectly distinct, and even of opposite tendency to those who *now* are under them. They who are born of the flesh, whether of Jewish or Christian parents, and who have only a legal dependence on circumcision, baptism, or any personal obedience whatsoever, or even on creeds, or sects, or national churches, however excellent, are under the covenant of works, mere Ishmaelites, bond-slaves, citizens of the earthly Jerusalem, and under condemnation. But they who "are born of the Spirit," and so believe in Christ, trusting only in his merits and grace, are the children of the promise, and of the heavenly Jerusalem; they possess true liberty, and are the heirs of everlasting felicity. Millions have already been thus born of God in the Gentile world, which once lay desolate; and we should pray that such places, as still continue barren, may speedily produce more converts than have yet been made in the most flourishing churches. If indeed we are the children of promise, and heirs of the inheritance, we need not wonder that carnal Ishmaels mock and persecute us: so it hath been, and so it will be. But let us rest our souls on the Scripture, and, by an evangelical hope and a cheerful obedience, let us show that we are the children of God; that we walk at liberty; and that our conversation and treasure are indeed in heaven.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1—6. As Christ had called the Galatians, by his Gospel, to partake of full liberty from condemnation and from the ceremonial law, as well as from sin and Satan; so the apostle exhorted them to stand fast in that liberty, whatever efforts were used to deprive them of it; and not to suffer the judaizing teachers to entangle them in a yoke of bondage under the ceremonial law, which would reduce them again into as abject a slavery as that of their Gentile state. For he, Paul, though single, and opposed to many confident teachers who maintained the contrary, most decidedly and solemnly assured them, that if they submitted to circumcision, as necessary to justification, they would derive no benefit from Christ and his covenant, or from his righteousness, atonement and mediation; and he again testified to every individual among them, who should be circumcised from such motives, that he became a debtor to keep the whole law of God, and liable to condemnation for every failure in his obedience to it. Perhaps some taught them, that the most burdensome parts of the law were not obligatory on proselytes who lived at a distance from Jerusalem. And certainly Christ would not benefit that man, who brought himself under this obligation, by seeking to be justified on account of his own obedience to the law; as that attempt was in fact a renunciation of the doctrine of grace, a forfeiture of every hope of benefit from the mercy and free favour of God, and a kind of voluntary divorcing himself from Christ. For circumcision, in such circumstances, would be a deliberate renunciation of the covenant of Christ for that of the law: whereas all true Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, being taught by the

7 Ye did [q] run well; who did [*] hinder you, that ye should not [r] obey the truth?

8 This persuasion *cometh* not of [s] him that calleth you.

9 A [t] little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

10 I have [u] confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: [x] but he that troubleth you shall [y] bear *his* judgment, [z] whosoever he be.

11 And I, brethren, [a] if I yet preach circumcision, [b] why do I yet suffer persecution? then is [c] the offence of the cross ceased.

12 I would they were even [d] cut off which trouble you.

[q] Matt xiii. 21. 1 Cor. ix. 24. Heb xii. 1.

[*] Or, *drive you back?* iii 1.

[r] Acts vi 7. Rom. ii. 8 vi 17. x. 16. xv. 18 xvi. 26. 2 Cor. x 5. 2 Thes i. 8. Heb. v. 9 xi. 8. 1 Pet. ii 22.

[s] See on, i 6.

[t] Matt. xiii. 33 xvi. 6–12. Mark viii. 15. Luke xii. 1. xiii. 21. 1 Cor. v. 6, 7 xv 33. 2 Tim. ii. 17.

[u] iv. 11. 20. 2 Cor. i 15. ii. 3 vii. 16 viii. 22 2 Thes. iii. 4. Philem 21.

[x] i 7. ii. 4. iii 1. iv 17. vi 12, 13. 17. Acts xv. 1. 2 24 1 John ii. 18–26.

[y] 12. 1 Cor v 5 2 Cor ii. 6. x 2 6 xiii. 10 1 Tim. i. 20.

[z] ii 6. 2 Cor. v. 16.

[a] ii 3 Acts xvi 3.

[b] iv. 29 vi. 12. 17 Acts xxi. 21 22 xxiii. 12. xxiii. 13. 14. 1 Cor xv 30 2 Cor. xi. 23–26.

[c] Is. viii. 14 Rom. ix. 32. 33. 1 Cor i. 18 23 1 Pet. ii. 8, 9.

[d] 10 i. 8, 9 Gen. xvii 14. Ex xii. 15. xxx. 33. Lev. xxii 3. Josh. vii 12. 25. John ix. 34. Acts v. 5. 9. 1 Cor. v. 13. Tit iii. 10.

Holy Spirit, waited for eternal life, the proper reward of righteousness, and the object of their hope, as the gift of God by faith in Christ; and not for the sake of their own works in any degree. They not only deemed themselves pardoned and justified by faith in Christ, in respect of the past and present, but they had the same expectation for the future, and waited for the day of judgment, expecting to be accounted righteous only by faith in Christ, and thus entitled to the heavenly inheritance. For, according to the new covenant, and in respect of those who were members of the Christian church, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision were of any avail: the Jewish convert might observe the legal ceremonies, or he might assert his liberty from them; the Gentile might utterly disregard them; or from motives of expediency he might be circumcised, as Timothy had been, and pay some attention to them, provided he did not count them obligatory on his conscience, or place any dependence on them. But these things were of no avail *in Christ Jesus*. True faith alone received the Saviour, and interested the believer in his whole salvation; and this living and justifying faith was distinguished from a dead faith, by being an operative active principle; and especially as it always showed its energy in the heart, by love to Christ, his cause, and his people; by love to God and to man for his sake; and this never failed to produce its correspondent effect on a person's conduct. By this view of the subject, a simple dependence on the righteousness and atonement of Christ, and an evangelical obedience to his commandments, are at once secured; and the fruits of that love, by which faith worketh, will be adduced at the day of judgment, as evidences to prove believers entitled to the heavenly inheritance. (*Matt.* xxv. 31—46.) After what the apostle had before said, (2—4.) this conclusion fully proves that he did not oppose the observance of the ceremonial law as evil in itself, but as their legal dependence on it was wholly incompatible with the method of justification revealed in the Gospel. 'It is to be noted, that circum-'cision is here to be considered, partly from the cir-'cumstances of the times, (when it had ceased to be "the seal of the righteousness of faith," 'as by baptism 'it was abolished,) and partly from the sentiments of 'these adversaries, who were desirous to connect it with 'Christ, as if some part of salvation resided in it.' (*Beza.*)

V. 7—12. When the Gospel had first been received by the Galatians, they seemed in a very promising manner to run the race set before them; professing, and apparently exercising, that "faith which worketh by love," and obeying Christ from evangelical principles. But they were now evidently hindered and turned aside from this obedience of faith and love to ceremonial observances and legal principles. But who were they that had thus *driven them back* from the way of Christ into these new and unauthorized paths? (or, come across them in the course, and turned them out of it.) This persuasion of the necessity of circumcision certainly did not come from the apostle, who had called them to the grace of Christ; nor was it from the Holy Spirit, the Agent in the sinner's conversion. In fact, a few *Judaizers* had crept in among them, who, being infected with pride, bigotry, and enmity to the pure Gospel of Christ, had leavened them also with a similar spirit: its baleful influence was rapidly diffusing itself through all their churches, and would have most fatal effects, unless counteracted. Yet, (notwithstanding his fears concerning them,) reflecting on the manner in which they had received his doctrine, and trusting in the Lord Jesus, he had a confidence in them that they would recover from the temporary fascination, and become entirely of his judgment on the subject. Then the ringleader of the defection, or any other person who had perverted them, (of whatever importance he had seemed to be,) would be justly censured by them, and bear that condemnation from them which he deserved; as assuredly he would from God, unless he were brought to repentance. Indeed, it had been craftily and maliciously insinuated that the apostle himself, after his journey to Jerusalem, and his conference with the other apostles, on some occasions preached the necessity of circumcision, when it tended to increase his influence; (and for this his candid allowance to men's prejudices, when it could be safely done, and the circumcision of Timothy, might give the handle:) but if this had been his practice, why did he every where meet with such furious persecution from the Jews? For in that case, the offence of the cross of Christ would have in a great measure ceased. Had he proselyted the Gentiles to the Mosaic law, and taught justification by it, the Jews would have connived at his regard to Jesus of Nazareth, being gratified in their self-preference, and in the increasing number of those who observed the law. But his preaching Christ as the only Salvation of sinners, his disregard to the ritual law, his doctrine of justification, which left all unbelievers under condemnation without distinction, and his success among the Gentiles every where, exasperated the Jews against him. As then this insinuation was notoriously false, so he ardently wished that the persons who thus troubled them, and employed such manifest deceits for that purpose, were cut off by excom-

13 ¶ For, brethren, [e] ye have been called unto liberty; [f] only *use* not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, [g] but by love serve one another.

14 For [h] all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this, [i] Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

15 But [k] if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

16 *This* [l] I say then, [m] Walk in the Spirit, [n] and * ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

e 1 iv 5–7 22–31. Is. lxi. 1 Luke iv 18 John viii 32–36. Rom vi. 18 22

f 1 Cor. viii 9 1 Pet ii 16 2 Pet ii. 19. Jude 4 10–12

g 14 22. vi. 2 Mark x 43–45. John xiii. 14, 15. Acts xx. 35. Rom. xv. 1, 2 1 Cor. ix 19. xiii. 4–7. 2 Cor. iv. 5. xii. 15. 1 Thes. i 3 Jam. ii. 15 17. 1 John iii 16 —19.

h Matt. vii. 12. xix. 18, 19. xxii. 39. 40. Rom. xiii 8–10. Jam. ii. 8–11.

i Lev. xix. 18 34 Mark xii 31. 33. Luke x. 27–37. 1 Tim. i. 5.——k 26. 2 Sam. ii. 26, 27 Is. ix. 20, 21. xi. 5–9. 13. 1 Cor iii. 3 vi. 6–8. 2 Cor xi. 20. xii. 20 Jam. iii. 14–16. iv 1–3.

l *See on*, iii 17. 1 Cor vii. 29 ——m 25 vi. 8. Rom viii. 1 4, 5 13, 14. 1 Pet. i. 22. iv. 6. Jude 19–21 ——n 19–21. Rom. vi. 12 xiii. 13, 14. 2 Cor vii. 1 Eph. ii. 3. Col. ii. 11. iii. 5–10. 1 Pet i. 14. ii. 11. iv. 1–4 1 John ii 15, 16 ——* Or, *fulfil not.*

17 For [o] the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: [p] and these are contrary the one to the other; [q] so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

18 But [r] if ye be led by the Spirit, [s] ye are not under the law.

19 Now [t] the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; [u] adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

20 Idolatry, [x] witchcraft, hatred, vari-

o Ps. xix. 12, 13. li. 1–5 10–12. lxv 3 cxix. 5. 20 24, 25 32. 35. 40. 133. 159. 176 Ec. vii. 20. Is vi. 5 Matt. xvi. 17. 23. xxvi. 41 John iii. 6. Rom vii 18 23 —25 viii. 5. 13. Jam. iv 5, 6

p iii. 21 Matt. xii. 30. Rom. vii 7. 8. 10–14 viii. 5 —8.

q Ps cxix. 4–6. cxxx. 3. Matt. v 6 Luke xxii. 33 46. 54–61. Rom. vii. 15—23 Phil iii. 12 —16. Jam iii. 2 1 John i. 8–10. ——r 16. 25 iv 6. Ps. xxv. 4, 5. 8. 9. cxliii 8–10. Prov. viii 20. Is. xlviii. 16–18. Ez. xxxvi 27 John xvi 13 Rom viii. 14. 2 Tim i. 7. 1 John ii. 20. 27.——s iv 5. Rom vi. 14, 15.——t 13. 17 vi. 8 Ps. xvii. 1. John iii. 6. Rom. vii. 5 18. 25. viii. 3. 5 9 13. 1 Cor iii. 3 1 Pet. iv. 2 ——u Ez xxii. 6–13 Matt. xv 18, 19. Mark vii. 21—23. Rom. i 21–32 1 Cor vi. 9, 10. 2 Cor. xii 20, 21. Eph. iv 17–19. v. 3, 4 Col. iii. 5–8. 1 Tim i. 9, 10 Tit. iii. 3. Jam. iii. 14, 15 1 Pet. iv. 4, 5 Rev. xxi. 8. xxii. 15. ——x Ex xxii. 18. Deut xviii. 10. 1 Sam xv. 23. 1 Chr. x. 13, 14. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 6. Acts viii. 9–11. xvi. 16–19

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munication from their society, and so kept from doing them any further mischief. (*Marg. Ref.*) But why did he not command the Galatians to excommunicate them, as he had required the Corinthians to deliver the incestuous person to Satan, &c.? It is probable, because the infection had spread so wide in the churches of Galatia, and so very many were concerned in some degree, that there was little prospect, except by the intervention of miracles, that such a command would be obeyed. The apostle therefore pointed out to them their duty, and waited for a more favourable opportunity of exercising the needful discipline.

V. 13—15. The Galatians had been called unto liberty, and ought not to endure those who wanted to bring them into bondage: only let them be careful not to run into licentiousness, or to take occasion from their liberty to indulge the inclinations of corrupt nature. "Faith working by love" would indeed, as far as it had influence, lead them to serve and worship God as his children: and love to their brethren and to all men, for Christ's sake and after his example, ought to make them willing servants to each other, and induce them to give up their own inclinations and indulgence, to promote their welfare, as far as in their power, without doing any one harm in his person, connexions, property, reputation, or peace of mind. For the whole moral law contained no more, in all its requirements, than was implied in that "love" by which faith worked: especially the whole of men's duty to one another was summed up in the single precept of "loving their "neighbours as themselves," (*Notes, Lev.* xix. 18. *Rom.* xiii. 8—10.) and this still continued to be their rule of duty, though they were delivered from the law as a covenant. But if, on the contrary, they indulged selfishness, pride, and anger, by dividing into parties and quarrelling with each other, as if they would bite and devour one another, they might expect to be left by the God of peace and love to be the instruments of each other's present misery or future destruction.

V. 16—18. To prevent the ruinous consequences of contentions to themselves, and to the churches among them, the apostle called on them "to walk *in*," or *by* "the Spirit," according to his holy guidance, in dependence on his influences, and with constant prayer for them: this would effectually prevent them from fulfilling the lusts or desires of the flesh, or that evil nature with which they were born. 'According to his 'manner, the apostle calls that part of a man "the spirit," 'which is newly quickened by the Holy Spirit, which is 'dead unto sin and alive unto God; and, "the flesh," 'whatever in man is not renewed by grace, through 'Christ, as apprehended by faith. He here justly adds, 'that in the same regenerate man is both *flesh*, and *spirit;* 'the conflict between which is copiously shown in the 'seventh chapter of Romans.' (*Beza.*) For the *flesh*, the old man, lusteth in direct opposition to the desires of the new nature, in the regenerate, as well as to the dictates of the Holy Spirit: and the spirit, in both senses, opposeth the corrupt desires of the flesh, by holy affections and inclinations. These are therefore directly opposite to each other: so that believers "*do not* the things which "they would," (according to the most literal meaning of the words.) They are not so holy as they long to be; nor yet, though at liberty from the covenant of works, do they indulge those corrupt inclinations, which still rise up in their hearts, and cause them much trouble and uneasiness. Thus they are engaged in a perpetual conflict; in which they earnestly desire that grace may obtain a complete and speedy victory. And they, who thus give themselves up to be led by the Holy Spirit, are not under the law, nor exposed to its awful curse for every failure in their obedience: while their hatred of sin, and desires after holiness, according to the perfect rule of God's commandments, is the evidence that they are interested in the salvation of the Gospel. (*Notes, Rom.* vii. 7—25. viii. 1—17. *Marg. Ref.*) The apostle, in the Scriptures referred to, says, "As many as are led by the Spirit of "God, they are the sons of God." Here he says, "If "ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law." Hence it follows, that they who are not under the law are the sons of God. 'Ye will not gratify the lusts of 'your *animal* nature; particularly ye will not gratify 'the sinful passions of envy, malice, anger, revenge.' (*Macknight.*) Do these belong to the animal nature? Is the devil then an animal? In fact all sin has its source and seat in *the soul*, and the body, even in gross sensual indulgences, is only the instrument of unrighteousness to sin. (*Marg. Ref.*) So strangely do many learned men mistake and misinterpret the declarations of Scripture on this subject!

ance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, [y] heresies,

21 Envyings, murders, [z] drunkenness, [a] revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, [b] that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But [c] the fruit of the Spirit is [d] love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, [e] faith,

23 Meekness, [f] temperance: [g] against such there is no law.

24 And [h] they that are Christ's, have [i] crucified the flesh with the * affections and lusts.

25 If [k] we live in the Spirit, [l] let us also walk in the Spirit.

26 Let us not be [m] desirous of vain glory, [n] provoking one another, envying one another.

y 1Cor. xi 19 Tit. iii 10. 2Pet. ii 1.
z Deut. xxi. 20. Luke xxi 34. Rom. xiii. 13. 1 Cor. v. 11. vi. 10. Eph. v. 18. 1 Thes v. 7.
a 1 Pet. iv. 3.
b Is iii. 11 Rom ii 8,9. vii. 13 1Cor. vi. 9,10. Eph v. 5, 6 Col iii 6 Rev. xxi 27
c 16—18 Ps. i. 3. xcii. 14. Hos xiv. 8. Matt xii 33. Luke viii. 14, 15. xiii 9. John xv. 2. 5 15 Rom. vi. 22. vii. 4. Eph v. 9. Phil i. 11 Col i. 10.——d 13. Rom. v 2—5 xii. 9—18. xv. 13. 1 Cor. xiii. 4—7 Eph. iv 28—32. v. 1, 2. Phil. iv. 4—9. Col. iii. 12—17. 1 Thes. i. 3—10 v. 10—22. Tit ii. 2—12. Jam. iii. 17, 18 1 Pet. i 8 22 2 Pet. i. 5—8. 1 John iv. 7—16.
e 1 Cor. xiii 7. 13 2 Thes iii. 2. 1 Tim iii. 11 iv 12. 1 Pet. v 12.
f Acts xxiv 25. 1 Cor. ix, 25. Tit. i 8. ii. 2.
g 1 Tim. i 9.
h iii 29 Rom viii 9. 1 Cor iii 23. xv. 23 2 Cor x 7
i 16—18 ii. 20. vi. 14. Rom. vi 6. viii 13. xiii. 14. 1 Pet. ii. 11.
* Or, *passions.*
k John vi. 63. Rom. viii. 2. 10. 1 Cor xv. 45 2 Cor. iii. 6. 1 Pet. iv. 6. Rev xi. 11
l *See on*, 16 Rom. viii. 4, 5 ——m Luke xiv. 10. 1 Cor. iii 7. Phil. ii. 1—3. Jam. iv. 16 ——n *See on*, 15. Jam iii. 14—16. 1 Pet. v. 5.

V. 19—21. The difference between the flesh and the Spirit might be known by their contrary effects. The works of the flesh must be manifest to every one, who considered the conduct of unconverted men, and the state of the world in general. Several of the sins here specified as "the works of the flesh," have no connexion with the bodily appetites: which proves, that we are not to understand, by "flesh and spirit," the animal part of man, as distinguished from the intellectual; but the whole of our fallen nature, as opposed to the new nature communicated by regeneration, and the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit acting upon it. It is not requisite to consider every particular in this catalogue: a few may require observation. Idolatry is "a work of the flesh;" as it springs from man's carnal enmity to the holy character, worship, and service of God; in the stead of whom he deifies imaginary beings, more congenial to himself, and worships them in a manner more suited to his pride and lusts.—Witchcraft, (implying all kinds of sorcery, charms, divinations, incantations, fortune-telling, and attempted, real, or pretended, intercourse with evil spirits,) is a work of the flesh, as it results from man's carnal dislike of submission to God, and dependence on him, and a desire of seeking help and information from other quarters: by both these, men virtually worship the devil. *Emulations*, or "zeals," seem in this connexion to signify that ambition of pre-eminence and thirst for glory, which excite men to vie with one another, and eagerly to aspire after distinction, according to the nature of their objects and pursuits. Poets, orators, historians, philosophers, moralists, and all men who do not attend to the Bible, deemed this the noblest principle of human activity; yet it springs from unmingled pride and selfishness, and is nearly allied to envy. When the object of emulation is evil, its effects are dreadful; when the object is good, the glory of man is sacrilegiously substituted in the place of the glory of God, and this thirst for human applause has caused more horrible violations of the law of love, and done more to desolate the earth, than even the grossest sensuality ever did. *Heresies* are called works of the flesh; pride, ambition, avarice, or other carnal affections, induce men to pervert the truth of God's words, and, espousing some pernicious error, to seek distinction by propagating it.—Hence arise contentions, separations, and the most fatal effects to individuals and to the Church. These were therefore joined by the apostle with adulteries, unnatural, and worse than beastly lusts; drunkenness, envy, revellings, seditions, and even murders, as equally the result of a carnal heart, and marks of unregeneracy. Many more he might have mentioned; but these and such like would, without repentance and its fruits, certainly exclude men from heaven, as the apostle had formerly declared to them, and now again forewarned them. The word translated witchcrafts, is by some rendered *poisonings*, as if the apostle in this compendium would pause to distinguish one kind of murder from another, when the difference did not at all alter the nature or degree of the crime. "Witchcrafts," had the name used in the original, from the magical compositions of certain ingredients, which attended these diabolical practices. *Revellings* were such feasts as were accompanied with music and dancing, and whatever could promote hiliarity. The Greeks and Romans had an imaginary god, called Comus, (from the Greek word here used,) who was supposed to preside over them, and was in that character worshipped by hymns, oblations, and libations.

V. 22—26. The holy dispositions and affections, and the conduct resulting from them, are not so much the works of the believer, as "the fruit of the Spirit," dwelling in the new nature and working by it, which he hath produced by regeneration. Love of God and man, of the Saviour, his people, and all men for his sake, and according to his command and example; a joyful frame of mind in the salvation and service of the Lord; a peaceful conscience, and a submissive will, leading to a peaceful conduct towards man; a disposition to bear injuries and affronts, without seeking revenge, or expressing resentment; a mild, unassuming, inoffensive deportment, united with beneficence and philanthropy; truth, sincerity, fidelity and integrity to man, springing from faith in God and faithfulness to him; a humble, teachable, unambitious temper and demeanour, and an evident moderation about earthly objects, and in respect of every animal indulgence: these, and such like, are "the fruits of the Spirit;" and against them there is no law, for they are exactly what the moral law requires. (*Notes*, 1 *Cor.* xiii.) So that obedience to the law as a rule, and as written in the heart by the Holy Spirit, with delight and satisfaction, and earnest desires after more exact conformity to it, is the apostolical evidence of deliverance from the law as a covenant of works; and they who really belong to Christ, as justified believers, have actually crucified the flesh, with all its corrupt affections and rebellious inclinations. The carnal nature, the old man, is dethroned, condemned, hated, opposed, weakened, and wounded: his death is determined, though the execution be lingering and only

CHAP. VI.

The apostle exhorts the Galatians to restore the fallen with meekness, and to bear each other's burdens, according to the command of Christ, 1, 2; *to beware of proud self-deception,* 3—5; *to provide for their pastors, and to persevere without wearying in every good work; being assured that every one will reap as he has sowed,* 6—10. *He shows the carnal motives and glorying of the Judaizing teachers,* 11—13; *and determines to glory in the cross of Christ alone, as crucified to the world, and the world to him,* 14. *Nothing in Christ avails, but a new creation,* 15. *He prays for peace on all true Israelites; desires that none of them would further trouble him, who, as an old soldier, bore the scars of his warfare; and he commends them to the grace of Christ,* 16—18.

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to be effected by a continued course of self-denial; and though he still struggles for life, liberty, and even victory; which perpetuates the believer's conflict, and prevents his complete holiness. But, says the apostle, if we live *in*, or *by*, the Spirit, as regenerate persons, "let us also "walk in the Spirit," and order our daily conversation according to his holy influence, and in dependence on his guidance; especially in mortifying the carnal desires of vain glory and human applause, and refraining from whatever may tend to exasperate the minds of other men, or manifest envy of their gifts, reputation, or prosperity. The *body*, as meaning the animal nature, must be "kept under "and brought into subjection," by proper discipline, as a child; but the *flesh* must be crucified, as an enemy and malefactor, which is doomed to inevitable destruction. (*Note*, 1 *Cor.* ix. 24—27.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

While so many are struggling for personal and political liberty, or disputing about it, as the greatest of earthly blessings, let us aspire after, and stand fast in, the liberty which Christ bestows: that, walking before God with the humble and obedient confidence of children, we may steadfastly reject every yoke of bondage, with which Satan or his ministers may attempt to entangle us. Especially we should regard the apostle's warnings to keep clear of all dependence on our own works for justification, as in that case "Christ will profit us nothing." It is to be feared, that numbers impose on themselves in this matter: they imagine that the merits of Christ will make up for their deficiencies, while their real dependence is placed on their own morality, devotions, or superstitions. But the divine Saviour will teach us to give him the whole honour of our justification, or he will leave us wholly to stand or fall by our own righteousness; and every man, who trusts to his own works, "becomes a debtor to do the whole "law:" "Christ becomes of none effect to him;" he virtually renounces the covenant of grace, and must expect to be dealt with according to the rigour of the covenant of works. May we then keep at a distance from this fatal rock, and be of that number, who "through the "Spirit wait for the righteousness of hope by faith!" For the danger of old did not lie in circumcision, as that and uncircumcision were alike immaterial in themselves, even as many external forms and observances now are: but faith working by love forms the essence of the religion of Christ. Without this all else is worthless; and, compared with it, other things are of small value. Yet many, who seemed to run well in this evangelical race, have been hindered from obeying the truth by those who perplexed them with refined notions, or laboured to proselyte them to some new sect or form: so that, instead of "the work "of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope," they have turned aside to vain jangling, and zeal for trifling distinctions and the shibboleths of a party. This persuasion, that religion consists in such things, does by no means accord with the doctrine of the apostles, nor is it from the converting grace of the Spirit. Yet, when a little of this leaven gets into hopeful congregations, it is apt to diffuse itself through the whole lump. Its first beginnings should therefore be strenuously opposed; and they who would thus unsettle and pervert others, should be censured by their brethren, or even cut off from their communion: and certainly they who persist in disturbing and dividing the Church of Christ, must at last bear their judgment, whosoever they be.

V. 13—18.

It becomes us most steadfastly to maintain the pure Gospel of a crucified Saviour, whatever offence may be taken, or persecution endured, by means of it; but we should be equally watchful against those who make their "liberty an occasion for the flesh," and of indulging their selfish passions. By love, we should become the willing servants of one another and of all men; and in loving our neighbours as ourselves, according to the requirement of the holy commandment, we shall most effectually promote our own comfort, and the happiness of families, churches, and communities. But a house divided against itself cannot stand; and when professed Christians, instead of the gentleness of lambs and doves, become like savage beasts of prey, in biting and devouring one another, we need not wonder, that they are consumed one of another. Alas! how hath Satan prevailed in this way against the Church of Christ! What cruel persecutions and fierce controversies have arisen among Christians, so called! How many hopeful prospects have thus been clouded, and flourishing churches ruined! So that the nominal kingdom of the Prince of peace has become a scene of contention and discord! But all this would have been prevented, if men had "walked in the Spirit;" for they would not then have thus fulfilled the lusts of the flesh. The most eminent Christians indeed do not attain to all that they desire

BRETHREN, * if a man be [a] overtaken in a fault, ye which are [b] spiritual, [c] restore such an one [d] in the spirit of meekness; [e] considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

2 [f] Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil [g] the law of Christ.

* Or, *although*.
a ii. 11—13. Gen. ix. 20—24 xii. 11—13. Num. xx. 10—13 2 Sam xi. 2, &c. Matt. xxvi. 69—75.
b Rom. viii 6 xv. 1 1 Cor. ii. 15. iii. 1. xiv. 37.
c 2 Sam. xii. 1, &c. Job iv. 3, 4. Is. xxxv 3, 4. Ez. xxxiv. 16 Matt ix. 13. xviii. 12—15 Luke xv. 4—7 xvii. 32 Heb. xii 13. Jam v 19, 20 1 John v 16 Jude 22, 23 ——d v. 23. Matt. xi 29. 1 Cor. iv. 21. 2 Cor. x. 1. 2 Thes. iii. 15 2 Tim ii 25. Jam iii. 13. 1 Pet. iii. 15 ——e 1 Cor x. 12. Heb. xiii 3 Jam iii. 2.——f 5 v. 13, 14 Ex xxiii. 5. Num. xi. 11, 12. Deut. i. 12. Is lviii 6. Matt. viii. 17 xi 29. Luke xi 46. Rom. xv. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 21.——g John xiii. 14, 15. 34, 35. xv. 12. 1 Cor. ix. 21. 1 John ii. 8—11. iv. 21.

3 For [h] if a man think himself to be something, [i] when he is nothing, [k] he deceiveth himself.

4 But let every man [l] prove his own work, and then shall he have [m] rejoicing in himself alone, [n] and not in another.

5 For [o] every man shall bear his own burden.

h ii. 6 Prov. xxv. 14. xxvi 12. Luke xviii. 11. Rom. xii. 3. 16. 1 Cor. iii. 18. viii 2.
i 1 Cor. xiii. 2, 3. 2 Cor. iii. 5. xii. 11.
k 1 Cor. iii. 18. 2 Tim. iii. 13. Jam i. 22 26. 1 John i. 8.
l Job xiii. 15. *Marg*. Ps. xxvi. 2. 1 Cor xi 28. 2 Cor. xiii. 5.——m Prov. xiv. 14 1 Cor iv. 3, 4. 2 Cor i. 12. 1 John iii 19—22 ——n vi. 13 1 Cor. i 12, 13. iii. 21—23. iv. 6, 7 2 Cor. xi. 12, 13.——o Is. iii. 10, 11. Jer. xvii. 10. xxxii. 19. Ez. xviii 4. Matt. xvi. 27. Rom. ii. 6—9. xiv. 10—12. 1 Cor. iii 8. iv. 5. 2 Cor. v. 10, 11. Rev. ii. 23 xx 12—15. xxii. 12.

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and aim at; yet they who are led by the Spirit, habitually oppose and mortify those sinful workings, which they cannot wholly extirpate.

V. 19—26.

It should always be kept in mind, that "hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, "and envyings," are as much the works of the flesh, as adulteries, fornications, murders, drunkenness, revellings, or any sensual excess; and that they will as certainly exclude men from heaven, whatever profession of religion they make; nay, even when religion, in its purest form, is the pretence, subject, or occasion, of their malignant passions. But though the apostle hath repeatedly and plainly forewarned us, that they who do such things as are here mentioned, or others of a similar nature, shall not inherit the kingdom of God, yet what numbers of professed Christians live habitually in the grossest of them; and notwithstanding their adultery, fornication, shameful uncleanness, or secret lasciviousness, still hope for heaven, in neglect of evangelical repentance and faith! Nor can the most idolatrous covetousness, the most exorbitant pride, ambition, and emulation, the most notorious malice, wrath, hatred, envy, or even the murders committed in revengeful duels, deprive them of their presumptuous confidence. For "he that believeth not, hath made God "a liar." Nay, some even attempt to revive the worship of Satan by various divinations and prognostications, who would nevertheless be offended to be denied the name of Christians! Many also, who are zealous for the apostle's doctrine of justification, and suppose themselves not to be *under the law*, are so far from being led by the Spirit, that they are evidently and habitually fulfilling the lusts of the flesh; though the feeble remonstrances of a conscience, not totally callous, deceives them into an imagination that they are engaged in the conflict of the flesh and spirit! But let us never forget, that they who are not under the law for condemnation, are led by the Spirit into the love of its precepts, and an earnest desire to obey them. If we bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, as here described, in our habitual temper and conduct, we can have no objection to the daily examination of ourselves by that perfect standard of sin and holiness, that our love may be exercised in knowledge, and in all judgment: for against such things there is no law. They who "are "Christ's," (and all others, however distinguished, belong to Satan's kingdom,) "have crucified the flesh, with "its affections and lusts." Yet the imperfection of our attainments leaves room both for personal humiliation and mutual exhortations. If then we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit; watching against spiritual pride and vain-glory; not provoking or envying one another, but following after love, and seeking to bring forth more abundantly those good "fruits which are, through "Jesus Christ, to the praise and glory of God."

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1—5. The apostle, having concluded the argumentative part of the epistle, added some particular admonitions before he closed it. If any brother had been, or should be, surprised into the commission of sin, through unwatchfulness and temptation, and contrary to the habitual tenour of his conduct, the more spiritual of them, who were most matured in judgment and experience, ought to bestow pains to bring him to repentance, and to give him proper counsel and encouragement, in a meek and compassionate spirit, that he might be restored, like a dislocated limb to its place; and not to treat him with harsh rebukes or disdainful neglect. For each of them severally ought to consider himself, and his own weakness and frailty, as he too might be tempted and overcome, and then he would need that meekness and sympathy, which he had refused to his offending brother. Thus they ought not only to bear with one another's infirmities, but, as fellow-travellers, to carry each other's burdens; while the stronger brother denied himself, in order to support, comfort, and assist the weak, the tempted, and afflicted, that so they might fulfil the commandment which Christ repeatedly gave his disciples, "to love one another;" and which indeed was the substance of *his law*, for their conduct towards their brethren. But if, on the contrary, any of them thought himself more wise, strong, or eminent, than the rest, on account of his gifts or reputation, and so trusted in himself and despised others, when in fact he was nothing in the school of Christ, having not learned the first lesson of his religion, he was under a sad delusion, his heart imposed on him, and in fact he was his own deceiver. To prevent this fatal mistake, it behooved every individual to prove his own work by the touch-stone of the sacred oracles, that he might discover whether his habitual conduct, and the motives of it, accorded to the principles, experience, and character of the true believer; that so, instead of arrogantly condemning others, or glorying in others, and their attachment to him, or opinion of him, he might find cause of rejoicing and humble glorying in himself, and in the attestation of the sanctifying Spirit to his faith in Christ, 6 Let [p] him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth, in all good things.

7 Be [q] not deceived; [r] God is not mocked: [s] for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8 For he that [t] soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh [u] reap corruption; but he that [x] soweth to the Spirit, shall [y] of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

9 And let [z] us not be weary in [a] well doing: [b] for in due season we shall reap, [c] if we faint not.

10 As we have therefore [d] opportunity, let us [e] do good unto all *men*, [f] especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

11 ¶ Ye see how large a letter I have [g] written unto you with mine own hand.

12 As many [h] as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, [i] they constrain you to be circumcised; only [k] lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

13 For neither they themselves who are circumcised [l] keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, [m] that they may glory in your flesh.

14 But [n] God forbid [o] that I should glory, [p] save in the cross of our Lord

p Deut. xii 19. Matt. x. 10 Rom xv 27 1 Cor ix. 9—14. 1 Tim. v. 17, 18

q 3. Job xv 31 Jer. xxxvii 9. Ob 3 Luke xvi. 8 1 Cor iii. 18. vi. 9. xv. 33. Eph. v 6 2 Thes. ii. 3. Jam i. 22 26. 1 John i 8 iii 7

r Job xiii 8, 9 Jude 13

s Job iv. 8 Prov. i. 31. vi 14 19 xi 18. Hos viii 7 x. 12. Luke xvi. 25. Rom. ii. 6—10 2 Cor. ix 6

t Rom. vi. 13. viii. 13. xiii. 14.

u Prov. xxii. 8. Jer. xii. 13 Hos. x 13 2 Pet ii 12 19 Rev xxii 11.——x *See on*, 7. Ps cxxvi 5. 6. Ec. xi 6 Is xxxii. 20 Jam iii. 18 ——y Matt xix. 29 Luke xviii 30. John iv. 14 36 vi 27. Rom. vi 22 1 Tim i. 16. Tit. iii. 7 Jude 21 ——z Mal. i. 13. 1 Cor. xv 58 2 Thes iii. 13. Heb xii. 3 ——a Rom. ii 7 1 Pet ii. 15 iii. 17 iv. 19.——b Lev xxvi 4. Deut xi 14. Ps. civ. 27. cxlv 15. Jam. v 7, 8.——c Is. xl. 30, 31. Zeph. iii. 16. *Marg.* Matt. xxiv. 13. Luke xviii. 1. 2 Cor iv 1 16 Eph iii 13. Heb iii. 6 14 x. 35—39. Rev ii 3 7. 11. 17. 26—29. iii 5. 6. 12, 13. 21, 22.——d Ec ix 10 John ix 4. xii. 35 Eph. v. 16. Phil. iv. 10. Col. iv. 5. *Gr.* Tit. ii. 14.

e Ps. xxxvii. 3 27. Ec. iii. 12. Mark iii. 4. Luke vi. 35. 1 Thes. v. 15. 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18. Tit iii 8 Heb. xiii. 16. 3 John xi.

f Matt x. 25. xii. 50. xxv 40. Eph ii. 19. iii. 15. Heb iii 6. vi 10. 1 John iii. 13—19 v. 1. 3 John 5—8

g Rom. xvi. 22. 1 Cor. xvi 21—23

h 13 Matt. vi 2. 5. 16. xxiii. 5. 28. Luke xvi. 15 xx 47 John vii 18 2 Cor x. 12 xi. 13 Phil. i 15. ii. 4. Col. ii. 23.

i ii. 3. 14. Acts xv. 1. 5.

k *See on*, v. 11. Phil. iii 18

l Matt. xxiii. 3. 15. 23. Rom. ii. 17—24. iii. 9—19. 2 Pet. ii. 19 ——m 1 Cor. iii. 21 v. 6 2 Cor. xi. 18.——n *See on*, Rom. iii. 4 6.——o 2 Kings xiv. 9—11. Job xxxi. 24, 25. Ps. xlix 6 lii. 1. Jer. ix. 23, 24. Ez. xxviii. 2 Dan iv. 30, 31. v. 20, 21. 1 Cor. i. 29—31. iii. 21 2 Cor. xi. 13. xii. 10, 11. p Is xlv. 24, 25 Rom. i. 16. 1 Cor. i. 23. ii. 2. Phil. iii. 3 *Gr.* 7—11.

For every man must at last stand or fall, not according to the sect to which he belonged, or the judgment of men respecting him, but according to his real character in the sight of God. So that if any were deluded into fatal errors by false teachers, every one must bear the burden of his own guilt; nor would the condemnation of the deceiver exculpate him, who allowed himself to be deceived by him. (*Marg. Ref.*) The word rendered *spiritual*, when applied to *persons*, seems to denote the *spirituality*, or heavenly mind and judgment, of those who are thus distinguished. But all rulers, teachers, and workers of miracles, were not spiritual, spiritually minded, "led "by the Spirit," and filled with "the fruits of the "Spirit;" and many private Christians were. The duty of restoring the fallen might belong to the teachers and rulers *primarily*, but not *exclusively*. It can hardly be doubted, but that there were pastors and teachers in the churches of Galatia, yet they are scarcely mentioned in this epistle; perhaps, because they generally concurred with those who preached circumcision. Some indeed suppose, that the persons endued with spiritual gifts superintended the churches for some time, without any regular appointment, and that there were no other bishops or elders in Galatia at this time; but this by no means agrees with the history, which mentions the ordaining of elders by the apostles in every city, either personally, if they had leisure, or by apostolical men, or evangelists, (as Timothy, Titus, &c.) if compelled previously to leave the new converts. It is, however, probable, that these elders, and the deacons also, were generally chosen from among those who had been endued with miraculous powers, by the laying on of the hands of the apostles.

V. 6—10. The Lord had appointed the office of the ministry, for the conversion of sinners and the edification of believers; and accordingly the apostle exhorted the Galatians to contribute to the comfortable maintenance of their pastors, who instructed them from the word of God, communicating to them a proportion of their temporal good things, according to their ability. In this, and all such matters, they must be careful not to be deceived by their own hearts, by Satan, or by false teachers; for however they might excuse themselves, or impose upon men, and then deride their simplicity and credulity, God was not to be thus deceived, or mocked with false pretences; and it was most certain, that every man would at length reap a harvest correspondent to what he sowed. He that sowed to the flesh, by continuing to fulfil its lusts, and to indulge his selfish and sensual desires, under the profession of the Gospel, would only reap the corruptible things of this world; his body, which he indulged and pampered, would soon turn to corruption in the grave, and at length he himself would perish, as unregenerate, and having no inheritance in heaven. But the man who sowed to the Spirit, and, under the influences of the Holy Spirit, exercised daily repentance, faith in Christ, love to him and his brethren, and other Christian graces, would not only here reap the earnest and first fruits of inward consolations, but at length inherit everlasting life, as trained up for it by the sanctification of the Holy Spirit, and as receiving for Christ's sake a proportionable gracious recompense of all his disinterested and faithful services. Let then none of them grow weary of doing well, in dependence on Christ and for the honour of his Gospel, whatever conflicts, disappointments, persecutions, or temptations, they met with; for in due season, in the time of harvest, they would surely reap an abundant increase of all their labours, self-denial, and expense, if they showed the sincerity of their faith and love by continuing to the end without fainting in the work of the Lord. While therefore their lives were continued, and opportunities afforded, they ought to make it their great business, and deem it their chief pleasure, honour, and advantage, to be doing good, according to their ability, to men of every description, but especially to those who were their brethren in the family of God, by faith in Christ, or all professed Christians, who showed their sincerity in professing the Gospel by their temper and conduct. For surely those learned men, who would substitute the word *profession*, instead of *faith in Christ*, do not mean to include those who evidently make a hypocritical profession;

Jesus Christ, by [*] whom [q] the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

15 For [r] in Christ Jesus [s] neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, [t] but a new creature.

16 And as many as [u] walk according to this rule, [x] peace *be* on them, and mercy, and upon [y] the Israel of God.

17 From henceforth [z] let no man trouble me: for [a] I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

18 Brethren, [b] the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

[*] Or, *which*

[q] i. 4. ii 20. v. 24. Acts xx 23. 24. Rom vi 6 2 Cor v 14—16. Phil i. 20, 21. iii 8, 9 Col. iii. 1—3 1 John ii. 15—17 v 4, 5.

[r] *See on*, v 6. Rom viii. 1. 2 Cor. v. 17

[s] 1 Cor. vii 19

[t] 2 Cor. v. 17. Eph. ii. 10. iv. 24. Col. iii. 10. Rev. xxi. 5.

[u] v. 16. 25. Ps. cxxv. 4, 5. Phil. iii 16.

[x] i. 3. Num vi. 23—27. 1Chr. xii. 18. John xiv 27. xvi 33. *See on*, Rom i. 7. Phil. iv 7.

[y] iii 7—9. 29. Ps lxxiii. 1. Is. xlv. 25. Hos i. 10. John i. 47. Rom. ii. 28, 29. iv 12 ix 6—8. Phil iii.3 1Pet. ii 5—9.

[z] i 7. v. 12. Josh. vii. 25 Acts xv. 24. Heb xii. 15

[a] v 11. 2 Cor i. 5 iv. 10. xi. 23—25. Col. i. 24.

[b] *See on*, Rom. xvi. 20 24 2 Cor. xiii. 14. 2 Tim. iv. 22. Philem. 25. Rev xxii. 21

V. 11—16. The words here rendered "how large a "letter," are supposed by many persons to signify *with what kind of letters*, referring to the apostle's want of skill in writing the Greek language. He had, however, bestowed great pains to pen this epistle with his own hand, either because he had not an amanuensis with him, or, rather, because he did not choose to employ one, but wrote the whole himself, that he might convince the Galatians of his love to them, and anxiety about them. There were professed teachers of Christianity indeed, who wanted to make a fair show in the flesh, or in respect of external matters, by forming a coalition between the Jewish religion and that of Jesus. These were so very earnest in urging the Gentiles to be circumcised, that they might be said even to compel them, as they would take no denial, and exhausted all their eloquence and ingenuity to overcome their reluctance. But, notwithstanding their attachment to the ritual law, they would not have been so earnest in this matter, if they could otherwise have possessed their influence in the Christian Church, without exposing themselves to persecution for professing faith in Christ and his cross. For, not only did the Jews hate and persecute those who preached the Gospel to the Gentiles, without regarding the Mosaic law, but the heathen rulers also, who tolerated the Jews and such Christians as observed the law, were inveterate against the Gentile Christians, and deemed them an upstart sect, dangerous to the civil government. This crafty and selfish aim of the judaizing teachers, of advancing themselves to consideration in the Christian Church, without exposing themselves to persecution, induced them to be very zealous in proselyting the Gentiles to the Mosaic law, but they were not equally strict in their own observance of it; not only were they negligent of the moral precepts, but probably on one pretence or other, they dispensed with themselves and one another, in respect to the more burdensome and expensive of the ceremonial institutions, many of which could not be observed in countries distant from Jerusalem. So that it was evident they only desired the Gentiles to be circumcised, that they might glory in having induced such numbers to bear in their flesh this mark of their being proselyted. This both placed them at the head of a Christian sect, and also tended to procure them favour and reputation with the Jewish rulers and others. But the apostle added, with a noble disdain of such base motives, "God forbid that I should glory, &c.:" he would not value himself on any thing which he had received, attained to, or performed, either before or since his conversion, except in his dependence on the sufferings and death of Christ upon the cross, as a sacrifice for sin, and in the hopes, comforts, and blessings, which he thence had derived. In this, indeed, he greatly gloried, and his view of the cross of Christ, and of the obligations, motives, and instructions, connected with it, had crucified the world to him, and him to the world. 'So that he viewed 'the world, as little impressed by all its charms, as a 'spectator would be by any thing that had been graceful 'in the countenance of a crucified person, when he beholds it blackened in the agonies of death, and was no 'more affected by the objects around him, than one that 'is expiring would be struck with any of those prospects, 'which his dying eyes might view from the cross on 'which he was suspended.' (*Doddridge.*) He disdained the friendship, riches, honours, and pleasures of the world, and disregarded its reproach and hatred, as he would have done those of a crucified malefactor, seeing in the cross of Christ the condemnation of all unbelievers without distinction; and the love of all things of a worldly nature was crucified by his view of the holiness of God, the evil of sin, the wickedness of man, and the importance of eternity, which the cross of Christ exhibited, and by that grace which he died to procure for him. To show forth the love of his crucified Lord, to point him out to sinners, to honour him in his own conduct, and to teach others to love and glorify him, was the great business of his life; all else was comparatively beneath his notice. This raised him above all regard to circumcision or uncircumcision, assured that regeneration, or a new creation to the image of Christ, as evidential of faith in him, was the great distinction between one man and another; (*Notes, 2 Cor.* v. 17—20:) and to all men, Jewish or Gentile converts, who walked with God, as in Christ, new creatures, glorying in his cross only, and crucified by it to the world, he desired that mercy and peace might abound, even to the true Israel of God, as distinguished from the unbelieving nation of Israel.

V. 17, 18. As what had been written was abundantly sufficient to satisfy all humble inquiries, the apostle desired that he might not thenceforth be troubled and disquieted by such disputations; they ought not thus to add to his sufferings, for he already bore in his body the marks and scars of the wounds which he had received in the cause of Christ, and which he deemed far more honourable than the external badge of circumcision.—Some think, that the marks which slaves and soldiers received, showing to what master or commander they belonged, are alluded to. But the scars of the stripes and wounds, which he had received for Christ's sake, are certainly meant. These ought to have endeared him to them, as he exposed himself to such persecutions for their good. He therefore desired, that the grace and free favour of Christ might be with their souls, to comfort, establish, and sanctify them; and then he knew that they would be more affectionate to him, and less attached to mere externals.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

There is a great difference between those who habitually live in known sin; and those who are overtaken with a fault, to which the best of men are liable. The reality and degree of our spirituality should be evinced by tender and compassionate endeavours to restore the fallen and confirm the weak, in the spirit of meekness; as conscious that we too are liable to be tempted, and have need of humble watchfulness, and constant dependence upon God. Our Christian liberty is enjoyed in proportion as we "fulfil the law of Christ," in loving the brethren, and bearing one another's burdens, with compassion and self-denial. But, alas! many think themselves to be something when they are nothing, and so deceive themselves. Let us then prove our own work; and seek rejoicing in the assurance of our own conversion, and not in the opinion of others concerning us; seeing that "every man must bear "his own burden." They who love the Gospel, and are taught according to the word of God, will not grudge the faithful minister a proportion of their good things: men may in this and in other matters impose on others, as well as deceive themselves; but God will not be trifled with. As the present is our seed-time for eternity, let us examine what we are now sowing; and what our harvest is likely to prove. If hitherto any man have sown to the flesh, and is afraid that "of the flesh he shall reap corruption;" let him begin, by repentance, faith, and prayer, to sow to the Spirit, that he may at length reap everlasting life. And let none of us, who have begun thus to sow to the Spirit, "grow weary in well doing; assured that in due "season we shall reap if we faint not." Not only do those, who have no root in themselves, lose all their labour about religion, by drawing back in the time of temptation; but even believers often lose much of the comfort and usefulness, that they were likely to obtain, by fainting in part through disappointment, and want of zeal and patience. Let us then watch against this; remembering that we are the servants of Christ, whose work it is, "as "we have opportunity, to do good to all men, especially "to the household of faith."

V. 11—18.

There have always been professors and teachers, who desired to make a fair show in the flesh, to render religion subservient to worldly interests or distinctions, and to escape the cross. Such men will commonly be more zealous to make proselytes to a party, than converts to Christ; that they may glory in the numbers who are attached to them. But the consistent Christian is nobly disdainful of these low aims: he only glories in the cross of Christ, as the Foundation of all his hopes; and this faith in a crucified Saviour crucifies the world to him, and him unto the world; as he desires to "live no longer to "himself, but to him who died for him, and rose again." Thus he overcomes the love of worldly objects, and is reconciled to hardships, poverty, reproach, and hatred for his Lord's sake. If we then are in Christ, new creatures, we have the kernel and the substance of religion, and may leave others to quarrel about the shell or the shadow of it. Yet we should desire that mercy and peace may be upon all, who walk according to this rule, and upon the whole Israel of God. They are peculiarly blameable, who trouble and grieve those soldiers of Christ, who bear in their bodies the scars of the wounds which they have received in fighting the good fight: but we should not wonder, if our most disinterested and self-denying labours meet with this recompense alone, from those whom we have most loved. And we must still pray, that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ may be with their spirits; as well as expostulate with them concerning their misconduct.

THE

EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

EPHESIANS.

'*Although it does not appear to have ever been disputed, that the epistle before us was written by St. Paul, yet it is well known, that a doubt has long been entertained concerning the persons to whom it was addressed. The question is founded on some ambiguity in the external evidence. Marcion, a heretic of the second century, as quoted by Tertullian, calls it the Epistle to the Laodiceans. The name,* Ephesus, *in the first verse, upon which word singly depends the proof that the epistle was written to the Ephesians, is not read in all the manuscripts now extant. I admit, however, that the external evidence preponderates, with a manifest excess, on the side of the received reading.'* (Paley.) *The same learned writer proceeds to argue, from internal evidence, that the epistle could hardly be written to a people with whom the apostle had resided three years: and it must be acknowledged, that in this respect it more resembles the epistle to the Romans, and that to the Colossians, than those epistles which the apostle wrote to the Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, and Thessalonians; in which there are constant allusions and appeals to what had past when he resided among them. As, however, the external evidence preponderates with a manifest excess, in favour of the received reading, it is in this exposition adhered to: though it may be observed, that the change of the word* Ephesus *for* Laodicea, *or the total omission of it, would in no respect deduct from the abundant instruction, contained in the epistle itself. 'It has been said, that if this epistle was directed to the Ephesians, it is difficult to understand how the apostle contented himself with a general salutation. But there are no particular salutations, in the epistles to the Galatians, &c.: because, to have sent particular salutations to individuals, in Churches where the apostle was so generally and intimately acquainted, might have offended those who were neglected. And to have mentioned every person of note, would have taken up too much room. In writing to the Romans, the case was different. The apostle was personally unknown to most of them; and he could take particular notice of all his acquaintance.'* (Macknight.) *The successful ministry of the apostle in the renowned, but licentious, city of Ephesus; and his solemn charge to the elders of the Church, which was there collected, have before been considered;* (Notes, Acts xix. xx.) *Some years after, he wrote this epistle during his imprisonment at Rome, and probably near the close of it; to establish them in the great doctrines of the Gospel, to guard them against errors, excite them to a holy conversation, and to animate them in their Christian warfare. This epistle, and the two that follow it, which were also written during his imprisonment, and probably about the same time, are remarkable for a peculiar pathos and ardour, or* rapture, *as some have called it; and this is generally ascribed to the extraordinary consolations enjoyed by the apostle during his sufferings for Christ's sake. But his mind was doubtless enlarged to a remarkable degree in writing to those whom he had no occasion to rebuke, and with whom he was not under the necessity of engaging in controversy: so that, entire confidence of affection took place of that caution, reserve, or sharpness, which were requisite in the three preceding epistles. Learned men, according to their different hypotheses, suppose, that the apostle continually refers, in this epistle, to the mysteries of Diana, to the Gnostics, or to the Judaizing teachers; but it may fairly be questioned, whether, writing with an inexpressible flow of holy affections, on the great subjects which rejoiced his heart, he had express reference to any of those things which expositors, more coldly speculating on his words, have thought of. Perhaps, he had some general regard to the Judaizing corruptors of the Gospel: but, as the epistle to the Colossians, which was written about the same time, and in other respects greatly resembles this, is far more explicit on that subject, it may be supposed that the Ephesians were less in danger from that quarter.*

CHAP. I.

The apostle salutes the Ephesians, 1, 2. *He blesses God for the spiritual blessings, which he had conferred on them and him, as chosen in Christ, and predestinated to the adoption of children,* 3—5; *as accepted in the Beloved, through the redemption of his blood, and his grace abounding towards them, in all wisdom,* 6—8; *as gathered, and made heirs, with his people, to the praise of his glory, by first trusting in Christ,* 9—12; *and as sealed by the Spirit of adoption, the Earnest of their inheritance,* 13, 14. *He thanks God for them, and prays that God would more completely illuminate them, and give them deeper experience of the grace and comforts of the Gospel,* 15—18; *according to the mighty power, by which Christ had been raised from the dead, and exalted as Head over all things to his church,* 19—23.

PAUL, [a] an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, [b] to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the [c] faithful in Christ Jesus:

2 Grace [d] *be* to you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

a *See on,* Rom. i. 5 1 Cor. i. 1. Gal i 1.
b *See on,* y Rom. i. 7. 1 Cor. i. 2. 2 Cor i. 1.
c vi. 21. Num. xii. 7. Luke xvi. 10. Acts xvi. 15. 1 Cor iv. 1. 17. Gal. iii. 9. Col. i. 2. Rev. ii. 10. 13. xvii. 14.
d *See on,* z a. b. Rom. i. 7. 2 Cor. i. 1.

3 [e] Blessed *be* the [f] God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, [g] who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings [h] in heavenly * *places* [i] in Christ:

4 According [k] as he hath chosen us in him [l] before the foundation of the world, [m] that we should be holy, and [n] without blame before him [o] in love:

5 Having [p] predestinated us [q] unto the adoption of children [r] by Jesus Christ to himself, [s] according to the good pleasure of his will,

6 To the [t] praise of the glory of his grace, wherein [u] he hath made us accepted in [x] the Beloved:

7 In [y] whom we have redemption through his blood, [z] the forgiveness of sins, according [a] to the riches of his grace;

8 Wherein [b] he hath abounded toward us [c] in all wisdom and prudence;

e Gen. xiv. 20. 1 Chr. xxix. 20. Neh. ix. 5. Ps. lxxii. 19. Dan. iv. 34. Luke ii 28. 1 Pet. i 3. Rev. iv. 9—11. v 9—14.
f 17. John x. 29, 30 xx 17 Rom. xv 6. 2 Cor. i. 3. xi. 31. Phil. ii. 11.
g Gen. xii. 2, 3. xxii. 18. 1 Chr. iv. 10. Ps. lxxii. 17. cxxxiv. 3. Is. lxi. 9 Gal. iii. 9.
h 20 ii. 6. iii. 10. vi. 12. *Marg.* Heb. viii. 5. ix. 23.
* Or, things.
i 10. John xiv. 20. xv. 2—5. xvii. 21. Rom. xii. 5. 1 Cor. i 30. xii. 12. 2 Cor. v. 17. 21.
k Deut. vii. 6, 7. Ps cxxxv. 4. Is. xli. 8, 9. xlii 1. lxv. 8—10. Matt. xi. 25, 26. xxiv. 22. 24. 31. John x. 16. Acts xiii. 48. xviii 10. Rom. viii. 30. 33. ix. 23, 24. xi. 5, 6. 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14. 2 Tim. ii. 10 Tit. i. 1, 2. Jam ii. 5. 1 Pet. i. 2. ii. 9.——l Matt. xxv. 34. John xvii 24. Acts xv. 18 1 Pet. i. 20. Rev. xiii. 8. xvii. 8——m ii. 10 Luke i 74, 75. John xv. 16. Rom. viii. 28; 29. Col. iii 12. 1 Thes. iv. 7. 2 Tim. i. 9. ii. 19. Tit. ii. 11, 12. 2 Pet. i 5—10.——n v. 27. 1 Cor. i. 8 Phil. ii. 15 Col. i. 22. 2 Pet iii. 14.——o iii. 17. iv. 2. 15, 16. v. 2. Gal. v. 6. 13 22. Col. ii. 2. 1 Thes iii. 12 1 John iv. 16——p 11. Rom. viii 29, 30.——q Jer. iii. 4. 19 Hos. i. 10 John i. 12. xi. 52. Rom. viii. 14—17. 23. 2 Cor vi 18 Gal iv. 5, 6. Heb. xii 5—9. 1 John iii. 1. Rev. xxi. 7.——r John xx. 17. Gal. iii. 26. Heb. ii. 10—15——s 9. 11. Dan. iv. 35. Matt. xi. 26. Luke x. 21. xii. 32. Rom. ix. 11—16. 1 Cor. 1. Phil. ii. 13 2 Thes. i. 11.——t 7, 8. 12. 14. 18. ii. 7 iii. 10, 11. Prov. xvi, 4 Is xliii. 21. lxi. 3. 11. Jer. xxxiii 9. Luke ii. 14. Rom. ix. 23, 24. 2 Cor. iv. 15. Phil. i. 11. iv. 19. 2 Thes. i 8—10. 1 Tim. i. 14—16 1 Pet. iv. 11.
u Is. xlv. 24, 25. Jer. xxiii. 6. Rom iii. 22—26. v 15—19. viii. 1. 2 Cor. v. 21 Phil. iii. 9.
x Ps. xxii. 20. lx 5. Prov. viii. 30, 31. Is. xlii. 1. xlix. 1—3. Zech. xiii. 7. Matt iii. 17. xvii 5. John iii. 35. x. 17. Col. i. 13.——y Job xxxiii. 24. Ps cxxx. 7. Dan ix 24—26. Zech. ix. 11. xiii. 1. 7 Matt xx. 28. xxvi 28 Mark xiv 24. Acts xx. 28. Rom iii. 24. 1 Cor. i. 30. Col i. 14. 1 Tim. ii. 6. Tit ii. 14 Heb ix. 12—15. 22 x. 4—12 1 Pet. i 18, 19. ii. 24. iii. 18. 1 John ii. 2. iv. 10. Rev. v. 9. xiv. 4.——z Ex. xxxiv 7. Ps. xxxii. 1, 2. lxxxvi 5. cxxx 4. Is. xliii. 25. lv. 6, 7. Jer. xxxi 34. Dan. ix. 9. 19 Jon iv. 2. Mic vii. 18. Luke i. 77. vii. 40—42. 47—50. xxiv. 47. John xx. 23. Acts ii. 38. iii. 19. x. 43 xiii. 38, 39. Rom. iv. 6—9. Col. ii 13. Heb. x. 17, 18. 1 John i. 7—9. ii. 12.——a *See on,* 6. ii. 4. 7. iii. 8 16. Rom. ii. 4. ix. 23. 2 Cor. viii. 9. Col. i. 27. ii. 2 Phil. iv 19. Tit. iii. 6 *Marg.*——b Rom. v. 15. 20. 21.——c 11 iii. 10 Ps. civ. 24. Prov. viii. 12. Is lii 13. Dan. ii. 20, 21. Matt. xi. 19. Rom. xi. 33. 1 Cor. i. 19—24. ii. 7. Col. ii. 3. Jude 25. Rev. v. 12.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. (*Notes, Rom.* i. 1—7.) By "the "faithful in Christ Jesus," the apostle might mean, either believers in Christ, or such as approved themselves to be his *faithful* soldiers, servants, and stewards. Some have supposed, that the expression was intended to include other believers, as well as the saints at Ephesus, but it may be rendered, "*even* the faithful in Christ Jesus." (*Marg. Ref.*) *Grace.* (2.) 'This grace is given by the communication of the Holy Ghost, from the Father, and the 'Son, to the Church; (*John* xiv. 23;) which is the reason 'that the Holy Ghost is not mentioned in these salutations.' (*Whitby.*)

V. 3—8. The following twelve verses, properly speaking, form one period. The apostle's mind was so full of his subject, that he was not very exact about his style: and this renders a double degree of attention requisite in the reader, who would fully enter into his meaning. We shall, however, better understand his argument and doctrine, by considering the passage in a more detached manner. Reflecting on the great things which God had done for him, and by him, especially among the Gentiles, the apostle broke out into the most rapturous praises and thanksgiving unto God on that account.—He could do no other than *speak well* concerning the God and Father of the Lord Jesus, and celebrate the praises of his name, who had *done so well and graciously* by his believing people, and had conferred on them all spiritual blessings, that could be desired, or enjoyed, in respect of heavenly *things,* and as the earnest of heavenly felicity; by giving his Son Jesus Christ for them, and by calling them to believe in him; or by exalting Christ, as their Surety, Advocate, and fore-runner, into the heavenly places, God had at once, as it were, conferred all spiritual blessings on every believer, as united unto him, and interested in him. This resulted from his choice of them, in Christ, and as given to him, even "before the "foundation of the world;" not because he foresaw they would of themselves be more holy than others of their fallen race; but that they should be made holy, by separation from sin, consecration unto God, and the sanctification of the Spirit, in consequence of their election in Christ. Thus he purposed to render them "blameless "before him, in love;" not only in respect of their complete justification in Christ; but by their present integrity and sincerity in the professed love of Christ, of each other, and of all men; by their blameless walk before God, in all his ordinances and commandments;

9 Having [d] made known unto us the mystery of his will, [e] according to his good pleasure, which he hath [f] purposed in himself:

10 That, [g] in the dispensation of the fulness of times, [h] he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in * heaven, and which are on earth, *even* in him:

d 17, 18. iii 3—9. Matt xiii. 11. 35. Rom. xvi. 25—27. 1 Cor. ii. 10—12. Gal. i. 12. 16 Col. i 26—28. 1 Tim. iii. 16.
e *See on*, 5.
f 11. iii. 11. Job xxiii. 13, 14. Ps. xxxiii. 11. Is xiv. 24—27 xlvi 10, 11. Jer li. 29. Lam. iii. 37, 38. Acts ii. 23. iv. 28. xiii. 48. Rom. viii. 28. 2 Tim. i. 9.
g Is. ii. 2—4. Dan ii. 44. ix. 24—27. Am. ix. 11. Mic. iv. 1, 2. Mal. iii. 1. 1 Cor. x. 11 Gal. iv. 4. Heb. i. 2 ix 10. xi. 40 1 Pet. i. 20 ——— h 22. ii. 15. iii. 15. Gen xlix. 10. Matt xxv. 32. Phil. ii. 9, 10 Col. i. 20. iii. 11. Heb xii. 22—24. Rev. v. 9. vii. 4—12. xix. 4—6 ——— * Gr. *the heavens.*

11 In whom also [i] we have obtained an inheritance, [k] being predestinated according to [l] the purpose of Him, who worketh all things after [m] the counsel of his own will:

12 That we should be [n] to the praise of his glory, [o] who first † trusted in Christ.

i 14. Ps. xxxvii. 18. Acts xx 32. xxvi 18. Rom. viii. 17. Gal iii. 18. Col. i. 12. iii. 24. Tit. iii. 7. Jam. ii. 5. 1 Pet. i. 4. iii. 9
k *See on*. 5.
l *See on*, f 9.
m *See on*, c. 8 Job xii. 13. Prov. viii 14 Is v. 19. xxviii. 29. xl. 13, 14. Jer. xxiii. 18. xxxii. 19 Zech ix. 17. Acts ii 23. iv. 28. xx. 27. Rom. xi. 34 Heb. vi. 17.
n 14. ii 7. iii. 21. 2 Thes. ii. 13. *See on*, t. 6. ——— o 13. Ps. ii 12 cxlvi. 3—5. Is xi 10. xii. 2. xxxii. 1, 2. xlii. 1—4. xlv. 23—25. Jer. xvii. 5—7. xxiii 6. Matt xii. 18—21. John xiv. 1. Rom. xv. 12, 13. 2 Tim. i. 12. *Marg.* 1 Pet. i. 21. ——— † Or *hoped.*

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and at length by making them perfect in holy love and heavenly felicity. For he had "predestinated," or fore-ordained, them to be adopted as his children, by faith in Jesus Christ; and to be openly admitted to the privileges of that high relation to himself, notwithstanding their original and actual sinfulness. In doing this according to his sovereign will and pleasure, he intended to exhibit the glory of his rich, free, and distinguishing grace in the most illustrious manner, that they and others might celebrate the praises of it for ever: as by that glorious grace he had made them, (lost sinners both of the Jews and Gentiles,) "accepted in his beloved" Son, and the "right-"eousness of God in him:" so that, as the Father was well-pleased in his beloved Son, he was also well-pleased with them for his sake. Or hath "highly favoured us in "him;" as a word of the same import is elsewhere rendered; (*Luke* i. 28;) including all other blessings, as flowing, without fail, from their justification in Christ.—For though in themselves they had been condemned criminals, enslaved and imprisoned under the curse of the law, and the power of sin and Satan, without any possibility of delivering themselves, yet Christ had paid a complete ransom for their souls, when he shed his blood on the cross, and, having been brought into a state of union with him by regeneration and faith, they had obtained a complete redemption; their sins having been fully pardoned, and their souls set at liberty from the fetters and dungeon of their former wretched condition.—This deliverance accorded to the unspeakable abundance of God's free mercy and grace: his love appointed this method of redemption, provided the Redeemer, spared not his own Son, brought them to hear and embrace this salvation, freely pardoned all their sins, gave liberty to their captive souls, supplied all their wants, and invested them with the richest variety of privileges and blessings. In exercising such astonishing grace, after so abundant a manner, the Lord had also acted with all wisdom and prudent counsel: for whereas mercy to criminals often gives encouragement to crimes, and disgraces or weakens the hands of government, this method of grace was so wisely ordered, that it showed sin in all its odiousness and desert of vengeance; exhibited the divine justice and holiness in the most tremendous glory; manifested all the attributes of God in glorious harmony; furnished the most effectual motives to the believer's future obedience; and tended directly to subvert Satan's empire of ungodliness and iniquity. So that the wisdom of God never shone so bright in the view of all holy intelligences, as in this display of the riches of his glorious grace. (*Notes*, *Rom.* iii. 19—31. viii. 28—39.) Exalted and mysterious wisdom had also been displayed in all the steps by which the way was prepared for the revelation of this plan, and in the time and manner in which it was revealed. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 9—12. The blessings before mentioned were communicated to believers, by the Lord's making known to them the mystery of his sovereign will, respecting the method of redemption and salvation, and the admission of sinners into his family by faith in Christ, whether they were Jews or Gentiles. All these arrangements had been made "according to his good pleasure, which he had "purposed in himself;" for as he advised with no counsellor, so he gave no account of his holy, wise, and righteous appointments. Having revealed these things to the apostles, and by them to the Church, his divine teaching had led those whom he had chosen to see the glory of those truths, which others were left to blaspheme. Thus were they made to know the mystery of his will, and to understand, that in the dispensation, which at length in the fulness of times had been introduced, the Lord meant to gather together, as into one kingdom or family, in his beloved Son, and under his government, all things in heaven and earth. So that not only Jews and Gentiles would become one Church: not only were the saints, who had before gone to heaven, to be considered as one body with believers on earth; but even holy angels, and all the inhabitants of heaven, as confirmed in Christ, and his worshippers and subjects, would form one kingdom with redeemed sinners, and join with them in love, adoration, and obedience. By virtue of their relation to Christ and union with him, the apostle and the Jewish converts had obtained a share in this glorious inheritance; having been predestinated, according to the sovereign appointment of that glorious God, who carries on his work of creation, providence, and redemption, according to those wise counsels, and that perfect plan, which he hath seen good to form And while most of their countrymen had been left to judicial blindness and unbelief, to be monuments of God's awful justice, they had been selected "for the "praise of his glory," being brought to trust in Christ for salvation, (*Marg. Ref.*) by the power of divine grace, as the first-fruits of the Christian-Church, though in themselves deserving of wrath, no less than their unbelieving Jewish brethren. *Gather*, &c. 'As when orators form a 'brief recapitulation of their arguments, or the heads of 'their discourse; so believers are said to be collected toge-'ther in Christ.' 'For Christ is He, in whom all the 'elect, from the creation of the world, otherwise wandering

p ii. 11. 12. Col. i 21—23. 1 Pet. ii 10.
q v. 21. John i 17. Rom vi 17 x. 14-17 Col. i. 4—6 23. 1 Thes ii 13
r Ps cxix. 43 2 Cor vi. 7 2 Tim ii 15. Jam i. 18
s Mark xvi. 15, 16. Acts xiii 26. Rom i. 16 2 Tim. iii. 15. Tit ii. 11 Heb ii. 3
t iv. 30 John vi 27. Rom. iv. 11. 2 Cor. i 22. 2 Tim ii. 19. Rev. vii. 2. 3.
u Joel ii. 28 Luke xi 13 xxiv. 49. John xiv 16. 17. 26 xv. 26. xvi. 7—15. Acts i. 4 ii. 16—22. 33, Gal. iii 14
x Rom. viii. 15—17 23. 2 Cor. i. 22. v 5. Gal iv 6
y iv. 30 Lev xxv. 24, &c. Ps lxxiv 2 lxxviii 54 Jer xxxii. 7. 8. Luke xxi. 28 Acts xx. 28 Rom viii 23 1 Pet ii. 9 *Marg*

13 In whom [p] ye also *trusted*, [q] after that ye heard [r] the word of truth, [s] the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after that ye believed, [t] ye were sealed with that [u] Holy Spirit of promise,

14 Which is [x] the earnest of our inheritance, until [y] the redemption of the purchased possession, [z] unto the praise of his glory.

15 Wherefore I also, [a] after I heard of your [b] faith in the Lord Jesus, [c] and love unto all the saints;

16 [d] Cease not to give thanks for you, [e] making mention of you in my prayers;

17 That [f] the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, [g] the Father of glory, may give unto you [h] the Spirit of wisdom and [i] revelation, * in the [k] knowledge of him:

18 The [l] eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what [m] is the hope of [n] his calling, and what [o] the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

19 And what *is* [p] the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the † working of his mighty power,

20 Which [q] he wrought in Christ, [r] when he raised him from the dead, [s] and set *him* at his own right hand in the [t] heavenly *places*,

21 Far [u] above all [x] principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and [y] every name that is named, not only in this world, but also [z] in that which is to come:

22 And hath [a] put all *things* under his feet, and [b] gave him *to be* the Head over all *things* [c] to the church,

23 Which is [d] his body, [e] the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

m iv 4 Rom. v. 4. 5. viii 24. 25. Gal v 5 Col. i. 5. 23 1 Thes. v. 8 2 Thes. ii 16. Tit ii. 13. iii. 7. 1 Pet. i 3. 1 John iii 1—3.
n iv 1. Rom viii. 28—30 Phil iii. 14. Col iii. 15. 1 Thes. ii. 12. 2 Thes. i. 11. 1 Tim. vi. 12. 1 Pet. iii. 9. v. 10
o *See on*, 7. 11 iii. 8.
p ii 10. iii 7. 20. Ps. cx. 2 3. Is. liii. 1. John iii. 6. Acts xxvi. 18. Rom i. 16. 2 Cor. iv 7. v. 17. Phil ii 13. Col. i 29. ii. 12. 1 Thes. i. 5. 2 Thes. i. 11. Jam i. 18
† Gr. *might of his power.*
q ii. 5, 6. Rom. vi. 5—11. Phil. iii. 10 1 Pet i 3.
r Ps. xvi 9—11. John x. 18. 30. Acts ii 24—32. iv. 10 x 40. xxvi. 8 Rom. i. 4. xiii 20.
s iv. 8—10 Ps. cx 1. Matt. xxii 43 — 45. xxvi 64. xxviii. 18 Mark xiv 62 xvi. 19 John xvii. 1—5 Acts ii. 34—36. v 31. vii. 55. 56. Rom viii. 34. Col iii 1 Heb i. 3 ii 9. x 12. Rev. i. 17. v. 11—14.——t *See on*, i. 3 ——u Col. ii. 10 Heb. i 4.——x iii. 10 vi. 12 Dan vii 27. Rom. viii. 38, 39 Col i. 15, 16 ii. 15. Heb. iv 14 1 Pet iii. 22 ——y Matt. xxviii. 19. Acts iv 12 Phil ii 9—11. Rev. xix. 12, 13 ——z Matt. xxv 31—46 xxviii. 18. John v. 25—29. Heb ii. 5. Rev. xx. 10—15 ——a Gen. iii 15. Ps. viii. 6—8. xci. 13 1 Cor xv. 25—27 Heb. ii. 8 ——b iv. 15, 16. 1 Cor xi. 3. Col. i. 18. ii. 10. 19.——c iii 21. Matt. xvi. 18 Acts xx 28. 1 Tim. iii. 15. Heb xii 22—44.——d ii. 16. iv. 4. 12. v. 23—32. Rom. xii. 5 1 Cor. xii. 12—27. Col. i. 24. iii. 15.——e iii. 19. iv. 10. John i. 16. 1 Cor. xii. 6. xv. 28. Col. i. 16. ii. 9, 10. iii. 11.

z *See on* 6. 12 ——a Col i. 3, 4. Philem. 5.——b Gal. v. 6 1 Thes i. 3. 2 Thes. i. 3 1 Tim i. 5. 14.——c Ps xvi 3 Col. i. 4 1 Thes. iv 9 Heb. vi 10. 1 Pet. i 22 1 John iii. 17 iv 21 ——d *See on*, Rom i 8, 9. 1 Sam. vii. 8. xii. 13. 1 Thes. v. 17 —— e Gen. xl. 14. Is lxxi 6. 1 Thes i 2 ——f *See on* 3.——g 1 Chr. xxix 11 Ps xxiv 7 11 xxix 3 Jer. ii. 11. Matt vi 13. Luke ii 14. Acts vii. 2 1 Cor ii 8 Jam ii. 1 Rev. vii 12 ——h Gen xli 38. 39 Is xi 2 Dan v. 11 Luke xii 12 xxi 15. John xiv 17. 26 Acts vi 10 1 Cor xii 8 xv 6. Col i 9 ii 3. Jam iii. 17, 18.——i iii 5 Dan ii 28—30 x 1. Matt. xi. 25. xvi. 17 1 Cor ii. 10. 2 Cor xii 1.——* Or, *for the acknowledgment.* Col. ii. 2. 2 Tim. ii 25. Tit. i. 1.——k iii. 18, 19. Prov ii 5. Jer. ix. 24 xxiv 7. xxxi 34. Matt. xi 27 John viii 54, 54. xvi. 3. xvii. 3 25, 26. Rom. i 28. Col. i 10. 2 Pet. i 3. iii. 18 1 John ii 3. 4.——l v. 8. Ps. cxix 18 Is vi. 10. xxix 10. 18 xxxii. 3. Matt. xiii. 15. Luke xxiv. 45. Acts xvi 14. xxvi. 18. 2 Cor. iv. 4. 6. Heb. x. 32.

‘from God, are gathered together; of whom were some ‘in the heavens, when he came on earth, (who indeed ‘had been gathered together, by faith in him who was ‘to come;) others being found on earth, were gathered ‘together, and are daily gathered to him.’ (*Beza.*) The union of angels with redeemed sinners, in one company of worshippers, seems also intended.

V. 13, 14. Not only the Jews, who had embraced the Gospel, but the Gentile converts also, especially those at Ephesus, had, “to the praise of the divine glory,” been led to believe and hope in Christ; when the word of truth, the glad tidings which proposed salvation to them, had been preached among them, in whom, “after “they had believed,” or *believing*, they had been sealed by the Holy Spirit, who had been promised by the ancient prophets, and by Christ before his ascension into heaven. This cannot be exclusively explained of miraculous powers. These were not the earnest, pledge, and foretaste of heaven, as this seal is declared to have been; for many unsanctified persons have exercised miraculous powers. But the sanctifying and comforting influences of the Holy Spirit seal believers as the children of God and heirs of heaven; they are the first-fruits of that holy felicity, and they impress the holy image of God upon their souls. (*Note, 2 Cor.* i. 21, 22.) Thus the Ephesian converts were preserved, supported, and comforted, and would be during their time of trial and suffering in life and death, till they should at last be put in full possession of that complete redemption, which Christ had ensured to his *purchased people:* or till the inheritance, which sin had forfeited, but which Christ had purchased for them, should be, so to speak, fully rescued from the hands of their enemies, and they put in complete possession of it at the resurrection of the dead; to be for ever monuments erected “to the praise of the glory of “God.” All these things are so evidently distinguishing of true Christians, and so inapplicable to collective bodies of professors, that we must conclude the apostle spoke of election as *personal* and *gratuitous;* and of effectual vocation as inseparably connected with eternal life: and learned men need far more ingenuity than has yet been employed in the argument, to make the apostle’s words speak any other language, consistently with the rules of grammar and of common sense. (*Notes, Rom.* viii. 28—39. ix. xi.)

V. 15—23. The apostle had for some time witnessed the conduct of the Ephesians: but having been absent from them at least five years, he had again heard of their faith in Christ, and love to all his saints; which excited him, without ceasing, to thank God for his grace and mercy towards them, and animated him in mentioning them expressly by name, in all his secret and social prayers. Especially he entreated the God, whom the Lord Jesus Christ, as man, had worshipped and obeyed, (even the glorious Father, the great Author of all that glory which is visible in the whole universe,) that he would still more abundantly communicate to them the Holy Spirit, from whose influence all divine wisdom was derived to men; and who discovered to the hearts of believers the certainty, nature, and glory of those truths, which by prophets and apostles he had revealed to the Church. That so every veil of prejudice, pride, and sin, being removed, they might more completely know God in Christ, and more confi-

CHAP. II.

The apostle shows the Ephesians their former corrupt state, as slaves of Satan and children of disobedience; among whom he and all others once were, being by nature the children of wrath, even as they, 1—3. *All are saved by grace, in Christ, through faith, and thus created unto good works,* 4—10. *The Gentiles were once without Christ, without hope, without God; but by the special grace of God, through the atonement of Christ, all, who believed, were brought nigh, and reconciled to God; had access to him; were formed into one church with Jewish converts, (the ritual law being taken away by the death of Christ,) and so became an habitation of God through the Spirit,* 11—22.

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dently acknowledge their relation to him; that, the eyes of their minds being divinely illuminated, they might understand more clearly, and experience more deeply, the value of that Object of their hope, to which God had called them by his Gospel; and perceive what riches of grace, consolation, and spiritual blessings, were comprised in that glory, which constituted the inheritance conferred on his saints; or the rich abundance and revenue of glory, which the Lord would derive from his saints, as his chosen inheritance. And that they might perceive what exceeding greatness of divine power had been exerted in their conversion to the faith; and was still engaged to uphold, strengthen, and defend them, to perfect their new creation, and to complete their redemption from Satan, sin, and death; according to the operation of that mighty power, which was put forth in the resurrection and exaltation of Christ. It is remarkable that the apostle seems here, studiously, to have exhausted the utmost vigour of the Greek language to express, by a beautiful accumulation of energetic words, the omnipotence of God, as effecting the believer's conversion and salvation, in continuing, as it were, that exertion of it, by which the Redeemer was raised from the dead. For, in consequence of the resurrection of Christ, he had been exalted in the human nature to the right-hand of the Father, on the mediatorial throne in heavenly places, far above all creatures, however dignified; not only above the princes of the earth; not only as the conqueror and destroyer of the powers of darkness; but even far above the hierarchies of heaven, however distinguished as principalities, powers, &c.; yea, above every name, that ever was, or will be, celebrated on earth or in heaven, either during the continuance of this world, or that which is to come. And as all creatures were subjected to his government, so all enemies were virtually put under his feet; seeing he hath power and authority to crush them as he pleases; and will continue to do this in the proper seasons, till the last enemy shall be destroyed. (*Note*, 1 *Cor*. xv. 24—28.) Having thus exalted the risen Saviour, the Father hath constituted him absolute and universal Governor of the world, and given him to be the Head of the Church, that he might employ his unbounded authority, and almighty power, for its benefit: so that the whole is exercised in subserviency to his purposes of grace, and to render effectual his redemption, in the final salvation of his purchased people. For his Church is his body; he is the Head of life, and authority to the whole company of believers, as united to him; and they are dear to him, and taken care of by him, as the members of his body: so that he, "in whom all fulness dwells," is not complete in his mediatorial character, except in the preservation and full salvation of his whole mystical body. And while he fills heaven and earth with his glory, he fills his ordinances with his power and gracious presence, and dwells in every believer, by his Spirit of life, purity, and love; he condescends to deem them essential to his own fulness of glory; even as every member of the body is to the completeness of the human nature.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

Faith in Christ, and faithfulness to him, unite to form the character of his saints; and to the sovereign grace of God we wholly owe it, if we are either true believers or ministers. God our Father, from whom, and the Lord Jesus, through whom grace and peace are given to sinful men, are to be adored and praised for all those spiritual blessings with which we are, or hope to be, blessed, in time and to eternity. The appointment of the eternal Son of the Father, as the Surety for fallen man, in the divine foreknowledge, even before the foundation of the world, is the source of all the hopes and comforts of those who "were chosen in him, that they should be holy, and "without blame before him in love." For personal holiness was provided for, in every part of the counsels of God, respecting man's salvation. So that the renewal of our hearts to the divine image, and a blameless walk before God, in love of him and of our brethren, are the proper evidences that we are predestinated, and have been called, by God, to "the adoption of children by Jesus Christ "unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." For when this purpose of God began to take effect, by our being "made accepted in his beloved Son, in whom "we obtain redemption through faith in his blood, even "the forgiveness of our sins according to the riches of his "grace:" then, as the children of God, who is LOVE, we began to bear his image and become followers of him. Thus the change wrought, as well as the mercy shown, are "to the praise of the glory of his grace:" the reconciled rebel, the adopted son, gives all the praise of his salvation to his gracious Father; his actions, (as well as his lips,) declare the praises of the divine mercy; and it appears evident, that adorable wisdom and prudence conjoined with unspeakakle grace in forming and executing the holy plan of man's salvation.

V. 9—14.

The mysteries of God in man's redemption must have

AND [a] you *hath he quickened*, who were [b] dead in trespasses and sins;

2 Wherein [c] in time past ye walked, [d] according to the course of this world, [e] according to the prince of the power [f] of the air, [g] the spirit that now worketh in [h] the children of disobedience;

a 5. 6. i. 19, 20. John v 25. x. 10 xi 25, 26. xiv. 6 Rom. viii. 2. 1 Cor. xv 45. Col. ii. 13. iii. 1—4.

b v. 14 Matt. viii 22. Luke xv 24. 32. John v. 24 2 Cor. v. 14. 1 Tim v. 6 1 John iii. 14. Rev. iii. 1.

c 3 iv. 22. Job xxxi. 7. 1 Cor. vi. 11. Col. i. 21. iii. 7. 1 Pet iv. 3 ——— d Ps. xvii 14. Jer. xxiii. 10. Luke xvi. 8 John vii 7. viii. 23 xv. 19. Rom. xii 2. 1 Cor. v. 10. Gal i. 4. 2 Tim. iv. 10. Jam. i. 27. iv. 4. 1 John ii. 15—17. v. 4.

e vi 12. John viii. 44. xii 31. xiv. 30. xvi. 11. 1 John v. 19. Rev xii. 9. xiii. 8 14. xx. 2.

f Job i. 7. 16. 19. Rev xvi. 17.

g Matt. xii. 43—45 Luke xi 21—26. xxii. 2, 3. 31. John xiii. 2. 27. Acts v. 3 2 Cor. iv. 4. 1 John iii 8 iv. 4. ——— h 3 v. 6. Is. xxx. 1. lvii 4. Hos. x. 9. Matt. xi. 19. xiii. 38 Col iii. 6. 1 Pet. i. 14 *Gr.* 2 Pet ii. 14. *Gr.* 1 John iii 10.

been for ever hidden from us, if he had not made them known to us by his Gospel, and his Spirit of truth. Thus, in every respect, he dispenses his blessings according to "his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself." In executing his grand design of "gathering together in "one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and "in earth," he hath brought us to seek and obtain an inheritance among his redeemed people; and we must allow, that we were "predestinated according to the "purpose of him, who worketh all things after the "counsel of his own will." He sent the word of truth, the Gospel of salvation, to us, while others were left in darkness; he quickened us, when others were left dead in sin; he enabled us to trust in Christ, as well as sealed our pardon by his sanctifying Spirit, as the earnest of our future glorious inheritance. We need not wonder that the self-wise and self-sufficient men deride and dispute against these humbling and spiritual mysteries; nor is it at all desirable that they should embrace them, as a scheme of doctrine, in a carnal mind. But that humble believers, who allow their own hearts to be as evil, except as renewed by divine grace, as those of their most irreligious neighbours, should be afraid of tracing back their present experience of that grace to the sovereign purpose and electing love of God in Christ; that in giving him the whole glory of having made them to differ, they may also possess a ground of assurance of his perfecting his good work in their souls; this, I say, is matter of surprise to those who find the sweetest animation and encouragement from the glorious review and prospect.

V. 15—23.

If any, who appear to have faith in the Lord Jesus, and love to all the saints, are dazzled by these sublime mysteries, their more established brethren should not forget who made them to differ; and, instead of forming rash judgments, and engaging in violent disputations, (which are peculiarly unsuitable on this subject,) they should thank God for what he hath done for them, and pray always for those whom they deem mistaken. Indeed, we all need to pray for ourselves and each other, "to the "God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory," for a large communication of "the Spirit of wisdom and reve-"lation in the knowledge of him." We shall do far more in this way towards bringing believers to be of one mind and judgment, than by eager disputations: "for a man can "receive nothing, except it be given him from above;" and high confidence, on one side of the question, commonly excites the same on the other side, with all its hateful consequences. But, if we disputed with less earnestness, and prayed with greater fervency for each other, the eyes of our understanding being enlightened, we should daily see more and more, "what is the hope of our calling, and "the riches of the divine glory, in the inheritance of his "saints." When most sensible of our own weakness, and the power of our enemies, we shall most perceive and experience the greatness of that mighty power, which hath effected our conversion, and is engaged to perfect our salvation. For the resurrection and exaltation of Christ, his universal and sovereign authority, and almighty power, were all intended for our benefit, if we are indeed the members of his mystical body the Church; which is "the "fulness of him who filleth all in all." The immensity of this love and condescension, and the vastness of our privileges, should excite our enlarged expectations; our unspeakable obligations, if duly apprehended, will constrain us by love to live to our Redeemer's glory; and thus our humble, holy, and cheerful lives will vindicate our doctrine from the calumnies of those who speak evil of such things as they understand not.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. The almighty power of God, which raised Christ from the dead, (i. 20;) had also raised to spiritual life the Ephesians, who had been dead in sin: for the words, "hath he quickened," seem to have been properly, from the fifth verse, supplied by our translators: as, in the original, that verse appears to take up and conclude the sentence here begun, merely by changing *you* into *us*, entirely in the apostle's manner. Death in trespasses and sins implies an utter incapacity for *spiritual* employments and satisfactions; the want of all desire after that felicity which holy creatures enjoy in the favour and service of God; and a total inability of worshipping and obeying him with love and delight: even as a dead man is utterly incapable of the business or pleasures of life. The employments and enjoyments of *animal* nature, and even those of a *rational* being, are within the capacities of a man who is dead in sin; but he cannot relish or desire spiritual pleasures. He may be an epicure, or a philosopher; but he cannot find satisfaction in the peculiar employments of a saint. For he must be *carnal;* and the carnal mind is enmity against God, and in opposition to the holy law. Such a man therefore must be an apostate, and an idolater, who seeks happiness in the creature, not in the Creator: and he can only live to transgress, to pursue carnal things, to corrupt himself and others, and to aggravate his condemnation, as a transgressor of the divine law. In such sins and trespasses the Ephesians had habitually walked; and had gone about, under an accumulating load of guilt, and the power of their evil propensities, without any concern about the consequences. In this they had proceeded according to the customs, fashions, and maxims "of this present evil "world." (*Note, Gal.* i. 4.) They did like their neighbours, and like other men all over the earth. Thus to live

3 Among whom also [i] we all had our conversation [k] in times past, [l] in the lusts of our flesh, [m] fulfilling the * desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were [n] by nature the [o] children of wrath, [p] even as others.

4 But God, [q] who is rich in mercy,

Is liii. 6. lxiv. 6, 7. Dan ix. 5—9. Rom iii. 9—19. 1 Cor. vi. 9—11. Gal. ii. 15, 16 iii. 22. Tit. iii. 3. 1 Pet. iv. 3. 1 John i. 8—10.——k iv. 17—19. Acts xiv. 16. xvii. 30, 31. Rom. xi. 30. 1 Pet. ii. 10. 1 John ii. 8.———l iv. 22 Mark iv. 19. John viii. 44. Rom. i. 24 vi 12. xiii 14 Gal. v. 16—24. 1 Tim. vi. 9. Jam. iv. 1—3. 1 Pet. i. 14. ii 11. iv. 2. 2 Pet. ii. 18. 1 John ii. 16 Jude 16—18.————m Rom viii. 7, 8. 2 Cor. vii. 1. Gal. v. 19—21.

* Gr. *wills* John i. 13.

n Gen v. 3. vi. 5. viii. 21. Job xiv. 4. xv. 14—16. xxv. 4. Ps. li. 5. Mark vii. 21, 22. John iii. 1—6. Rom. v. 12—19. vii. 18. Gal ii. 15, 16.————o *See on*, h. 3. Rom. ix. 22.————p Rom iii. 9. 22, 23. 1 Cor. iv. 7. q 7. i. 7. iii. 8. Ex. xxxiii. 19. xxxiv. 6. 7. Neh. ix. 17. Ps. li 1 lxxxvi. 5. 15. ciii. 8—11. cxlv, 8. Is. lv. 6—8. Dan. ix. 9. Jon. iv. 2. Mic. vii. 18—20 Luke i. 78. Rom. ii. 4. v. 20, 21. ix. 23. x. 12. 1 Tim. i. 14. 1 Pet. i. 3.

"according to the course of this world," was to live according to the will of the devil: a dreadful advance on the preceding clause, though evidently contained in it. At this time therefore they lived according to the example and temptations of Satan, the god and prince of this world, that arch-apostate and rebel, who has the seat of his empire in the air, and there exerts his power and influence. This, at least, accorded to the notions then prevalent among the Jews, and even among the Gentiles, concerning their *genii* and demons; which, whether to be understood literally or figuratively, was sufficient for the apostle's purpose. There Satan, and the legions of fallen angels which are subordinate to him, continually wait their opportunity of tempting men to sin, by removing from their minds good thoughts and serious impressions, and suggesting others of a contrary tendency. In this way he maintains his dominion; and men in general copy his example of rebellion, enmity, and contemptuous defiance of God; of pride, ambition, envy, malice, deceit, murder, and destruction: or they gratify his malignity by destroying themselves and each other, through gross sensualities, or by war and bloodshed; or his ambition, by idolatry, impiety, and infidelity. Thus the Ephesians had walked according to that spirit, which still worked in the children of disobedience, or in those who continued in unbelief and rebellion against God. Or, as it may be more literally rendered, "according to the prince of that "spirit, which now worketh, &c." Satan is the author and ruler of that proud, carnal, and impious spirit, or disposition, which is in ungodly men: his temptations first produced it in human nature; and he works on it by the agency of evil spirits, to instigate it to all wickedness, in thought, word, and deed: thus he rules in man's heart; he possesses, as it were, all unbelievers; and he inspires with wit and ingenuity the advocates for vice, impiety, and infidelity, by whom he maintains his empire in the world.

Children of disobedience. (*Marg. Ref. Note*, v. 6.)

V. 3. The apostle before spoke of the Gentile converts exclusively, at least principally: but here, (in the same manner as in the epistle to the Romans he proved the Jews also to be under sin,) he turns his discourse, and includes both himself, and all the converts from that nation, among those who once were dead in sin, and slaves to Satan: and he proceeds to use the first person plural to the end of the seventh verse, and then he again addresses the Gentile converts. He could not mean the Jews, say many learned men, because they had not been idolaters. But had the apostle mentioned idolatry? and is there no way of conforming to the world and serving the devil, except by idolatry? To suppose that the apostle spake of himself, as one of the Gentiles, or one of the Church of Rome, chiefly consisting of Gentile converts, because he then resided there, is so absurd in itself, so unsuitable to his argument, so needless, after what he had said of the Gentiles, and so contrary to his language, and that of the most eminent saints, in other parts of Scripture, (*Marg. Ref.*); that nothing, it may fairly be presumed, could have reconciled so many learned writers to it, but the necessity of adopting it, in order to avoid the doctrine of original sin, in the strict and proper meaning of the terms, as true of all men, Jew, Gentile, or Christian, as 'naturally engendered of Adam's race;' and so to avoid also the doctrine of regeneration, or a real new creation of the soul, by the power of the Holy Spirit. The author of these notes was once deeply engaged in this scheme, being strongly attached to Mr. Locke's views; and had begun to compose a sermon according to it, when this very text, occurring to his mind, shook his whole system to the foundation. This is more than thirty years since, and he has had abundant time, and has bestowed no little pains, in reconsidering the subject; but is deeply convinced that the interpretation is wholly unscriptural, and that it tends to evaporate the meaning of the sacred oracles, as if we had little concern in the greatest part of them. Not only were the idolatrous Ephesians thus dead in sin, and under the power of Satan; but the apostle, and all other Christians then on earth, had in times past their conversation among them, as alienated from God, and disobedient to him. They lived "in the lusts of their flesh," or according to the desires of their carnal hearts; gratifying their animal appetites in sensual wickedness; or the proud, covetous, ambitious, and malignant tempers of their minds, as constitution, custom, or education swayed them; without any proper regard to the authority, will, glory, or favour of God. So that the Jews, as well as the Gentiles, and the Christians, as well as those who remained unconverted, were "by nature" dead in sin, "and children of "wrath," one as well as another. For, being born of Adam's fallen race, averse to good and prone to evil, they were alike, in the temper of their hearts and the conduct of their lives, deserving of, and meet for, the wrath of God. Great pains, as has been observed, have been employed to prove, that *nature* may signify *custom*, or *habitual practice*. But they who, with immense erudition, labour, and ingenuity, have spent themselves in this vain attempt, have been evidently baffled in the critical argument, by men of far inferior learning; so that they seem nearly silenced. At the same time, stubborn facts prove, that men called Christians are "dead in sin," as much as the Gentiles were; and that the children of believers are as prone to evil and averse to good, as those of idolaters: nor can any man suppose, that worldly lusts are more excusable in Christians, than in heathens. The word rendered "by nature," seems never to have been used for any other customs, than such as resulted from *innate* propensities: and the whole tenour of the Scripture, as well as the experience and confessions of the most pious persons who ever lived, confirm our interpretation, and expressly contradict that more flattering one, which many have attempted to substitute in its place.

for [r] his great love wherewith he loved us,

5 Even when we were [s] dead in sins, hath [t] quickened us together with Christ, ([u] by [*] grace ye are saved:)

6 And [x] hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* [y] sit together [z] in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus;

7 That [a] in the ages to come he might [b] show the exceeding riches of his grace, in *his* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

8 For [c] by grace are ye saved, [d] through faith; and [e] that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God:

r Deut vii. 7, 8. ix. 5, 6 Jer. xxxi. 3. Ez xvi. 6–8. John iii. 14–17. Rom. v 6–9 ix. 15, 16 2 Thes ii. 13. 2 Tim i. 9. Tit. iii. 4–7. 1 John iv 10–19.
s *See on*, b. 1
t *See on*, c. 2 v. 14 John v. 21 vi. 63 Rom. viii 2
u 8 Rom. iv 16 xi. 5, 6 Tit. ii 11.
* Or, whose *grace*, ye. Acts xv. 11 Rom xvi. 20. 2 Cor. xiii. 14. Rev. xxii 21
x *See on*, i. 19, 20. Rom vi. 4, 5. Col. i. 18. ii. 13. iii. 1–3
y Matt. xxvi. 29. Luke xii. 37 xxii 29, 30. John xii. 26 xiv. 3 xvii. 21–26. Rev. iii. 20, 21.——z *See on*, h: i 3.
a iii. 5. 21 Ps. xli. 13. cvi. 48 Is lx. 15 1 Tim. i. 17——b *See on*, 4. 2 Thes. i. 12. 1 Tim. i. 16. 1 Pet i. 12. Rev. v. 9–14.——c *See on*, 5. Rom iii. 24.——d Mar. xvi. 16 Luke vii. 50. John iii 14–18 36. v 24 vi 27–29 35 40. Acts xiii. 39. xv. 7–9. xvi 31 Rom. iii. 22. 26. iv. 5 16. x 9, 10. Gal. iii 14 22 1 John v. 10–12
e 10 i. 19 Matt xvi. 17 John i. 12, 13 vi 37. 44 65. Acts xiv. 27 xvi. 14. Rom. x. 14–17. Phil. i 29 Col ii. 12. Jam. i. 16–18.

9 Not [f] of works, lest any man should boast:

10 For [g] we are his workmanship, [h] created in Christ Jesus unto [i] good works, [k] which God hath before [†] ordained that we should [l] walk in them.

11 ¶ Wherefore [m] remember, that ye *being* in time past [n] Gentiles in the flesh, who are called [o] Uncircumcision, by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh [p] made by hands;

12 That at that time ye were [q] without Christ, being [r] aliens from the common-

f Rom. iii. 20. 27, 28. iv. 2. ix. 11. 16. xi. 6. 1 Cor. i. 29–31. 2 Tim. i. 9. Tit. iii. 3–5.
g Ps. cxxxviii. 8. Is. xix. 25. xxix. 23. xliii. 21. lx 21. lxi. 3. Jer. xxxi 33. xxxii. 39, 40. John iii. 3–6. 21 1 Cor. iii. 9. 2 Cor. v 5 Phil. i. 6. ii 13 Heb. xiii 21.
h iv. 24. Ps. li. 10. 2 Cor. v. 17. Gal. vi. 15. Col. iii. 10.
i Matt. v. 16. Acts ix. 36. 2 Cor. ix. 8. Col. i. 10. 2 Thes. ii. 17. 1 Tim. ii 10 v. 10. 25 vi 18 2 Tim ii. 21. iii 17. Tit. ii 7. 14. iii. 1. 8 14. Heb. x. 24 xiii 21. 1 Pet. ii. 12.——k i. 4. Rom. viii. 29——† Or, *prepared.*——l 2. iv. 1. Deut. v. 33. Ps lxxxi. 13. cxix. 3 Is. ii 3–5. Acts ix 31. Rom. viii. 1. 1 John i. 7. ii. 6——m Deut. v. 15. viii. 2. ix. 7. xv 15. xvi. 12. Is. li. 1, 2. Ez xvi. 61–63. xx. 43 xxxvi. 31 1 Cor vi 11 xii. 2. Gal. iv. 8, 9.——n Rom. ii. 28. Gal ii. 15. vi. 12. Col. i. 21.——o 1 Sam. xvii. 26. 36 Jer. ix. 25, 26. Phil. iii. 3. Col. iii. 11.——p Col ii. 11.——q John x. 16. xv. 5.——r iv. 18. Ezra iv. 3 Is. lxi. 5 Ez. xiii. 9. Heb. xi. 34.

V. 4—10. Even when the apostle and his fellow-christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, were dead in sin, incapable of helping themselves, and hateful in the sight of God, he loved them with an exceedingly great love: not for any thing which he saw, or foresaw, in them, but because "he was rich in mercy," and delighted in the most abundant and illustrious exercise of it. Having therefore loved them, and given his own Son to die for their sins, and raised him as their Surety from the dead, the same immensely free mercy influenced him to raise them from the death of sin, by a continuation of that powerful operation. Thus he "quickened them together "with Christ," in virtue of his resurrection, with life communicated from him, by the holy Spirit. So that they were saved, or had been saved, wholly by unmerited grace; whether their election, redemption, or conversion, were considered. Being thus raised to a new life, in conformity to their risen Lord, they in him, their Head, Representative, and Surety, were "made to sit in heavenly "places;" their future glory was ensured by his ascension and exaltation, and by their union with him; and their treasures, hearts, and hopes, were already in heaven with Christ their Life. (*Marg. Ref.*) This whole plan had been formed and executed, that "in the ages to come," in future generations, and *future worlds*, the Lord might display the exceeding riches and abundance of his grace, by the astonishing kindness shown to such vile sinners in Christ Jesus; that so men and angels, and all created intelligences, to eternity might behold, admire, and adore his glorious mercy and love in these transactions. The apostle would therefore repeat and enlarge upon the hint before given, that "they were saved by grace;" they were brought into a state of full security by the mere mercy of God, through faith in Christ: and even this faith, which effected their relation to him, was not of themselves; their proud and carnal minds having been utterly averse to the humbling and spiritual doctrine; but it was the free gift of God to them, the effect of their being quickened, or regenerated, by his Spirit. Thus their pride and enmity, their love of sin and the world, were subdued, and they were brought to believe the Gospel, and trust in Christ. This salvation therefore was, in no degree, or way, of works of any kind; that so no man should have any ground of boasting, that he did of himself contribute any thing to his own happiness, or of glorying over his neighbour. (*Notes, Rom.* iii. 19—28. 1 *Cor.* i. 29—31.) For though believers differed greatly from other men, and from their former selves, this was the effect of a divine power exerted upon them: they were "the work-"manship of God," who in Christ had wrought a real new creation upon their souls; giving new principles or propensities to their several faculties, and a new direction to their affections and desires. Thus their disposition and ability to love God, and to do good works, should be considered as *a part of their salvation*, not as the *cause* of it: for it was the purpose of God, that his redeemed people should habitually walk in good works, from their conversion, till they finished their course; and their holy lives were the effect, evidence, and recommendation of their salvation by grace. 'Both faith and works are God's 'workmanship; both are necessary; but the one the fruit 'of the other.' (*Maclaurin.*) The term, "good works," is never used, in the New Testament, for ritual obedience, or moral virtue, as practised by unbelievers, or for any other works than the fruits of the Spirit. If any one doubt of this, let him consult the marginal references, or a good concordance. This the author was not aware of when he wrote this note for the former edition, or he perhaps should have enlarged on the idea of the disposition and ability to do good works being *a part* of our salvation; and so in no sense a *cause* of it. For, without doubt, regeneration and sanctification by the Spirit of Christ are as much a part of our salvation, as redemption and justification. Some have objected to the word *prepared* being used, instead of ordained; but it is the marginal reading, and the more literal. Perhaps *provided* answers the idea as accurately as any other word. *Ordained*, for set in order, (*Ps.* viii. 3.) gives the real meaning.—Walking in good works forms an essential part of that plan, which God has set in order for man's salvation: and he prepares believers by his grace to fall in with this arrangement.

wealth of Israel, and strangers from [s] the covenants of promise, [t] having no hope, and [u] without God in the world:

13 But now [x] in Christ Jesus ye, who sometimes [y] were far off, [z] are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

14 For he is [a] our Peace, who hath made [b] both one, and hath broken down [c] the middle wall of partition *between us*;

15 Having abolished [d] in his flesh the enmity, *even* [e] the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain, [f] one new man, *so* making peace;

16 And that he might [g] reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, [h] having slain the enmity * thereby;

17 And came, [i] and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them [k] that were nigh.

18 For [l] through him we both have access [m] by one Spirit unto [n] the Father.

s Gen. xv. 18. xvii. 7–9. Ex. xxiv. 3–11. Num. xviii. 19. Ps lxxxix. 3, &c. Jer. xxxi. 31–34. xxxiii. 20–26 Ez. xxxvii 26. Luke i. 72 Acts iii. 25. Rom. ix 4, 5. Gal iii. 16, 17. t Jer. xiv. 8 xvii. 13. John iv. 22. Acts xxviii. 20. Col i 5 27 1 Thes iv. 13. 2 Thes. ii 16 1 Tim. i 1. Heb. vi. 18. 1 Pet. i. 3. 21. iii. 15. 1 John iii 3 ——u 2 Chr. xv. 3. Is xliv 6 xlv. 20 Hos iii. 4 Acts xiv 15, 16. Rom i. 28–32. 1 Cor. viii. 4–6 x. 19, 20 Gal iv 8.——x *See on* Rom viii. 1. 1 Cor. i. 30. 2 Cor. v. 17. Gal iii 28.——y 12 17 19–22. iii. 5–8 Ps xxii 27 lxxiii. 27. Is. xi. 10 xxiv. 15, 16. xliii. 6. xlix. 12 lvii. 19 lx. 4, 9 lxvi. 19 Jer. xvi. 19 Acts ii. 39. xv 14 xxi. 21. xxvi. 18 Rom. xv. 8–12 ——z 16 7. Rom. iii 23–30. v. 9, 10. 1 Cor. vi 11 2 Cor v. 20, 21 Col. i. 13, 14. 21, 22. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. iii. 18 Rev. v. 9 ——a Is. ix. 6, 7. Ez xxxiv. 24, 25. Mic v. 5. Zech vi. 13. Luke i. 79. ii. 14. Rom. v. 1. Col i. 20. Heb vii 2 xiii. 20 ——b 15 iii. 15. iv. 16. Is. xix 24, 25 Ez xxxvii. 19, 20. John ix. 16 xi. 52 1 Cor xii. 12. Gal. iii 28. Col iii. 11.——c Esth. iii. 8. Acts x. 28. Col ii. 10–14.——d Col i. 22. Heb. x. 19–22.

e Gal. iii. 10. Col. ii 14. 20. Heb. vii. 16. viii. 13 ix. 9, 10. 23. x. 1–10. f iv 16 24. 2 Cor. v. 17 Col iii 10. g Dan ix. 24. Rom. v. 10 2 Cor. v. 18–21. Col i 20–22. h 15. Rom. vi. 6. viii 3. 7 Gal. ii. 20. 1 Pet. iv 1, 2 * Or, *in himself.* i Ps. lxxxv 10. Is. xxvii. 5. lii. 7. lvii. 19–21. Zech. ix. 10. Matt. x. 13. Luke ii. 14. x. 5, 6. Acts ii. 39. x. 36 Rom. v. 1. 2 Cor v. 20 ——k 13, 14 Deut. iv. 7. Ps. lxxv. 1. lxxvi. 1, 2. cxlvii 18, 19 cxlviii. 14. Luke x. 9–11.——l iii 12. John x. 7 9. xiv 7. Rom. v 2. Heb. iv. 15, 16 vii 20 x. 19, 20 1 Pet. i 21. iii. 18 1 John ii 1, 2 ——m iv. 4 vi. 18 Zech. xii 10. Rom. viii. 15. 26 27. 1 Cor xii. 13. Jude 20 ——n iii. 14. Matt. xxviii. 19. John iv. 21–23. 1 Cor. viii. 6. Gal. iv. 6. Jam. iii. 9. 1 Pet. i. 17.

V. 11—13. Having spoken of the general state of fallen man, and the salvation of all believers by mere grace, the apostle next proceeded to show the Gentile converts the peculiarities of their case, which had placed them further out of the way of mercy than the Jews had been. He would have them remember, that they had not only been dead in sin, but "Gentiles in the flesh," as to their outward state, their gross idolatries, immoralities, and sensuality; so that they had been called the Uncircumcision, in contempt and aversion, as polluted and out of covenant with God, even by the Jews, who had only the outward circumcision in the flesh, of man's operation, without the "circumcision of the heart." At that time they were in every sense *without*, or separate from, Christ; being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and its peculiar advantages, as the visible church of God, in which his ordinances were administered, his oracles deposited, and the expectation of a Messiah maintained. They had also been strangers to the Abrahamic covenant, to that made with Israel at Sinai, to the covenant of royalty, and to that of the priesthood; in all which the Messiah was the great blessing that was promised. So that, whatever notions they might have of a future state, they had nothing on which to ground a hope of acceptance and happiness in it: all their expectations of that kind were mere presumption; and whatever demons, idols, or imaginary beings, they worshipped, they were indeed atheists as to the only true God, and as to the effect of their fables or speculations upon their conduct: "in the "world;" which was the same, or as bad as it would have been, if they all had been avowed atheists; seeing that their abominable idolatry led them into more immorality than it restrained them from, besides the impiety inherent in it. But at length they, who had been by nature, practice, custom, and external situation, so far off from the worship, service, love, favour, and image of God, were brought nigh to him, as in Christ Jesus, by faith: thus they were admitted into a state of acceptance, reconciliation, and friendship with God, through the atoning blood of Christ; and were become his peculiar people and spiritual worshippers. How rude and affronting would a company of unhumbled impenitent sinners, especially in a superior station of life, consider it; should a friend in a letter, or a minister in a sermon, address them in this language? If no man knoweth the Father, but he to whom the Son reveals him, all men, who reject the Gospel, whether idolaters, unbelieving Jews, Mahometans, or Deists, must be "without God," according to the apostle's meaning in that expression. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 14—18. In every sense, Christ was to be considered as their Peace; the Author, Centre, and Substance of reconciliation to God, and of the union of Gentile converts with Jewish believers in one church. For he had effected a cordial peace between those discordant parties, (who had before exceedingly despised, and even detested, each other;) by breaking down that partition-wall, which had so long separated the Jews from the Gentiles: namely, the ceremonial law, to which the Gentiles were extremely averse, even when otherwise favourable to the worship of JEHOVAH; and of which the Jews were tenacious and proud, to a degree of disgusting bigotry. But Christ, by assuming human nature, and fulfilling, in his priestly character, especially by his sacrifice on the cross, these typical institutions, had abolished them; and thus removed the ground of enmity of the Jews and Gentiles against each other concerning them. So that this law, the commands of which consisted of external ordinances, having lost all its use and obligation; the Gentiles were admitted into the Christian Church, without submitting to the yoke, or being deemed unclean because uncircumcised. Thus they became one body with the believing Jews; that so Christ might create, as it were, "One new man," consisting of regenerate persons, both Jews and Gentiles, united to himself the Head, quickened by his Spirit, walking in newness of life, harmonious in worship and obedience, and mutually loving and doing good to one another. (*Notes, &c. Is.* xi. 1—9. 1 *Cor.* xii.) In this way, Christ was the Peace-maker between Jews and Gentiles; and at the same time he reconciled both of them in one body unto God. For the ceremonial law implied man's state of condemnation, pollution, and enmity against God; to whom he could not approach, except on a mercy-seat, and by priests, sacrifices, incense, and purifications, being, after all, kept at a great distance from him: but the death of Christ upon the cross took away the guilt which was the cause of the enmity; that so a holy God might honourably pardon, and be reconciled to, his rebellious creatures; and it made way for the com-

19 Now therefore, ye are no more [o] strangers and foreigners, [p] but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of [q] the household of God;

20 And are [r] built upon [s] the foundation of the apostles and prophets, [t] Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-*stone;*

21 In whom [u] all the building, [x] fitly framed together, groweth unto [y] an holy temple in the Lord;

22 In whom ye also are builded together for [z] an habitation of God through the Spirit.

o See on 12
p iii. 6. Gal. iii. 26—28. iv. 26—31. Phil. iii. 20. Gr. Heb. xii. 22—24. Rev. xxi 12—26.
q ii. 15. Matt. x. 25. Gal. vi. 10. 1 John iii. 1.
r iv. 12. 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5.
s iv. 11—13. Is. xxviii. 16. Matt. xvi. 18. 1 Cor. iii. 9—11. xii. 28. Gal. ii. 9. Rev. xxi. 14.——t Ps. cxviii. 22. Matt. xxi. 42. Mark xii. 10, 11. Luke xx. 17, 18. Acts iv. 11, 12. 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8.
u iv. 13—16. Ez. xl.—xlii. 1 Cor. iii. 9. Heb. iii. 3, 4.
x Ex. xxvi. 1 Kings vi. 7.
y Ps. xciii. 5. Ez. xliii. 12. 1 Cor. iii. 17. 2 Cor. vi. 16.
z John xiv. 17—23. xvii. 21—23. Rom. viii. 9—11. 1 Cor. iii. 16. vi. 19. 1 Pet. ii. 5. 1 John iii. 24. iv. 13. 16.

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munication of his Holy Spirit to regenerate sinners, and so to destroy the enmity of their hearts against the holy character, worship, and service of God. (*Notes*, 2 *Cor.* v. 17—21.) Having finished this great design, he came, by his apostles and ministers, to preach peace with God, and with each other, to the Gentiles, who had been far off, and to the Jews, who were outwardly nigh to God. For through the Person, sacrifice, and mediation of Christ, sinners of all descriptions were allowed access to God, as a Father; and were introduced with acceptance into his presence, with their worship and services, under the immediate teaching and influence of the Holy Spirit, as one with the Father and the Son, in this great work of salvation, as well as in the unity of the Godhead: (*Is.* lvii. 19.) It should be noticed, that in the seventeenth verse, the apostle, distinguishing the Gentile converts from the Jewish, says, "*you* that were far off;" thus evidently ranging himself among the Jewish converts who were comparatively nigh. This is *natural*, and perfectly destructive of that *unnatural* interpretation, by which he is supposed to include himself among the Gentile converts. The wall, which separated the uncircumcised Gentiles, who came to worship the God of Israel at the temple, from the Jews and the circumcised proselytes, is generally supposed to be alluded to, by the "middle wall of partition." Under the Christian dispensation, they all worshipped together, as one body, animated by one soul, and speaking by one tongue. (*Notes*, *Col.* ii. 10—23.)

V. 19—22. The Gentile believers were no longer strangers and aliens, excluded from the privileges of God's people, as foreigners are from those of native subjects: or as those from other nations, who came occasionally to worship at Jerusalem, were from the stated or resident worshippers. But they were become fellow-citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem with the most eminent saints of Israel: they belonged to the household of God, not only as servants, but as children. Nay, they were made a part of the spiritual temple, which the outward sanctuary had typified; having been builded upon the foundation, which prophets of old, and apostles of late, had laid in their doctrine, and in the scriptures; of which foundation, and of the whole superstructure, Jesus Christ himself was the chief Corner-stone, the Centre of union, the Cement and Support. Upon him the whole building, being fitly framed, according to the counsel and plan of the divine Architect, grew up to a holy temple in the Lord; being dedicated to his glory, the place of his special presence and power, in which he delighted to be worshipped. Thus, by the continual conversion of sinners, and the progressive sanctification of believers, while each individual, in his proper place, conduces to the stability and proportion of the whole, and is himself consecrated and preserved by being a part of it, the spiritual temple is erecting from age to age, and will be, till its full completion in heaven.—So that the Gentiles, being *in* Christ by faith, were builded on this Foundation laid by prophets and apostles, whose predictions and doctrine related to the chief Corner-stone. Thus they became a part of the temple, together with Jewish believers; for the special in-dwelling of God, who by his Holy Spirit reigned in them, communicated his peculiar blessings, and was glorified by them. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—3.

We cannot duly value the Gospel, unless convinced that we are in ourselves dead in trespasses and sins; and that we must have perished if God had left us, as he most justly might have done. Yet, when we had neither title to happiness, nor capacity for it; when we were unable to help ourselves, and unwilling to try, we were utterly insensible of our danger, ready to vindicate our conduct, and perhaps proud of our wisdom, strength, and goodness! This is still the case with the multitudes, "who "walk according to the course of this world," in the broad way of destruction; for they, who go with the stream, who will be in the fashion and live in pleasure, "are dead whilst they live." They seek liberty in the bondage of Satan; and that "prince of the power of the air" illudes his numerous votaries with gay phantoms of fancied good, and enables them to build magnificent palaces in his unsubstantial element, that they may neglect "the gift of God, which is eternal life." Thus millions copy his example of rebellion, and do as he would have them. He still "works in the hearts of the children "of disobedience:" he prompts his ministers of unrighteousness and infidelity: and while he emboldens them to deride the doctrine of Scripture, concerning divine influences, and the agency of good and evil spirits, he must feel a horrid pleasure, mingled with contempt of the folly of those, who are thus deluded by his deceptions.—There is no doubt a black inspiration; and Satan and his angels, working on men's pride, enmity, and love of sin, teach them to invent, propagate, and ingeniously defend impious or infidel notions, and to excuse or palliate their ungodliness and worldly lusts. But indeed, in one way or another, we have all had our conversation among these children of disobedience, under Satan's influence, and fulfilling the desires of our carnal minds: and, on the broad ground of scripture, we may assert with confidence, that whether men have been more prone to sensual or spi-

CHAP. III.

Paul, the prisoner of Christ for the Gentiles, 1; shows, that the mystery, concerning their salvation, which was before concealed, had been made known to him by revelation, 2—7; and to him was this grace given, that he should preach the unsearchable riches of Christ among them, 8, 9; that the principalities and powers in heavenly places might in the church discover the manifold wisdom of God; while, according to his eternal purpose, Jews and Gentiles had access to him with boldness by Jesus Christ, 10—12. He desires that the Ephesians may not faint, because of his tribulations for them, 13; fervently prays, that they may be abundantly strengthened, enlightened, sanctified, and comforted, 14—20; and concludes with animated praises, 21.

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ritual wickedness, all are alike *by nature* the children of wrath: that they who oppose this humbling tenet are yet dead in sin; and that the state of those who know nothing of this in their own experience is very doubtful.

V. 4—10.

In proportion as we judge of ourselves as lost sinners, so will be our apprehensions of Christ and his salvation: the more fully we perceive our guilt and pollution, the greater will be our astonishment in contemplating the immensity of the love, and the rich mercy of our God: and we shall not only allow the gift of Christ, of pardon, and of eternal life, to be most free; but we shall ascribe the change, which we have experienced in conversion, to the abundant love of God to us, even when we were dead in sin. By his power we were quickened together with Christ: he taught us to aspire to an inheritance in the heavenly places, with our risen and ascended Redeemer: and the same considerations, which will excite the admiration, and be the delightful theme, of all holy creatures, throughout a blessed eternity, will now lead us to adore the exceeding riches of the grace of God, in his kindness to us hitherto. When we reflect on the infinite majesty of God, the immensity of the creation, the meanness and wretchedness of man, and the stupendous plan of redemption, we shall not be able to account for such favour shown to us, except we also consider, that the exceeding riches of divine grace will be proportionably displayed and glorified, in the view of the whole creation, on account of each of these circumstances, and of many others, to eternal ages. "We are then saved by grace, through "faith, and that not of ourselves; it is the gift of God:" for if it had been at all of works, or man could in any respect have boasted, the glory of God had not been complete. Yet, let none infer that this is an unholy salvation: for all, who partake of it, are "God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works;" and his purpose and efficacious operation concur in securing the holiness of true believers. So that none can, on the ground of scripture, either abuse the doctrine to licentiousness, or accuse it of that tendency; and all who attempt either of these things are "left without excuse."

V. 11—22.

Besides the general ruined state of all men, every one of us should recollect those peculiarities of situation, character, and disposition, which set us at a greater distance from salvation than others of our fellow sinners.—The immoral and licentious conduct of some; the impiety infidelity, or dangerous heresies of others; the pharisaical pride of many; an utter disregard to religion, and ignorance of even its forms and first principles, with various other circumstances; had rendered the case of some persons peculiarly perilous, and should increase their humility and gratitude, if at length they have been converted. Many of us were once without the external knowledge of Christ, at a distance from the profession of his Gospel, strangers to the covenants of promise; having no thought about future happiness, or hope of it, and living as atheists in the world. These things should be brought into the account, in order to increase our love and zealous obedience, if we, who once were so "very far off, are "brought nigh by the blood of Christ." Through this great Peace-maker, how near may the chief of sinners approach to a reconciled God! How harmoniously then should believers live together, as members of one body and children of one family! May his grace reconcile all, who profess his truth, to God, and to each other! May every partition-wall be pulled down, and every enmity slain, which prevents the complete union of Christians, as one new Man in Christ! May he go with his ministers to the ends of the earth, "preaching peace to those that are afar off!" May his Gospel be more successfully dispensed among those that are nigh! May sinners every where seek and find access to the Father, through the Son, and by the Holy Spirit! If we are experimentally acquainted with this way of access to our reconciled God, we are no more strangers and foreigners, whatever once we were; but fellow citizens of the saints and of the household of God. We have no "law of commandments contained in ordinances," to keep us in bondage, to drive us to a distance, or to excite enmity among brethren; except such as are of human invention. Christ's institutions, (as well as his moral precepts,) are suited to help our approach to God, and our walk with him, to excite our holy affections, and to conduce to our peace with one another, when properly understood and attended on. Sinners, in these far distant regions, now hear Christ preaching peace to them, and are invited to seek access to God through him: but believers are built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief Corner-stone, that they may be "an habitation of God through the Spirit." Let us then inquire, whether we are builded on this Foundation?

FOR this cause, [a] I Paul, [b] the prisoner of Jesus Christ [c] for you Gentiles;

2 If [d] ye have heard of [e] the dispensation of the grace of God, which is given me to you-ward:

3 How that [f] by revelation he made known unto me [g] the mystery; ([h] as I wrote * afore in few words;

4 Whereby when ye read, [i] ye may understand my knowledge in [k] the mystery of Christ,)

a 2 Cor. x. 1. Gal. v. 2 b iv 1. vi. 20. Luke xxi 12 Acts xxi. 33. xxvi. 29. xxviii 17–20. 2 Cor. xi. 23. Phil. i. 7. 13–16. Col. i. 24 iv. 3. 18. 2 Tim. i. 8 16. ii 9. Philem. 9. Rev. ii 10. c Gal v. 11. 1 Thes. ii 15, 16. d iv 21. Gal. i. 13 Col. i. 4 6. 2 Tim i 11 e 8 iv. 7 Acts ix. 15. xiii 2 46. xxii 21 xxvi. 17, 18 Rom. i. 5. xi 13. xv 15, 16. 1 Cor ix 17–22. Gal. i. 15, 16. ii 8, 9. Col. i 25–27. 1 Tim i 11. ii 7 2 Tim. i. 11.——f i. 17. Acts xxii. 9. xxvi. 15–19. 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10 Gal i. 12 16–19.——g 9. Rom xi. 25. xvi. 25. Col i 26, 27 ——h i. 9–11. ii. 11–22.

* Or, *a little before.*——i Matt. xiii. 11. 1 Cor. ii 6, 7. xiii. 2 2 Cor xi. 6.——k v. 32. vi. 19. Luke ii. 10, 11. viii. 10. 1 Cor. iv. 1. Col. ii. 2. iv. 3. 1 Tim. iii 9. 16.

5 Which [l] in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, [m] as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets [n] by the Spirit;

6 That [o] the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of [p] the same body, and [q] partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

7 Whereof [r] I was made a minister, [s] according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me, [t] by the effectual working of his power.

l 9. Matt. xiii. 17. Luke x. 24. 2 Tim i 10. 11. Tit. i 1–3. Heb. xi. 39, 40. 1 Pet. i. 11, 12. m *See on* ii 20. iv. 11, 12. Matt. xxiii 34 Luke xi. 49. 1 Cor. xii. 28, 29. 2 Pet. iii. 2. Jude 17. n Luke ii. 26. 27. John xiv 26. xvi 13. Acts x. 19, 20. 28. 1 Cor. xii. 8–10. o ii 13–22. Rom. viii. 15–17. Gal iii. 26–29. iv. 5–7 p iv. 15, 16. v. 30. Rom xii 4, 5. 1 Cor xii. 12 27. Col ii 19——q Gal. iii. 14. 1 John i. 3 ii. 25.——r *See on* 2 —Rom. xv. 16. 2 Cor. iii. 6. iv 1. Col. i. 23–25.——s 8 Rom. i. 5. 1 Cor. xv. 10 1 Tim. i. 14, 15.——t 20. i. 19. iv. 16. Rom. xv. 18, 19. 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. Gal. ii. 8. Col. i 29. 1 Thes. ii. 13. Heb xiii. 21.

Whether our hopes are fixed on Christ, according to the doctrine of his word? Whether we have devoted ourselves as a holy temple to God through him? Whether we are an habitation of God by the Spirit? Are spiritually minded, and bring forth the fruits of the Spirit? If this is our experience and privilege, let us take care not to defile the temple of God, nor to grieve our holy Comforter; let us desire his gracious presence with us, and his influences on our hearts; let us endeavour to fill up the place assigned us, to the glory of God; and let us study to promote the peace and purity of the holy temple to which we belong, and to forward that work, by which it is continually approaching towards its full perfection.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1—7. Some expositors suppose, that all between this first verse and the beginning of the next chapter is a kind of parenthesis; but it seems more obvious to render the sentence, "For this cause I Paul *am* "the prisoner of Jesus Christ;" according to the opinion of the majority of commentators. His zealous preaching to the Gentiles, and openly admitting them into the Christian Church, without circumcision, or observance of the ritual law, which implied the abrogation of the Mosaic dispensation, had so irritated the Jews, that they had apprehended him at Jerusalem; in consequence of which he was at this time a prisoner at Rome, in the cause of Christ, and for the sake of the Gentiles. As he was therefore the prisoner of Christ for them, they ought to read his epistle with peculiar attention. *Since* they had heard of the manner in which he had been converted, and intrusted with a dispensation to preach the Gospel of the grace of God, as the apostle of the Gentiles; and how Christ, by immediate revelation, had made known to him the mystery of his love; as he had briefly written to them in the preceding chapters, on an attentive perusal of which they would readily perceive his extensive knowledge of the mystery of Christ, in which some thought him defective. This had not in former ages been made known to mankind with that clearness, with which it was at length revealed to the holy apostles and prophets of Christ by the Holy Spirit: especially it had not been understood, that the Gentiles, without being proselyted to the Mosaic law, should be admitted to be fellow-heirs with the Jews of their covenanted blessings, forming with them one mystical body, on embracing the Gospel. Of this new dispensation Paul had been made a minister; having received the gratuitous pardon of his own sins, and abundant mercy and favour from God; and having been effectually changed by the powerful operation of his Spirit, and qualified for that important service. They, who had statedly attended on the ministry of the apostle, during his residence at Ephesus, must often have heard from him, concerning "the dispensation of the grace of God which "was given to him," in behalf of the Gentiles, (2:) but numbers, out of the adjacent regions, coming to Ephesus, heard the Gospel from him; many of whom, it is highly probable, returning home, both professed and preached it; and these might need more full information on this subject, which was so peculiarly interesting to the Gentiles. St. Peter was sent to Cornelius the first Gentile convert: but it does not appear that the whole design of God, respecting the union of uncircumcised Gentiles, (when converted to Christianity,) in one Church with Jewish believers, was so clearly revealed to him, as it was soon after to St. Paul. At least the latter, with his coadjutors, proclaimed this doctrine, so encouraging to the Gentiles and offensive to the Jews, far more avowedly, and to immensely greater numbers, than any other of the apostles, of whom we read. Some imagine that the apostle meant to show, that the value of the Christian revelation was vastly greater than that of the curious books which the Ephesians had burned, (*Acts* xix. 19;) and than the mysteries of the initiated in the worship of Diana. But if the former were indeed the oracles of Satan, and the latter probably little better, we can hardly conceive that the apostle would disgrace the oracles of God by such a comparison. The same may fairly be said of several other comparisons, which learned men suppose the apostle to have intended. The great mystery, here spoken of, seems very improperly *confined*, by many expositors, to the calling of the Gentiles, whereas the mysterious salvation, by Emmanuel's righteousness and atonement, through faith, and by the new creation of his Spirit unto holiness, which the Gentiles were called to partake of in common with the Jews, and on which the apostle had before enlarged, and to which he was about to return, (9.) was also evidently intended. The former, as exclusive, is

8 Unto me, [u] who am less than the least of all saints, [x] is this grace given, that [y] I should preach among the Gentiles [z] the unsearchable riches of Christ;

9 And [a] to make all *men* see what *is* [b] the fellowship of the mystery, which from [c] the beginning of the world hath been [d] hid in God, who [e] created all things by Jesus Christ:

u Prov. xxx. 2, 3. Rom xii. 10. 1 Cor. xv. 9. Phil ii. 3. 1 Tim. i. 13, 15. 1 Pet. v. 5, 6.
x 1 Chr xvii 16. xxix. 14, 15 Acts v. 41 Rom. xv 15–17
y *See on* 2. Gal i. 16. ii. 8.
z 16. 19 i. 7, 8. ii. 7. Ps. xxxi. 19. John i. 16 Rom. xi. 33 1 Cor. i. 30 ii. 9. Phil iv. 19 Col. i. 27. ii. 1—3. Rev. iii 18.——a Matt. x 27 xxviii. 19. Mark xvi. 15, 16. Luke xxiv 47. Rom xvi 26. Col i. 23 2 Tim iv. 17. Rev. xiv 6.—b 3. i. 9, 10.—c i. 4. Matt. xiii 35 xxv. 34. Acts xv 18. Rom. xvi 25 1 Cor. ii. 7 2 Thes. ii 13 2 Tim. i 9. Tit i. 2. 1 Pet. i. 20 Rev. xiii. 8. xvii. 8.—d Col. i. 26. iii 3.——e Ps xxxiii. 6. Is. xliv. 24. John i. 1–3 v. 17. 19. x. 30. Col. i. 16, 17. Heb. i. 2, 3. iii. 3, 4.

10 To [f] the intent that now unto the [g] principalities and powers [h] in heavenly *places*, might be known by the church, [i] the manifold wisdom of God,

11 According to [k] the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

12 In [l] whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

f Ex. xxv. 17—22. Ps. ciii 20. cxlviii. 1, 2. Is. vi 2—4 Ez iii. 12. 1 Pet i. 12. Rev. v. 9—14.
g *See on* i. 21
h *See on* i. 3
i i. 8. Ps. civ. 24. Matt xi 25—27 Rom. xi. 33. 1 Cor i. 24. ii. 7. 1 Tim iii. 16. Rev. v 12.
k i. 4. 9. 11. Is. xiv. 24 — 27. xlvi. 10, 11. Jer. li. 29. Rom. viii. 28—30. ix. 11 2 Tim. i 9
l ii. 18 John xiv. 6 Rom v. 2. Heb. iv. 14—16. x. 19—22.

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at best but a meagre interpretation; the latter perfectly agrees with the apostle's manner, when speaking of a subject with which his heart was full.

V. 8. The apostle here formed a new word, to express the deep sense which he had of his own unworthiness: this is very properly rendered "less than the least; as it is a comparative formed from the superlative degree of the Greek adjective, signifying *little.* He does not seem merely to have adverted to his former persecuting enmity. That indeed made him deem himself "the "chief of sinners;" but here he spake of himself as *a saint*, though most mean, and unworthy of that title. In general we must ascribe this to his unaffected humility, his self-knowledge, acquaintance with the holy law, near communion with God, and candour towards his brethren: and perhaps those humiliating infirmities, of which he repeatedly spake, were in some degree taken into the account. But the consideration of his peculiarly aggravated crimes before conversion, and the unparalleled mercy and favour that had been shown him, gave him such a sense of his immense obligations, and of the returns of love, gratitude, zeal, and holiness, which became *him*, that he regarded his attainments and experience much more beneath the proper standard, than those of any other true Christian. Surely, thought he, no other believer loves the Lord, in a degree so disproportioned to his obligations, as I do! All his obedience, labours, usefulness, and even sufferings, would be considered as so many additional favours bestowed on him: and that coldness of affection, or rising of evil in the heart, which he could bear with in others, he deemed inexcusable in himself! This did not, however, lead him to doubt of his being a saint; but only to stand more amazed at the love of the Lord towards him; and under this impression he uttered the feelings of his heart in such energetic language, as but few can use with propriety or sincerity: though many employ the words rather as expressive of what they ought to mean, than of what they really feel concerning themselves; and some perhaps as affecting the praise of humility. On so great a sinner and so unworthy a believer was this astonishing grace conferred that he should be employed as an apostle, to preach among the idolatrous Gentiles, through many nations, the unsearchable riches of Christ! The vastness of the divine Redeemer's condescension and mercy; the preciousness of his blood and salvation; the fulness laid up in him, and the freeness with which it was bestowed; the privileges of his people, and their glorious inheritance; those riches of Christ, which were not provided for himself or for holy creatures, but purchased for the vilest of sinners; for the payment of their debts, the ransom of their souls, and the enriching of them to all eternity; which sufficed for all the multitudes that ever had come, or should come to him for them, how many soever they were; which never could be exhausted or diminished, by the most liberal and profuse communication of them, or leave the glorious and gracious Proprietor less rich than before, to the ages of eternity: these are "the unsearchable riches of Christ;" and they baffle even the powers of computation; they are incomprehensible and infinite! This was the great subject of the apostle's ministry among the Gentiles, whom he called to come and partake of these unsearchable riches by faith in Christ. It may be very useful to compare the animated language of this chapter with the cold reasonings of modern theologians, and their extreme caution lest they should speak too highly of Christ and his salvation.

V. 9—12. This preaching was appointed, that men of all nations and descriptions might perceive the happy fellowship or *partnership*, (so to speak,) of Jews and Gentiles in the blessings of salvation; according to the mysterious plan, which had been formed from the beginning, in the counsels of God, but had been hid from his creatures in general; save as he had given some previous intimation of it by his prophets, and had at length more fully discovered it by Jesus Christ, by whom, as the eternal Word, he at first created all things, and was now effecting a glorious new creation. (*Note, John* i. 1—4.) To the intent that angels and archangels, even the principalities and powers who were around his throne in heavenly places, and had from the beginning witnessed and adored the displays of his wisdom, in the works of creation and providence, should now discover still more surprising and beautifully varied displays of it, in his Church of redeemed sinners: while they beheld rebels changed into spiritual worshippers; all the Persons and perfections of the Godhead more abundantly glorified, even by means of man's apostacy; Satan's devices turned against him, and the most discordant characters united in one loving family, or as one Body in Christ. All this accorded to the purpose of God, which from eternity he had conceived in his infinite mind, of saving sinners by Christ Jesus our Lord. Through faith in him, and an interest in his salvation, both Jewish and Gentile believers had obtained the privilege of coming before God

13 Wherefore I desire that [m] ye faint not [n] at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

14 For this cause [o] I bow my knees unto [p] the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

15 Of whom [q] the whole family in heaven and earth [r] is named,

16 That he would grant you, [s] according to the riches of his glory, [t] to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in [u] the inner man;

17 That [x] Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, [y] being rooted and [z] grounded in love,

m Deut. xx. 3 Is. xl. 30, 31. Zeph. iii. 16 Acts xiv. 22 Gal. vi. 9. 2 Thes. iii. 13. Heb xii. 3—5.
n 1. 2 Cor. i. 6. Phil. i. 12—14 Col. i. 24 1 Thes. iii. 2—4.
o i 16—19. 1 Kings viii. 54. xix. 18. 2 Chr. vi. 13. Ezra ix. 5. Ps. xcv. 6 Is xlv. 23. Dan. vi. 10. Luke xxii 41. Acts vii. 60 ix. 40 xx. 36. xxi. 5.
p *See on* i. 3.
q i. 10. 21. Phil. ii. 10. Col. i. 20. Rev. v. 8—14 vii. 4—12.
r Is. lxv. 15 Jer xxxiii. 16. Acts xi. 26. Rev. ii 17. iii. 12.
s 8. i. 7. 18. ii. 7. Rom. ix. 23. Phil. iv. 19. Col. i. 27 ——t vi. 10. Job xxiii. 6. Ps xxviii. 8 cxxxviii. 3 Is. xl 29—31. xli. 10. Zech. x 12. Matt. vi. 13 2 Cor. xii. 9. Phil. iv. 13. Col i. 11. 2 Tim. iv 17. Heb. xi. 31.——u Jer. xxxi. 33. Rom. ii 29. vii 22. 2 Cor iv. 16. 1 Pet. iii. 4 ——x ii 21, 22. Is lvii. 15. John vi. 56. xiv. 17. 23. xvii 23 Rom. viii. 9—11. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Gal. ii. 20. Col. i. 27. 1 John iv. 4. 16. Rev iii 20.——y Matt. xiii. 6. Rom. v. 5. 1 Cor. viii. 1. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. Gal. v. 6. Col. i. 23 ii. 7.——z Matt. vii 24, 25. Luke vi 48 *Gr.*

18 May be [a] able to comprehend [b] with all saints, what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

19 And [c] to know the love of Christ, which [d] passeth knowledge, that ye might be [e] filled with all the fulness of God.

20 Now unto him that is [f] able to do [g] exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, [h] according to the power that worketh in us;

21 Unto him [i] *be* glory in the church [k] by Christ Jesus, [l] throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

a 19. i. 18—23. Job xi. 7—9. Ps. ciii 11, 12. 17. cxxxix. 6. Is. lv. 9. John xv. 13. Gal ii. 20. iii. 13 Phil. ii. 5—8. iii. 8—10. 1 Tim. i. 14—16. iii. 16. Tit. ii 13, 14. Rev. iii. 21.
b i. 8. 15 Deut. xxxiii. 2, 3. 2 Chr. vi. 41. Ps. cxvi. 15. cxxxii. 9. cxlv. 10. Zech. xiv 5. 2 Cor. xiii. 13. Col. i. 4.
c 18. v. 2. 25. John xvii. 3. 2 Cor. v. 14 Gal. ii. 20 Phil. ii. 8—12. Col. i. 10. 2 Pet iii. 18. 1 John iv. 9—14.——d Phil. iv. 7.——e i. 23. Ps. xvii. 15. xliii. 4. Matt. v. 6. John i. 16. Col. ii 9 Rev. vii. 15—17. xxi. 22—24. xxii. 3—5.——f Gen. xvii. 1. xviii. 14. 2 Chr. xxv. 9. Jer. xxxii. 17. 27. Dan. iii. 17. vi. 20. Matt. iii. 9. John x 29, 30 Rom. iv. 21. xvi. 25. Heb vii. 25. xi. 19 Jam. iv. 12. Jude 24 ——g Ex. xxxiv. 6 2 Sam. vii 19. 1 Kings iii. 13. Ps. xxxvi 8, 9 Cant. v. 1. Is. xxxv. 2. lv. 7. John x 10 1 Cor. ii. 9 1 Tim i. 14. 2 Pet. i. 11 ——h 7. i. 19. Col. i. 29.——i i. 6. 1 Chr. xxix. 11. Ps. xxix. 1, 2. lxxii. 19. cxv 1. Is. vi 3 xlii. 12. Matt. vi. 13 Luke ii. 14. Rom xi. 36. xvi. 27. Gal. i. 5 Phil ii. 11. iv. 20. 2 Tim. iv. 18. Heb. xiii. 21. 1 Pet. v. 11. Rev. iv. 9—11 v. 9—14. vii. 12 &c.——k Phil. i. 11. Heb. xiii. 15, 16. 1 Pet. ii. 5.——l ii 7. 1 Pet v. 11. 2 Pet. iii. 18. Jude 25.

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with a humble boldness, notwithstanding their reverence of his infinite majesty and purity; and with a confidence of being accepted, and receiving abundant blessings, notwithstanding their conscious guilt and pollution.

V. 13. As so great honour redounded to God, and such blessings were conferred on men, through the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, the apostle was well satisfied with his sufferings on that account, and desired the Ephesians not to be discouraged, or to turn aside from their profession, on account of them; either for fear of being exposed to similar persecutions from the Jews; or through the insinuations of Judaizing teachers, who might attempt to prove that Paul had done wrong in disregarding the legal ceremonies, and thus had needlessly exposed himself to persecution. Whereas his constant and patient endurance of such sufferings, in defence of the liberty of the Gentile churches, was indeed an honour to them; it manifested the importance of their cause in his judgment, and it showed the temper of the bigoted Jews: it should therefore animate the Gentile converts to stand fast in the liberty of the Gospel.

V. 14—19. The apostle could not go, as formerly, to establish the churches by his personal exhortations; but his affectionate desire of their prosperity was unabated; so that, in his imprisonment, he bowed his knees, in constant prayer for them, unto the Father of our Lord Jesus; of whom the whole family of believers on earth, and saints and angels in heaven, are named and considered as the children of God, being gathered together in one in Christ. (i. 10.) To this Father of Christ and of the whole family the apostle prayed, that according to the riches of his mercy, which were emphatically "his glory," he would grant the Ephesians to be powerfully strengthened by his Holy Spirit, in all the holy dispositions of their renewed souls, in faith, reverential fear, love, gratitude, hatred of sin, hope, patience; that thus they might be steadfast amidst temptations and persecutions, enjoy comfort, and glorify God in every situation and duty. That Christ, being welcomed to their hearts by faith, to be their Lord and Saviour, might dwell there, as the Sovereign of all their affections and actions, and the Source of all their joys: that so they might be rooted, as a tree in a deep and fertile soil, and established, as a building on a firm foundation, by their supreme love to Christ, and his salvation, cause, and people; and thus be secured from turning aside or growing negligent, and be rendered stable and fruitful in their profession. That they might also be enabled to apprehend and understand, as all true saints did in some measure, the vastness of the love of Christ to his people. This had in it a *breadth*, commensurate with the boundaries of the earth, as it extended to sinners of every nation and character; a *length* equal to the duration of the world, yea, extending from eternity to eternity; and a *depth* and *height*, which might be contemplated in the abject state of deserved wretchedness in which Christ viewed sinners, from the *height* of his essential glory, the *depth* of suffering and abasement to which he stooped for their salvation, and the *height* of present privilege and future felicity to which he advanced them. In short, the apostle prayed, that they might, spiritually and experimentally, know more of the love of Christ: which passed the knowledge of all created beings, and could never be fully understood, being in all respects infinite and incomprehensible; that they might be so filled with heavenly knowledge, holy affections, and consolations, as to leave no room in their souls for error, ignorance, sin, or infelicity; but that the fulness of the divine power, grace, light, love, and joy, might wholly occupy their hearts; and that their powers might be so enlarged, as to receive more and more of these, till they should be filled with, (or unto,) all the fulness of God, as his temple was with his glorious presence. "The whole family in heaven and "earth," may include all holy creatures; but certainly none of the obstinate enemies of God. Perhaps the redeemed from among men are exclusively meant; and Christ, as the immediate antecedent, is He, from whom this family is named Christian. (*Marg. Ref.*) "The "height, &c." is here explained, as if necessarily connected with "the love of Christ," mentioned in the following verse. But the glorious plan of redemption in general may be meant: this, however, does not materially alter the sense.

CHAP. IV.

The apostle exhorts the Ephesians to a consistent walk, in humility and love, as united by manifold endearing bonds, 1—6: *to a peaceful improvement of gifts, and performance of duties, for the good of the church; from regard to the ascended Saviour, and the nature of his communications and appointments, for the edification of his saints,* 7—16: *to a conduct peculiarly distinguished from that of the Gentiles around them; being taught by Christ, dead to sin, and renewed to the divine image,* 17—24: *to avoid deceit and anger,* 25—27; *to labour in what was good, and so to shun dishonesty, and to practise charity,* 28; *to use their tongues in holy discourse, and not in unholy,* 29; *to beware of grieving the Holy Spirit,* 30; *and to practise meekness and kindness, after the example of the love of God in Christ,* 31, 32.

V. 20, 21. The apostle added to his most enlarged petitions an act of adoration, suited still more to exalt the expectations of the reader. He ascribed glory to God, as able, not only to do all that he had asked, but *above all, abundantly above all, exceedingly abundantly above all,* not only that he or the Ephesians had asked, but even all that they had thought, desired, or imagined! So that they might stretch their thoughts, enlarge their desires, and multiply their most comprehensive petitions, to the utmost; yet they never could reach the whole of what God was *able* to bestow upon them, or what he honourably could do for them in Christ Jesus. Nay, all that yet remained to be done, in order to complete their felicity and glory in soul and body, only accorded to that power, which had effected their redemption from the dominion of Satan, and their new creation to holiness; and which still upheld, preserved, and renewed them, amidst all their temptations and trials. To this God of power and grace unspeakable, the apostle most earnestly desired that glory, adoration and praise, should continually be rendered, in every part of the Church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all the ages of time, and to all eternity: and he closed this most rapturous act of devotion, by affixing his AMEN to these his prayers and praises. In attempting to explain such portions of scripture, it is almost impossible to avoid comparative flatness and insipidity; an inspired writer alone could do justice to them.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

Should we be called to suffer even unto bonds, in the cause of truth, and as the prisoners of Christ, we may hope to endure the cross with that cheerfulness and satisfaction, which holy Paul expressed; but our feelings would be very different, if we should suffer as evil-doers, or as "busy-bodies in other men's matters." This should teach Christians in general, and ministers especially, to confine themselves to their proper employment, to which the dispensations of Providence and of divine grace have called them; and to seek continual instructions from the Lord, both as to the mysteries of the Gospel, and the path of duty: that so their profiting in the knowledge of Christ, and their fitness for the office assigned them, may be evident to all men. We enjoy vast advantages for these studies, as the mysteries of redeeming love were not made known, even to ancient prophets, so clearly as they now are to those believers in general, who are well acquainted with the word of God: and our encouragement is proportionably great, as we sinners of the Gentiles are fellow-heirs with the ancient people of God in all the promised blessings, if we indeed are in Christ by believing the Gospel. The gift of the grace of God, and the effectual working of his power, are necessary to form a poor sinner into a faithful minister; and deep humility, united with exalted thoughts of Christ and his unsearchable riches, are invariable characteristics of those, who are thus appointed to this sacred service. Indeed, when we consider our own sinfulness by nature and practice, and contrast the poverty of our attainments, the coldness of our affections, and the manifold defilements of our conduct, with our obligations, and opportunities, and the glorious theme on which we are to insist, we may well tremble at the thoughts of preaching in the name of so holy and exalted a Saviour, even to the meanest of our fellow-rebels. But those "unsearchable riches of Christ," which we would recommend to others, may give ample encouragement to our own hearts; and our deepest humiliation will not abate our confidence of hope, if we duly advert to the power and love of our Redeemer. His riches are as unsearchable as ever: we should therefore invite the chief of sinners to leave their gilded joys, and glittering indigence, to come and be enriched by Christ. We should desire that all men might know the blessedness of the communion of the saints with God, and with each other, through the mystery of the Person and mediation of Emmanuel, by whom all worlds were created, and our souls were redeemed; and by the communion of the Holy Spirit. While angels adore the manifold wisdom of God, in his church of ransomed sinners, the ignorance of self-wise and carnal men concludes the whole design to be foolishness! But sinners, who by faith are admitted to share those blessings, "according "to the eternal purpose of God," in Christ, behold some glimpses of this glory, and are here prepared for the adorations of heaven. With humble boldness and reverential confidence, they are taught to approach the throne of grace by the faith of Christ: and thus they receive such supports and consolations, as keep them from fainting, on account of those tribulations which Satan and wicked men employ to discourage them.

V. 13—21.

Men of generous minds often consider more the effects, which their sufferings may have on others, than their own feelings under them: and they who know human nature, I THEREFORE, [a] the prisoner * of the Lord, [b] beseech you, that ye [c] walk worthy of the [d] vocation wherewith ye are called,

2 With all [e] lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, [f] forbearing one another in love;

3 Endeavouring [g] to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

4 *There is* [h] one Body, and [i] one Spirit, even [k] as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

5 [l] One Lord, [m] one faith, [n] one baptism,

6 One [o] God and Father of all, [p] who *is* above all, and through all, [q] and in you all.

[a] *See on* iii. 1.

* Or, *in the Lord*

[b] Jer xxxviii. 20. Rom. xii 1 1 Cor. iv. 16. 2 Cor. v 20 vi. 1. x. i. Gal. iv. 12. Philem. 9, 10 1 Pet. ii. 11. 2 John 5

[c] 17. v 2. Gen v. 24. xvii 1. Acts ix 31. Phil i. 27. iii. 17, 18 Col. i. 10 iv. 12 1 Thes ii. 12 iv. 1, 2. Tit ii 10. Heb. xiii. 21

[d] 4. Rom. viii. 28—30 Phil iii. 14. 2 Thes i. 11. 2 Tim. i. 9. Heb. iii. 1. 1 Pet. iii. 9. v 10. 2 Pet. i. 3

[e] Num. xii 3. Ps. xlv. 4. cxxxviii. 6 Prov. iii. 34 xvi. 19. Is lvii 15. lxi. 1—3 Zeph. ii 3. Zech. ix. 9 Matt v. 3—5. xi. 29. Acts xx. 19 1 Cor xiii 4, 5. Gal v. 23 Col. iii 12, 13. 1 Tim vi 11. 2 Tim. ii 25 Jam. i. 21 iii. 15—18. 1 Pet. iii. 15.

[f] Mark ix 19 Rom xv. 1 1 Cor. xiii 7. Gal. vi. 2.

[g] 4 John xiii 34. xvii 21—23. Rom. xiv. 17—19. 1 Cor. i 10 xii. 12, 13. 2 Cor. xiii. 11. Col. iii. 13—15. 1 Thes. v. 13. Heb. xii. 14. Jam. iii 17, 18.

[h] ii 16 v. 30. Rom xii. 4, 5. 1 Cor. x. 17 xii. 12, 13 20. Col. iii. 15

[i] ii. 18. 22 Matt. xxviii 19. 1 Cor. xii. 4—11. 2 Cor. xi. 4.

[k] *See on* d. 1. i. 18. Jer. xiv. 8. xvii. 7. Acts xv. 11. Col i. 5. 2 Thes. ii. 16. 1 Tim. i. 1. Tit. i. 2. ii 13. iii. 7. Heb. vi. 18, 19. 1 Pet i. 3, 4. 22. 1 John iii. 3

[l] Acts ii. 36 x 36. Rom. xiv. 8, 9. 1 Cor. i. 2. 13. viii. 6 xii. 5 Phil. ii. 11. iii. 8

[m] 13. Rom iii. 30. 2 Cor. xi. 4 Gal. i. 6, 7. v. 6. Tit. i 1. 4 Heb. xiii. 7. Jam. ii. 18. 2 Pet. i. 1. Jude 3. 20.

[n] Matt. xxviii. 19 Rom. vi 3, 4. 1 Cor. xii. 13. Gal. iii. 26, 27. 1 Pet iii. 21.

[o] vi. 23. Num xvi 22. Is. lxiii. 16. Mal ii. 10. Matt vi. 9. John xx 17. 1 Cor. viii. 6. Gal. iii. 26—28. iv. 3—7. 1 John iii. 1—3.

[p] i. 21 Gen xiv. 19. 1 Chr. xxix. 11, 12. Ps xcv. 3. Is xl. 11—17. 21—23. Jer. x 10—13 Dan iv 34, 35. v 18—23. Matt. vi. 13 Rom. xi. 36. Rev. iv 8—11.

[q] ii. 22. iii. 17. John xiv. 23. xvii. 28. 2 Cor. vi. 16. 1 John iii. 24. iv. 12—15.

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will fear lest others should faint on account of those trials, which are indeed their glory. The instructions and admonitions of ministers or others should always be watered, as it were, with fervent prayers: and we may serve our brethren or relatives in this way, when precluded from all other methods. While therefore we "bow our knees "before the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," as the Father of his whole family in heaven and earth, we should not fail to supplicate him in behalf of others in every part of the world; remembering the riches of his glory, and entreating him to deal with us and with them according to it. Nor can we do better than often to enlarge on the petitions before us, whether we are praying for ourselves, or our fellow-christians. We should desire that the Lord would grant unto us, that we may be "strengthened with might "by his Spirit" in all the graces of the *new man*; that our hearts may be made the throne and temple of the Lord Jesus; that, in the daily exercise of faith, we may realize his gracious presence, experience his sanctifying consolations, and become more entirely devoted to his service; that, being rooted and grounded in love to him and his cause, we may be made fruitful in every good work, and bold in professing our faith in him; that thus we may understand, experience, and enjoy more and more of his boundless love, which passeth all comprehension, and will be more and more discovered and adored to all eternity; and that so at length we may be filled with all the fulness of God. In asking for such enlarged blessings, for ourselves and for all our brethren, we should not be straitened in our own minds, as we are not in our gracious God. He is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we" ever yet asked or thought, or ever shall be able to ask or think, as long as we live: let us then enlarge our expectations and multiply our supplications; encouraged by what he hath already done for his Church, and by his regenerating and upholding of our souls: being assured that the conversion of sinners, and the increasing light, holiness, and comfort of believers, will redound, in more abundant adorations and thanksgivings, to his glory by Christ Jesus, in his whole Church, and through all the ages of eternity. Amen, So be it. Let thy name, O Lord, be thus hallowed on earth, as it is, and ever shall be, in thy holy habitation above!

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1—6. The apostle, as the prisoner of Christ, for preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles, exhorted and entreated his Ephesian brethren, whose best interests evidently lay near his heart, that they would be very careful, that their habitual conduct in the world, and among themselves, might be worthy of their high vocation. The privileges and prospects, to which the free grace of God had called them, from a state of wretched idolatry, the obligations conferred on them, the motives and encouragements afforded them, and every thing in the doctrine and love of Christ, as well as the nature of their future inheritance, required of them a peculiar temper and conduct; which he was about to point out to them in various particulars. Especially, he must exhort them to behave with humility and self-abasement, without self-preference, boasting, emulation, or contempt of others; and with meekness, gentleness, and long-suffering, amidst great insults and injuries; as well as with a disposition to forbear with one another in love, as to those light occasions of offence or displeasure which could not be wholly avoided, even among believers, in this present imperfect state. Thus they ought, studiously and diligently, to follow after peace and harmony with each other, according to the teaching and influences of the Holy Spirit; whose in-dwelling in all their hearts was the cause of their unity as Christians, and should induce them to live together as bound in the closest amity, and the nearest of all relations, notwithstanding difference of sentiment in subordinate matters, and the manifold defects to be discerned in each other. For, in truth, the whole Church was one Body, of which every believer was a member, and Christ the Head: this Body was animated, as it were, by one life or soul, even the omnipresent Spirit of Christ: all believers were called to hope for the same eternal happiness, on the same ground of the word of God, warranted by the same experience of his converting grace. They had all one Lord, Ruler, Protector, and Judge, under whom they had their several employments allotted to them. They had all one faith, both as to its Object, Author, nature, and efficacy; and they all believed the same doctrines in the great essentials of religion. They had all been admitted into the Church by one baptism with water, "in "the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy "Spirit," as the sign of regeneration and the outward seal of the new covenant: and they were all, whether Jews or Gentiles, become the worshippers of one God, even the Father of all; who was infinitely above, and absolute Ruler over all creatures; who pervaded, sustained, and acted by all as his instruments; and who was indeed in them all, 7 ¶ But [r] unto every one of us is given [s] grace, according to [t] the measure of the gift of Christ.

8 Wherefore he saith, [u] When he ascended up on high, [x] he led * captivity captive, [y] and gave gifts unto men.

9 (Now that [z] he ascended, what is it but that [a] he also descended, first into [b] the lower parts of the earth?

10 He that descended is the same also that [c] ascended up far above all heavens, [d] that he might † fill all things.)

r 8–14. Matt. xxv 15. Rom. xii 6–8. 1 Cor xii 8–11. 28–30
s iii 8 2 Cor. vi. 1 1 Pet. iv. 10.
t John iii. 34. Rom xii. 3. 2 Cor. x. 13–15
u *See on* Ps. lxviii. 18
x Judg. v. 12. Col. ii. 15.
* Or, *a multitude of captives*
y 1 Sam xxx. 26. Esth. ii 18.
z Prov. xxx. 4. John iii. 13. vi. 62 xx. 17 Acts ii 34–36.
a Gen. xi. 5. Ex. xix. 20. John vi. 33. 38. 41 51 58. viii. 14 xvi 27, 28.——b Ps. viii. 5. lxiii 9. cxxxix. 15. Matt. xii. 40. Heb ii. 7. 9 ——c *See on*, i 20–23 Acts i. 9. 11 1 Tim. iii. 16. Heb. iv. 14. vii. 26. viii. 1. ix. 23, 24.——d iii 19 John i 16. Acts ii. 33. Col. i. 19. ii. 9 ——† Or, *fulfil* Matt xxiv. 34. Luke xxiv. 44. John xix. 24. 28. 36. *Gr.* Acts iii. 18. xiii. 32, 33. Rom. ix 25–30. xv. 9–13. xvi. 25, 26.

11 And [e] he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, [f] evangelists; and some, [g] pastors and teachers;

12 For [h] the perfecting of the saints, [i] for the work of the ministry, [k] for the edifying of [l] the body of Christ:

13 Till [m] we all come ‡ in the unity of the faith, and of [n] the knowledge of the Son of God, [o] unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the § stature of the [p] fulness of Christ:

e 8. ii. 20. iii. 5. Rom. x. 14, 15. 1 Cor. xii 28. Jude 17 Rev. xviii. 20. xxi. 14.
f Acts xxi. 8. 2 Tim iv. 5.
g 2 Chr xv. 3. Jer. iii. 15. Matt. xxviii 20. Acts xiii. 1. Rom xii. 7. 1 Cor. xii. 29. Heb. v. 12. 1 Pet v. 1–3.
h Luke xxii 32. John xxi 15–17. Acts ix. 31. xi 23 xiv 22, 23. xx. 28. Rom. xv. 14. 29. 2 Cor. vii. 1. Phil i. 25, 26. ii. 12–18. Col i 28. 1 Thes v. 11–14. Heb vi. 1 xiii 17.——i Acts i. 17. 25. xx. 24 Rom. xii. 7 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2. 2 Cor. iii. 8. iv. 1 v. 18. vi 3 Col. iv 17. 1 Tim. i. 12. 2 Tim iv. 5 11.——k 16. 29. Rom. xiv. 19 xv 2. 1 Cor xiv 4, 5. 12. 26. 2 Cor. xii. 19. 1 Thes v. 11.——l *See on.* 4. i 23 Col i. 24.——m *See on*, 3. 5. Jer. xxxii. 38, 39. Ez. xxxvii 21, 22 Zeph. iii. 9. Zech. xiv. 9. John xvii 21 Acts iv. 32. 1 Cor i. 10. Phil. ii 1–3.——‡ Or, *into.* ——n Is. liii 11 Matt xi. 27 John xvi 3. xvii 3 25, 26 2 Cor. iv. 6. Phil. iii 8 Col. ii. 2. 2 Pet. i. 1–3. iii. 18 1 John v. 20.——o 12. ii. 15, Col. i. 28.——§ Or, *age.*——p *See on*, i 23.

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through Christ, and by his Spirit, being personally distinct from the Son, and the Holy Ghost, yet mysteriously one with them. Thus they had every possible motive to live in love and peace, as being united in so many important and endearing particulars. All divisions and discords, in these circumstances, must be peculiarly incongruous; yet pride, self-wisdom, self-will, ambition, resentment, the devices of false brethren, and the stratagems of Satan, would tend to disunion; and it would require their most prudent and strenuous endeavours to "keep the unity of the Spirit in "the bond of peace." 'It must be owned, as a certain 'truth, that nothing can unite us to that Church and Body, 'of which Christ is the Head, but the participation of the 'Spirit.' (*Whitby.*)

V. 7—10. The common Head and Lord of this one Body had conferred on every individual member gifts and grace, according to that measure by which, in his sovereign wisdom, he proportioned his communications to the wants and circumstances of his saints. This, therefore, every one ought thankfully to receive, and quietly to employ for the benefit of the whole, without envying, coveting, or disputing. With reference to this matter, the Lord had spoken by the Psalmist concerning the victories and exaltation of the Messiah; that when he ascended up on high, and led captive those enemies who had enslaved the human race, he received gifts for rebellious men, that he might confer them on them. (*Note, Ps.* lxviii. 18.) Now if JEHOVAH, (who was there evidently spoken of,) *ascended*, what doth this imply, but that he previously descended into these lower parts of the earth? So that his incarnation, abasement, death, and burial, in human nature, previous to his resurrection and ascension, were evidently pointed out by the prophet. He, who thus descended and abased himself, was the very same Person who also ascended up far above all heavens, as placed over all the inhabitants of them; that he might fulfil all things relative to his mediatorial undertaking; that from his fulness he might fill his Church, his ministers, and all believers, with his abundant gifts and graces; and that he might fill heaven and earth with his glory. (*Note*, i. 22, 23.)

V. 11—13. Christ, being thus exalted, first qualified and endowed with the Holy Spirit his chosen apostles, as his invaluable *gifts* to men; that, through their ministry, and by the laying on of their hands, sinners might be partakers of his salvation, and of abundant spiritual gifts and miraculous powers: and that, from them, as the grand repository, the Church, in all future ages, might receive all divine truth; especially by those sacred writings, which were penned by them, and under their inspection, to be the standard of Christianity. He next qualified and raised up prophets, or extraordinary teachers endued with the gift of prophecy, and acting in subordination to the apostles, in spreading his Gospel; others he qualified to be evangelists, to preach the Gospel from city to city, as assistants to the apostles, and as observing their directions. He also qualified and appointed stated pastors and teachers in the different churches, to carry on the work begun by the apostles and evangelists. Thus the ascended Saviour, by sending forth able and faithful ministers, gave gifts unto men, as through their labours he communicated all other spiritual blessings. This appointment was intended for the perfecting of the saints in knowledge and holiness, as well as for completing their numbers, by the performance of the several parts of the ministerial work; or for the perfecting of other holy persons, to perform in their turn the work of the ministry for edifying or building up the spiritual temple; by bringing sinners through faith to be built on the true Foundation; and by increasing the fitness of believers for their several stations in the Church; in order to the beauty, harmony, and proportion of the whole. Or, considering the Church as the Body of Christ, it was intended to nourish and mature that Body, till all believers were brought to that unity of faith and agreement in doctrine, and that spiritual and experimental knowledge of the Son of God, in his Person, glory, and salvation. producing love, confidence, obedience, and conformity, which would render the whole "a perfect man," complete in every member, sense, and organ, and all grown up to maturity; according to that measure of capacity, gifts, and grace, which Christ allotted to every individual, in order to the proportion of the stature of his mystical Body, "the fulness of him who filleth all in all." That so, the Church on earth might, in each successive generation, bear some proportion to the whole assembled company when perfected in number, knowledge, holiness, union, and felicity, in heaven. *Evangelists.* 'Under this name 'they are to be understood, whom the apostles used as

14 That we *henceforth* be [q] no more children, [r] tossed to and fro, and [s] carried about by every wind of doctrine, [t] by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they [u] lie in wait to deceive;

15 [x] But [*] speaking the truth in love, [y] may grow up into him in all things, [z] which is the Head, *even* Christ:

16 From [a] whom the whole Body [b] fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to [c] the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the Body unto the [d] edifying of itself in love.

17 ¶ This [e] I say, therefore, and [f] testify [g] in the Lord, [h] that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, [i] in the vanity of their mind;

18 Having [k] the understanding darkened, being [l] alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, [m] because of the † blindness of their heart:

19 Who, being [n] past feeling, have [o] given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness [p] with greediness.

[q] Is xxviii. 9 Matt xviii. 3, 4. 1 Cor. iii 1 2. xiv. 20 Heb v. 12—14

[r] Acts xx. 30, 31. Rom xvi 17, 18 2 Cor xi 3, 4 Gal i 6, 7 iii 1 Col ii. 4–8 2 Thes ii 2–5 1 Tim. i 6. iv. 6, 7. 2 Tim i. 15 ii 17 18 iii. 6–9. 13. iv. 3 Heb xiii 9 2 Pet. ii. 1–3 1 John ii. 18. 25 iv 1

[s] Matt xi. 7 1 Cor. xii 2 Jam iii 4

[t] Matt xxiv. 11. 24 2 Cor ii. 17 iv. 2 xi. 13–15 2 Thes ii. 9 10. 2 Pet ii 18. Rev. xiii. 11–14. xix. 20.——[u] Ps. x. 9 lix. 3. Mic. vii. 2. Acts xxiii 21. [x] 25. Zech viii. 16 2 Cor iv. 2. viii 8.——* Or, *being sincere* Judg. xvi 15. Ps. xxxii 2. John i. 47. Rom xii. 9. Jam. ii. 15, 16. 1 Pet. i 22 1 John iii. 18.——[y] ii. 21 Hos xiv 5–7 Mal. iv 2. 1 Pet. ii 2. 2 Pet iii 18 ——[z] *See on*, 22. v. 23. Col. i 18.

[a] *See on*, 12 —— Job x. 10, 11. Ps cxxxix 15, 16 1 Cor. xii 12–28. Col. ii. 19.——[c] iii 7. 1 Thes ii. 13

[d] 15. i. 4. iii. 17. 1 Cor. viii. 1. xiii. 4–9. 13. xiv 1. Gal. v. 6 13, 14 22. Phil i. 9 Col. ii. 2. 1 Thes i. 3. iii 12. iv 9, 10. 2 Thes. i. 3. 1 Tim. i. 5 1 Pet. i 22. 1 John iv 16

[e] 1 Cor i 12. xv. 50 2 Cor. ix. 6 Gal. iii 17. Col ii 4.

[f] Neh. ix 29. 30. xiii. 15. Jer. xlii. 19 Acts ii 40. xviii. 5 xx 21. Gal v 3 1 Thes. iv 6

[g] 1 Thes. iv 1. 2. 1 Tim v. 21. vi. 13 2 Tim. iv 1.

[h] i. 22 ii 1–3. v. 3–8. Rom. i. 23 32. 1 Cor vi 9–11 Gal. v 19–21 Col. iii. 5–8 1 Pet iv. 3, 4.——[i] Ps xciv 8–11 Acts xiv. 15.——[k] Ps lxxiv. 20. cxv. 4–8 Is xliv 18–20. xlvi. 5–8 Acts xvii. 30. xxvi. 17, 18. Rom. i. 21–23. 28 1 Cor. i 21 2 Cor. iv 4. Gal iv. 8 1 Thes iv. 5. [l] Rom viii. 7, 8 Col i. 21. Jam. iv. 4 ——[m] Rom ii. 19. 1 John ii. 11.——† Or, *hardness* Dan. v 20 Matt. xiii 15 John xii. 40 Rom. xi 25 *Marg* ——[n] 1 Tim. iv 2. [o] *See on*, 17. Rom i 24–26. 1 Pet. iv. 3.——[p] Job xv 16. Is lvi 11. 2 Pet. ii. 12–14. 22. Jude 11 Rev xvii 1–6 xviii. 3.

‘their attendants in performing their office, because they were not sufficient for every thing. Of this kind were Timothy, Titus, Silvanus, Apollos, whom Paul joined with himself in the inscription of the epistles, yet so as to call himself alone *an apostle.* This office therefore was only temporary.’ (*Beza.*) The opinion of this venerable Reformer, in the last clause, perhaps is not well founded. The office of *Evangelists* seems to have been, in most respects, similar to that of *missionaries* in subsequent times; that is, preachers of the Gospel, without full apostolical authority, and without any stated charge, going among the heathen to found churches, under the personal direction of the apostles while they lived, and afterwards according to their doctrine and methods of proceeding, or visiting the churches already planted, to set in order such things as were wanting to supply the deficiencies, or aid the labours of stated pastors, and to stimulate them to greater earnestness in discharging their duty. When zeal for propagating the Gospel subsided, this office sunk into disuse; and thus for ages the heathen have been, in a great measure, neglected; but in one form or another, the office of evangelist, or something of the same nature, must revive with the spirit of evangelizing the nations.—‘These, when they, (the persons above-mentioned,) were employed in preaching the Gospel to those who had not yet received it, the Scripture calls *Evangelists.*’ (*Hammond.*) It might have previously been expected, in the present divided state of the Church, that the zealots of each division would find out their own plan of Church-government, and their own orders of ministers, exclusively in this passage; but it is probable that none of them would be satisfied with so general a statement, were they called to write their sentiments on the subject.

V. 14—16. This whole plan was formed in order that believers should not thenceforth be, as many had been, like children in knowledge and experience; and so, through instability, want of judgment, and weakness of faith, liable to be tossed to and fro, as ships without ballast, by the waves of the sea; or carried about like clouds with the wind. by the false and pernicious doctrines which subtle and ingenious men devised; and by the plausible reasonings and pretences with which they propagated them; as in this manner Satan's ministers waited by the way for the professors of the Gospel, to deceive and pervert them for their own ambitious and selfish purposes. To prevent the division, scandals, and delusions, arising from the cunning craftiness of such deceivers, and the unsuspecting credulity of weak Christians, apostles, prophets, evangelists, and teachers, had been appointed; and every believer had his measure of spiritual gifts bestowed on him, that he might improve it to promote the purity, peace, and edification of the Church. Thus all Christians, as well as ministers, being taught *to hold*, or *maintain*, the truth in love, uprightly professing and defending the great truths of the Gospel in meekness towards all men, and love of each other, might grow up in all things to a nearer communion with Christ, and conformity to him, by influence derived from him, and by observing his directions, as members in that Body of which he is the Head, from whom the whole receives all its life, vigour, and spiritual health. And being fitly proportioned and closely united, through the gifts, grace, and services of each individual, and with the effectual operation of Christ by his Spirit, according to his appointed measure in every part, continual increase might be made to it, both by the conversion of sinners and the sanctification of believers; and the whole be edified, united, adorned, and advanced, in love of Christ, and of every one to the other, with all the happy effects and fruits of love. In this respect the Church would resemble the human body, which consists of various members, united by joints and ligaments; each part being proportioned to its place, and fitted for its use: the whole being compacted by the nerves, arteries, veins, and the circulations continually carrying on from the head and the heart, through every part of the whole. Thus it grows up from infancy to manhood, and is preserved in vigour and activity, while every part performs its proper function in union with the head, in perfect harmony with all the rest, and for the common good. This shows the intent, tendency, and duties of the several stations of Christians in the Church; and if these were more attended to, the resemblance would be more manifest, and the effects unspeakably beneficial. (*Notes, 1 Cor.* xii.)

20 But [q] ye have not so learned Christ;

21 If so be that ye have [r] heard him, and have been taught by him, [s] as the truth is in Jesus:

22 That [t] ye put off concerning [u] the former conversation, [x] the old man, which is corrupt according to the [y] deceitful lusts;

q Luke xxiv 47. John vi. 45. Rom. vi. 1, 2. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. Tit. ii. 11—14. 1 John ii 27.
r Matt. xvii. 5. Luke x. 16. John x. 27. Acts iii. 22. 23. Heb. iii. 7. 8
s i. 13. Ps. xlv 4. lxxxv. 10, 11 John xiv 6 17. 2 Cor i. 20. xi 10 1 John v 10—12. 20 —t 25 1 Sam i 14 Job xxii 23 Ex. xviii. 30—32. Col. ii. 11. iii. 8. Heb. xii. 1 Jam. i. 21. 1 Pet ii. 1, 2 —u *See on* 17—ii. 3 Gal. i 13 1 Pet i 18. 2 Pet. 7.—x Rom. vi 6 Col. iii 9.—y Prov. xi. 18. Jer. xlix. 16. Ob. 3. Rom. vii 11. Tit iii 3. Heb. iii 13. Jam. i 26. 2 Pet. ii. 13.

23 And [z] be renewed in the [a] spirit of your mind;

24 And that ye [b] put on the [c] new man, which [d] after God is [e] created in [f] righteousness and * true holiness.

25 Wherefore, [g] putting away lying,

z ii. 10. Ps. li. 10. Ex. xi 19. xviii. 31. xxxvi. 26. Rom. xii. 2. Col iii. 10. Tit, iii. 5.
a Rom. viii. 6. 1 Pet. i 13
b vi. 11. Job xxix. 14 Is. lii 1. lix. 17. Rom. xiii. 12. 14 1 Cor. xv 53. 54. 2 Cor. iv 16. Gal iii. 27. Col. iii 10—14.—c ii. 15. Rom. vi 4. 2 Cor. v. 17. 1 Pet ii. 2 —d Gen. i 26, 27. 2 Cor iii 18 Col iii. 10 1 John iii. 2 —e *See on* ii 10 —f Ps. xlv. 6 7. Rom. viii 29. Tit. ii 14 Heb. i. 8, 9. xii. 14 1 John ii. 2 —* Or, *holiness of truth* —g Lev. xix 11. Ps. lii. 3. cxix. 29. Prov vi. 17. xii. 19. 22 xxxi. 6. Is ix. 3. 4 lxiii 8. Jer. ix 3—5 Hos iv. 2. John viii. 44 Acts v. 3, 4 Col. iii 9. 1 Tim. i. 10 iv. 2 Tit. i. 2. 12. Rev. xxii. 15.

V. 17—20. In order that the Ephesians might "by "love serve one another," the apostle next called on them, not only as a friendly monitor, but as testifying to them, and charging them in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus, that they should not thenceforth, after having professed the Gospel, conduct themselves in the same manner that the unconverted Gentiles did; but should manifest such a distinction of temper and behaviour as became their vocation. For the Gentiles around them walked "in the vanity of their mind;" and their vain speculations and carnal affections concurred in influencing them to choose and pursue worldly vanities as their chief good, which was the natural effect of their vain idolatry. Their understandings were darkened through pride, prejudices, and lusts, and by the agency of Satan; so that they were wholly averse to that life of spiritual obedience which God requires and communicates, which accords to his own nature and felicity, and which is the beginning and preparation for heavenly joys. This "alienation from "the life of God," was the effect of their gross ignorance in every thing relating to true religion; and that arose, not so much for want of capacity or means of information, as from the *blindness* or *hardness*, of their hearts, and the obstinate depravity of their affections. Thus they stupified themselves with false principles, corrupting fables, and habitual excesses, till they lost all feeling of conscience, and sense of propriety, decency, and morality; and so gave themselves up to the unrestrained indulgence of their lewd inclinations, by the greedy commission of the most unnatural and detestable uncleanness; as if their highest happiness had consisted in these far worse than brutal practices. (*Notes, Rom.* i. 18—32.) *Greediness.* The original is *covetousness.* 'All this they did with 'covetousness, while they were never satisfied with luxurious indulgence, neither had their voluptuousness any 'measure or bounds.' (*Jerom.*)

V. 21—24. The Ephesians had not so learned that religion, of which Christ is both the Teacher and the lesson, the centre of all doctrines, promises, ordinances, and duties, as to live after the manner of their heathen neighbours. Indeed, some in other places had learned Christ from teachers who paid little regard to their practice; but they had been better instructed, *seeing* they had heard Christ himself, as it were, speak by his apostle, and had been thus taught by him as the "truth was in Jesus," laid up in him as in a treasury, to be communicated from him to his Church, through his word and ordinances; or, *if so be* they had been taught by him, that is, by his Spirit as well as by his ministers. For indeed, "the truth as it was in Jesus," taught men, that they must put off, in respect of their whole former conversation and behaviour, the "old man," or that sinful nature which they derived from fallen Adam, and which is corrupt in all its principles and affections, according to those various inordinate desires of worldly things, which mock men's expectations, deceive their souls, and make them deceivers of each other; and which may therefore be called deceitful lusts, "lusts of deceit." The outward conduct, resulting from this corrupt nature, must be cast off at once as a filthy garment; and the inward desires themselves must be denied, crucified, and mortified, till they are wholly abolished. (*Notes, Rom.* vi. 5, 6.) The Ephesians had also been taught, according "to the truth in "Jesus," that they must continually be renewed more and more in the inward judgment, temper, and affections of their souls, by the power of divine grace, into the humble, spiritual, holy, and loving mind of Christ; that so they might "put on the new man," and that their habitual conduct might be conformed to his example, and evince that they were new created after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness, *the holiness of truth*, that is, evangelical holiness, even that holiness which springs from a real belief of the truth as it is in Jesus, consists in uprightness towards God and man, and produces true and genuine peace and satisfaction. (*Notes,* &c. *Gen.* i. 26. *Rom.* xii. 1—3. xiii. 14.) These lessons they had been taught by the apostle, and by Christ himself, if they were true Christians; and, in connexion with the means, motives, and assistances afforded them, they would effectually lead them to a conduct very different from that of their Gentile neighbours. The corrupt conversation, including doubtless the *bad habits* of the heathen, is distinguished from "the old man," or the depraved nature whence all these evils sprang. The *root* would still remain after the converts had "put off, *concerning the* "*former conversation*, the old man;" and this would render watchfulness and diligence needful to the end, even till "the body of sin was abolished." If "the old man," signify only *bad habits*, as many explain it, how did it come to pass that these bad habits have always been so general, not to say universal, while good habits have been exceedingly rare? We never read of bad habits, in any degree, among holy angels, nor would they have been heard of among men, if we had not apostatized from God, and become dead in sin, and by nature children of wrath." The state of the unconverted Gentiles is, indeed, here particularly adverted to; yet it is most certain, that the nature of the unregenerate, (nay, their practice also, except in respect of gross idolatry and some of its abominable appendages,) is similar, even in those who are called Christians.

[h]speak every man truth with his neighbour: [i]for we are members one of another.

26 Be [k]ye angry, and sin not; [l]let not the sun go down upon your wrath;

27 Neither [m]give place to the devil.

28 Let [n]him that stole, steal [o]no more: but rather let him [p]labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, [q]that he may have to * give to him that needeth.

29 Let [r]no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but [s]that which is good to the † use of edifying, that it may [t]minister grace unto the hearers.

30 And [u]grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, [x]whereby ye are sealed unto [y]the day of redemption.

31 Let all [z]bitterness, [a]and wrath, and anger, and [b]clamour, and [c]evil

h 15 Prov. viii. 7. xii 17 Zech. viii 16. 19 2 Cor. vii. 14.
i v. 30 Rom. xii. 5. 1 Cor x. 17. xii. 12—27
k 31, 32. Ex. xi 6. xxxii. 21, 22. Num. xx 10—13. 24. xxv 7—11. Neh v. 6—13. Ps. xxxvii. 8. cvi. 30—33. Prov. xiv. 29 xix. 11. xxv 23. Ec. vii 9. Matt. v. 22. Mark iii. 5 x. 14. Rom. xii 19—21. Jam i 19.
l Deut. xxiv. 15.
m vi 11. 16 Acts v. 3. 2 Cor. ii. 10, 11. Jam iv. 7. 1 Pet v 8.——n Ex xx. 15. 17 xxi. 16 Prov xxx 9 Jer vii. 9. Hos. iv. 2. Zech v. 3. John xii. 6. 1 Cor. vi. 10, 11.——o Job xxxiv. 32. Prov. xxviii 13. Luke iii. 8. 10 14. xix 8——p Prov xiii. 1. xiv. 23. Acts xx 34, 35. 1 Thes iv. 11, 12. 2 Thes. iii 6. 8, 12.————q Luke iii. 11. xxi. 1—4. John xiii. 29. 2 Cor. viii. 2. 12.——* Or, *distribute*. Rom. xii. 13. 2 Cor ix. 12—15. 1 Tim vi. 18.———r v. 3, 4. Ps v. 9. lii. 2. lxxiii. 7—9. Matt xii 34—37. Rom. iii 13, 14 1 Cor. xv. 32, 33. Col. iii. 8, 9. Jam. iii. 2—8. 2 Pet. ii. 18. Jude 13—16 Rev. xiii 5, 6

s Deut. vi. 6—9. Ps xxxvii. 30, 31. xlv. 2 lxxi. 17, 18 24. lxxviii. 4, 5. Prov. x. 31, 32. xii 18 xv 2—4. 7. 23. xvi 21. xxv. 11, 12. Is. l. 4. Mal. iii. 16—18 Luke iv. 22. 1 Cor. xiv. 19 Col iii. 16, 17 iv. 6. 1 Thes. v. 11.
† Or *to edify profitably. See on* i. 16.
t Matt v. 16. 1 Pet ii. 12. iii. 1.————u Gen. vi 3. 6. Judg. x. 16. Ps. lxxviii. 40. xcv. 10. Is. vii. 13 xliii 24. lxiii. 10. Ez xvi 43. Mark iii 5. Acts vii. 51. 1 Thes v. 19 Heb. iii 10 17. x *See on* i. 13 ————y i. 14 Hos xiii. 14. Luke xxi. 28 Rom viii. 11. 23. 1 Cor i 30. xv 54.————z Ps. lxiv. 3 Rom iii 14. Col. iii. 19. Jam iii 14, 15——a *See on* 26. Prov. xiv. 17 xix. 13 Ec vii 9. 2 Cor xii 20. Gal v 20 Col. iii 8 2 Tim ii. 23. Tit. i. 7. Jam. i. 19. iii. 14—18. iv 1, 2————b 2 Sam. xix. 43 xx. 2 Prov. xxix. 9 22 Acts xix. 28 29. xxi. 30. xxiii 22, 23. 1 Tim iii. 3. vi. 4, 5.———c Lev. xix 16. 2 Sam xix 27 Ps. xv. 3. l. 20 ci. 5, cxl. 11. Prov. vi. 19. x. 18 xviii 8. xxv 23. xxvi. 20 Jer. vi. 28. ix. 4 Rom. i. 29, 30. 1 Tim. iii 11. v 13 2 Tim. iii. 3. Tit. ii. 3. iii. 2. Jam. iv. 11. 1 Pet. ii. 1. 2 Pet ii. 10, 11. Jude 8—10 Rev. xii. 10.

V. 25. Let the Ephesians show that they had put off the old man with his deeds, by laying aside every kind of lies and deceit: let them no longer flatter, slander, defraud, amuse, or compliment others, by any deviation from strict sincerity: but let every one of them speak the plain truth to his neighbours, without disguise, prevarication, simulation, or dissimulation: seeing that men, both in the Church and in civil society, were "members one of another;" and ought not in any way to deceive each other; but should think it as unnatural and preposterous to impose on one another, as for a schism to take place in the body, or for one sense or member to delude, or mislead another into mischief, to the common detriment of the whole body. ‘Dr. Whitby hath well shown, in his note on this passage, that several of the best of the heathen moralists thought lying might in many cases be justified: and I wish that none but heathens had ever taught so loose and dangerous a doctrine.’ (*Doddridge.*)

V. 26, 27. It would be proper to express displeasure at what was wrong, on many occasions, both in the management of their families, in reproving sin, and even in ordering their temporal concerns, so that all anger was not to be prohibited: yet let Christians be sure to restrain that dangerous passion within the bounds of reason, meekness, piety, and charity; not being angry without cause, or above cause, or in a proud, selfish, and peevish manner; not expressing their displeasure by reproaches, or furious rage, or suffering it to settle into resentment; but always endeavouring to subordinate its exercise to the glory of God, and the benefit of the offender himself, as well as that of others; and to show stronger disapprobation of the sin committed against God, than of the injury done to themselves. This would induce them to attend to the caution annexed, "not to let the sun go down upon their wrath," not to close the day without forgiving and praying for those who had offended them, or expressing a disposition to reconciliation and kindness. In this, and in other respects, they must take care not "to give place to the devil," who watched his opportunity of filling their minds with rancour and malice, and of thus exciting divisions and contentions among them. (*Marg. Ref.*) (*Notes, Matt.* v. 21—26. *Mark* iii. 1—5.)

V. 28. It might also be supposed, that, when the Ephesians were idolaters, they had practised various kinds of fraud and dishonesty, and that some of them had even lived by theft, rapine, or oppression. These might not, in many cases, be able to make restitution: but at least let them finally cease from every kind and degree of this vice; and, rather than do wrong to any man, let every one, however he had before lived in habits of ease and self-indulgence, learn, and submit to, if necessary, even the lowest and most laborious employment, which was honest and useful to society; not only in order to provide food and raiment for himself and family, but that he might be able to relieve the more urgent necessities of his sick and afflicted brethren and neighbours. Thus their Christian conduct would be as honourable, as their former behaviour had been disgraceful. In this way, even the grand principle of restitution, (namely, renouncing all right to property which has been injuriously acquired,) would be adhered to, as far as their circumstances admitted or it; and a fund raised, among the vigorous and healthy poor, for the relief of the sick and aged. Great stress seems in many places to be laid on this; which in a very striking manner shows to what an extent charitable communications, from the substance or gains of Christians, in every station of life, for the relief of their brethren, and of others for Christ's sake, ought to be carried. (*Marg. Ref.*) But, alas! they who are not eager to amass wealth, as most in these days are, spend too much on themselves and their families, to have a due proportion to spare for such purposes: and a degree of liberality, even far beneath the scriptural and primitive standard, is now deemed rather a prodigy to be wondered at, than an example to be imitated!

V. 29. The apostle furthermore exhorted his readers to abstain from all corrupt and polluting conversation, and not to suffer any thought of that contagious nature, which arose in their hearts, to proceed out of their lips; as this would poison the imaginations of the hearers, even when not so grossly indecent as to shock them. On the contrary, they ought to watch their opportunity of introducing wholesome and instructive discourse; and to take heed that the general tendency of their conversation was good, useful, and edifying; even such as might be the means of communicating grace to the hearers, by the blessing of God upon it; either by bringing careless persons to serious reflection, or by encouraging, warning, or quickening believers. (*Marg. Ref.*)

speaking, be put away from you, [d] with all malice:

32 And be ye [e] kind one to another, [f] tender-hearted, [g] forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

d Gen. iv. 8. xxvii.41 xxxvii. 4. 20 Lev xix. 17, 18. 2 Sam. xiii. 22 Prov. x. 12. xxxvi 24 25. Ec. vii 9. Rom i. 29. 1 Cor. v 8. xiv 20. Col iii 8. Tit. iii. 3. 1 John iii 12. 15.
e Ruth ii. 20 Ps. cxiii. 4, 5. 9. Prov xix. 22. Is. lvii. 1 *Marg.* Luke vi. 35. Acts xxviii. 2. Rom. xii. 10 1 Cor. xiii. 4. 2 Cor. vi. 6 Col. iii. 12. 2 Pet. i. 7.
f Ps cxlv. 9. Prov. xii. 10. Luke i. 78. Jam. v. 11
g v. 1 Gen l. 17 18. Matt vi. 12 14—14. xviii 21—35 Mark xi. 25. Luke vi. 37. xi. 4 xvii. 4. Rom. xii. 20, 21. 2 Cor. ii. 7 10. Col. iii 12, 13. 1 Pet. iii 8, 9. 1 John i. 9. ii. 11—13.

V. 30—32. In this, and in every other respect, Christians should beware of "grieving the Holy Spirit of God.'—'Give diligence, that the Holy Spirit may dwell in 'you willingly, as in a pleasant and agreeable habitation, 'and do not give him any cause for grief. He speaks 'here of the Spirit after the manner of men.' (*Beza.*) (*Marg. Ref.*) When a father has done every thing proper for the benefit of his son, he is grieved if his son acts in an unbecoming manner; and consequently, will not be free and cheerful in his company, but will either shun him, or frown on him. The sanctifying and comforting influences of the Holy Spirit seal believers, as the peculiar people of God, to the day of complete redemption, even to the general resurrection. (*Notes,* i. 13, 14. 2 *Cor.* i. 20—22.) (*Marg. Ref.*) As a kind and wise Friend, the Holy Spirit watched over the Ephesian converts for their good, with infinite condescension and love: all their hope, wisdom, strength, and joy, were from him; and the only return that he required was, a ready compliance with his holy suggestions, and a watchfulness against every thing of a contrary tendency. But, if they indulged anger, selfishness, deceit, sensual lusts, or vain conversation, he would hide his face, or frown upon them, withhold his consolations, and leave them to darkness, fears, anxieties, or even to know their own weakness by such falls, as would expose them to sharp corrections. In watching against these painful consequences, let them put away all bitterness and harshness of temper, language, and behaviour, even toward such as most grievously offended them; and avoid all sinful anger, and clamorous disputes, revilings, slanders, and reproaches, as well as all malice and resentment: that they might be kind and tenderly sympathizing with each other, and ready to forgive, even as God in Christ, and for his sake, had forgiven them.—(*Notes, Matt.* xviii. 21—35. 1 *Cor.* xiii.) None but true believers, persons really partaking of the regenerating sanctifying Spirit of Christ, could feel the energy of this exhortation: and, in the judgment of charity, the apostle addressed the Ephesians as of this happy company.—*Sealed.* 'That is, have God's mark set upon you, that 'you are his servants; a security to you, that you shall 'be admitted into his kingdom as such, at the day of 'redemption, that is, at the resurrection; when you 'shall be put in the actual possession of a place in his 'kingdom, among those who are his, whereof the Spirit 'is now an Earnest.' (*Locke.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

The mind that was in Christ, will teach those who suffer for his sake, to be more desirous that believers should walk worthy of their vocation, than of their own exemption from the cross: and though we can do nothing towards our own justification, yet by the grace of God we may do a great deal for the honour of the Gospel and the benefit of mankind. A spiritual, humble, obedient, and holy walk, is peculiarly suitable to the character of our Saviour, and to the freeness of our holy salvation, as well as to the nature of our present privileges and future inheritance. Even the candour and allowance, which we are conscious that we need from our brethren, should teach us to act with all lowliness and meekness, with "long-suffering, forbearing one another in love." If all who profess the Gospel did indeed thus "endeavour to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," what a different face would the Church of God assume! But, alas! whilst there is one Body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all, on whom all depend, and from whom all our hopes and comforts come, how grievously do the remaining ignorance, bigotry, and disproportionate zeal about comparatively trifles, even in good men, the designing ambition and furious passions of bad men, and the artifices of the devil, defeat the endeavours of those who labour for peace; and perpetuate, yea multiply, divisions and dissentions among those who are agreed in the great essentials of Christianity! Let us, however, persevere in seeking, and praying for, the peace of the Church: for "blessed are the peace-makers;" and whatever eager zealots may say of them, "they shall be called the children of "God." Let us watch against spiritual pride, envy, and the ambition of popularity: and let us improve our measure of endowment, as the gift of Christ for the benefit of others, with contentment and quietness.

V. 7—16.

It may be very useful to remember, that the Redeemer first came down from heaven, and abased himself, before he ascended as a triumphant Conqueror, to enrich us rebels with the fruits of his victories. Thus he left us an example that we should follow his steps, and expect abasement, self-denial, and the cross here, and honour and felicity hereafter. While Christians should be exhorted to value the faithful ministry of the Gospel, as the precious gift of Christ, and the grand means of salvation to their souls, pastors and teachers, however distinguished, should be reminded of the end for which they were appointed, even "for the perfecting of the saints, and for the *work* "of the ministry," rather than for the emolument or reputation of it; and for the edification of the body of Christ, not for the indulgence of themselves or the advancement of their families. We should then "take heed to ourselves and to our doctrine," and labour to bring those among whom we minister to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, and to that maturity of judgment and experience, which may fit them to be a part of that complete Body, "according to the measure of the "stature of the fulness of Christ." For by leading believers with gradual advances to this ripeness of knowledge, we most effectually counteract the sleight of men,

CHAP. V.

The apostle exhorts the Ephesians to imitate the love of God in Christ, 1, 2*: to avoid all uncleanness, covetousness, and improper discourse, which draw down the wrath of God upon "the children of disobedience,"* 3—6*; to have no fellowship with the works of darkness; but, as the children of light, to reprove them,* 7—14*; to walk with wisdom and circumspection,* 15—17*: not to drink to excess; but to be filled with the Spirit, singing Psalms and praises to God,* 18—20*: and to submit to one another, in the several relations of life,* 21. *The duties of wives and husbands, enforced and illustrated, by the mutual love of Christ and his church,* 22—33.

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and that cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive; for their success is chiefly among unstable professors, or such Christians, as, being children in understanding, are liable to be "tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine," and by every subtile device of the enemy. We should indeed hold the truth with firmness, but it should also be in love; otherwise, zeal for orthodoxy may dictate such violent measures, as will more distract the Church, and injure the cause of Christ, than false teachers themselves could do. But in "faith working by love" we grow up into Christ in all things, and, acting in this spirit, every minister and Christian, as a part of that Body of which he is the Head, contributes to the proportion, union, and prosperity of the whole, according to the effectual working of Christ in every part; and thus the Church is increased in holiness and in numbers, "by edifying itself in love." Indeed, every congregation, where the truth is preached, will prosper and increase, according to the measure in which this peaceful and loving improvement of every one's talents for the common benefit is attended to; for "the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace, but where envying and strife are, there is confusion and every evil work."

V. 17—24.

Let all ministers testify in the Lord against antichristian tempers and practices, as well as against false doctrines, and insist upon it, that believers must not walk as others do, who are Gentiles in conduct, though Christians in name; for the difference between *heretofore*, and *henceforth*, is of vast importance in this grand concern. Alas! do not men on every side walk in the vanity of their minds? Is it not plain that their understandings are darkened, and their hearts alienated from the life of God, and even hardened against it, through the ignorance that is in them? Nay, are there not numbers who are past feeling, and have given themselves up to work all uncleanness with greediness? Must we not then insist most decidedly upon the distinction between real and nominal Christians? Indeed, there are many professors of evangelical truth who have so learned Christ, as not to be convinced of the necessity of mortifying their corrupt nature and its deceitful lusts; of being "renewed in the spirit of their minds," and of "putting on the new man, as created after God in righteousness and true holiness!" But if we have truly learned Christ, from the teaching of his word and Spirit, we shall be daily aiming to practice these lessons, seeking help from God by fervent prayer; we shall mourn that so much power yet remains in our old corrupt nature, and we shall long to be more like our divine Master, in every part of our temper and conduct.

V. 25—32.

Zealous professors, and indeed, admired preachers of evangelical truth, nay, even true Christians, need warning and cautioning to avoid immoral practices; but the latter welcome and profit by the word of exhortation, while hypocrites detect themselves by raging against it. They, who most vigilantly examine themselves, will most perceive the extreme difficulty of entire truth and sincerity in all their conversation, and of avoiding every kind and degree of falsehood; they also find it very difficult to feel and express anger on the most justifiable occasions, and to perform the duties of parents, masters, or ministers, without falling into sin and dishonouring their profession. They perceive it very necessary to watch and pray against resentment, lest "the sun should go down upon their wrath," and so place should be given for Satan to tempt them to further transgressions; for, in every thing, the occasions of his suggestions should be assiduously avoided. Nay, exact and scrupulous honesty is far more uncommon than is generally imagined; and even some pious persons do things not strictly just, for want of being instructed and admonished after the apostolical manner. But while thieves and robbers are as welcome to Christ as their more moral neighbours, yet, *thenceforth* they must steal no more, whatever hard labour may be necessary for an honest livelihood. What then shall we think of those professed *Christians*, who grow rich and live in luxury, by various frauds, oppressions, excessive profits, smuggling, and other acts of injustice, without restitution or amendment? And if the poor labourer should give to him that needeth, what shall we think of them, whose large revenues and immense expenses or hoardings are far out of all proportion to their penurious and scanty alms? Our discourse also must be kept pure, our tongues bridled, and the gift of speech improved diligently as a talent; that so we may not, with this unruly member, do mischief to others, but may speak such pious and instructive words, as are suited to minister grace to the hearers, if we would act according to our obligations as Christians. When we, in any degree or respect neglect these rules, we "grieve the Holy Spirit of God," lose our comfort and evidence, or even bring our state into doubt and suspicion. Let us then watch against all these evils, all anger and malice, and copy diligently the loving example of our God and Saviour.

BE ye therefore [a] followers of God, [b] as dear children;

2 And [c] walk in love, [d] as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and [e] a sacrifice to God, [f] for a sweet-smelling savour.

3 But [g] fornication, and all uncleanness, or [h] covetousness, let it not be once [i] named among you, [k] as becometh saints;

a iv. 32. Lev xi. 45. Matt v. 45 48. Luke vi 35, 36. 1 Pet. i. 15, 16 1 John iv. 11 b Jer xxxi 20 Hos i. 10 John i 12 Col iii 12 1 John iii. 1, 2 c iii 17 iv 2. 15, 16. John xiii. 34. Rom. xiv. 15 1 Cor xvi 14 Col. i.i 14 1 Thes. iv. 9. 1 Tim. iv 12 1 Pet. iv 8. 1 John iii 11-23 iv. 20 21. d 25 iii 19 Matt. xx. 28. John xv. 12, 13. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. viii. 9 Gal. i. 4. ii 20 1 Tim. ii 6. Tit. ii. 14. Heb vii. 25-27. ix 14 1 Pet ii 21-24. 1 John iii. 16. Rev i. 5 v 9.——— e Rom. viii. 3. *Marg* 1 Cor. v. 7 Heb ix. 23. x 12.——— f Gen. viii 21. Lev. i. 9 13 17 iii 16. Am v. 21 2 Cor ii 15 ——— g 5. iv. 19 Num xxv 1. Deut. xxiii 17, 18. Matt xv. 19 Mark vii. 21. Acts xv. 20 Rom. i 29 1 Cor. v 10 11. vi. 9, 10 13 18. x. 8. 2 Cor. xii. 21. Gal. v. 19-21. Col. iii 5 1 Thes iv. 3 7 Heb xii. 16. xiii. 4. 2 Pet ii 10 Rev ii 14. 21 ix 31. xxi 8. xxii. 15.——— h 5. Ex. xviii. 21 xx. 17. Josh vii. 21 1 Sam. viii 3 Ps. x 3 cxix. 36 Prov xxviii. 16 Jer. vi 23. viii 10. xxii 17. Ez xxiii. 31. Mic ii. 2 Mark vii. 22 Luke xii 15 xvi. 14. Acts xx. 33. 1 Cor. vi 10. Col iii. 5 1 Tim iii. 3. vi. 10. 2 Tim iii. 2. Tit. i 7. 11 Heb. xiii 5. 1 Pet. v 2. 2 Pet. ii. 3. 14——— i Ex. xxiii. 13. 1 Cor. v. 1.——— k Rom. xvi. 2. Phil. i. 27. 1 Tim. ii. 10 Tit. ii. 3.

4 Neither [l] filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not [m] convenient; [n] but rather giving of thanks.

5 For [o] this ye know, [p] that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man [q] who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

6 Let [r] no man deceive you with [s] vain words; for because of these things [t] cometh the wrath of God upon [u] the children of * disobedience.

7 Be [x] not ye therefore partakers with them.

l iv. 29. Prov. xii. 23. xv 2 Ec. x. 13. Matt. xii 34-37 Mark vii. 22 Col. iii. 8. Jam. iii 4-8 2 Pet ii. 7 18 Jude 10 13. 15. m Rom i. 28 Philem. 8. n 19, 20. i. 16. Ps xxxiii. 1. xcii. 1 cvii 21, 22. Dan. vi 10 John vi 23. 2 Cor i. 11. ix 15 Phil. iv 6 Col iii 15-17. 1 Thes. ii 9. v. 18. Heb xiii 15. o 1 Cor vi. 9, 10. p *See on*, 3 q Col. iii. 5. 1 Tim vi. 10. 17. Rev. xxi. 8. xxii 15 r Jer. xxix 8 31. Ez. xiii. 10-16. Mic. iii. 5. Matt xxiv. 4 24. Mark xiii 5. 22 Gal. vi. 7. 8 Col ii. 4 8. 18 2 Thes. ii. 3. 10-12 1 John iv. 1.——— s 2 Kings xvi. i. 20. Jer xxiii 14-16.——— t Num. xxxii 13, 14. Josh. xxii 17, 18. Ps lxxviii. 31. Rom. i. 18. Col. iii. 6 ——— u *See on*, ii 2. 3 ——— * Or, *unbelief* Heb. iii. 19. 1 Pet ii. 8 *Gr* ——— x 11. Num. xvi. 26. Ps. l 18. Prov. i. 10-17. ix 6. xiii. 20. 1 Tim. v 22. Rev xviii. 4.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1, 2. Instead of the malignant passions, mentioned towards the close of the preceding chapter, the believers at Ephesus were exhorted to follow or imitate God, as his beloved children, in all his moral perfections, especially in that love from which their salvation flowed. This might best be contemplated in the Person and love of Christ, who had assumed human nature, and given himself for them an offering or sacrifice to God, which was to him a sweet-smelling savour, in allusion to the typical sacrifices that were consumed on the altar. Not that the Father took pleasure in the sufferings of his "beloved Son," in themselves; but his justice and holiness were glorified in them, and a way was thus opened for the honourable exercise of mercy towards those who deserved his awful vengeance; and in this he was well pleased.—As the Father appointed and provided this sacrifice, and from love to us gave his beloved Son for our sins, and as Jesus said "I and my Father are One;" so the love of Christ must be equivalent to that love of God, which they were directed to copy in their habitual conduct.—Compassion for the deservedly miserable, condescension to the mean and vile, a readiness to forgive injuries, self-abasement, self-denial, and enlarged beneficence, were most illustriously manifested in that love, which is here proposed as the pattern for our imitation.

V. 3, 4. The apostle had, in the foregoing chapter, warned the Ephesians against several of those immoralities, to which they had been addicted before their conversion, and he here resumes that subject. The degree, in which fornication in particular, and other kinds of licentiousness were practised, and even allowed, nay vindicated, by the gravest philosophers of the Gentiles, can hardly be conceived by those who are not very conversant with their writings. The exhortation, therefore, as it respects these vices, needs little comment; but many learned men maintain, that the word, rendered *covetousness*, means an insatiable craving after more and more of these sensual indulgences. Now, it cannot be denied that the word sometimes has that sense; yet it can hardly be supposed, that the apostle would, in so general a way, have added to his warning against fornication, the mention of that "uncleanness with greediness," which he had before stated as the excess of Pagan blindness and hardness of heart. (iv. 19.) On the other hand, can it be thought, that covetousness should here, and in all other exhortations of a similar nature, which the apostle addressed to the churches, be almost, if not entirely, overlooked? For they, who explain the word in this text of *greediness* in lewdness, put the same construction on it in other places where it occurs. No doubt, covetousness, or eager desires of gain, whether to hoard, or to support extravagance, is as contrary to vital Christianity, as the grossest sensualities, though more plausible, and not so easily defined: and also as supplying the means of silencing or softening the reproofs of those who would firmly protest against fornication, and even, in many cases, prosecute them with the censures of the Church. The clause, indeed, "let it not "once be named, &c." may only mean, 'Let it not be 'said, that a Christian is guilty of such crimes.' But if understood of the discourse, in which the *naming* or mentioning of licentious practices, in a manner too common, tends to pollute the imaginations, or inflame the passions of the hearers, it cannot be doubted, that the conversation of those who speak as if every thing was valuable in proportion as money can be got or saved by it, corrupts the judgment and principles of men, though in another way, yet as effectually as obscene discourse. It seems also to be with peculiar propriety, that the apostle joined this odious vice with these others more generally scandalous. Neither the one nor the other should be mentioned without detestation, for this *became*, (or suited their character as) saints, and their relation to God, as his children, as members of Christ, as temples of the Holy Spirit, as heirs of heaven, and as lights in the world. Nay, they must not allow of any indecent conversation, or any thing vain and trifling, or even those witty turns of expression, by which improper sentiments, being conveyed in an ingenious manner, obtain applause, instead of exciting indignation. Nothing of this kind could consist with the character of Christians, who ought rather to converse together on the mercies of God, and unite in thanksgivings for them.

V. 5--7. The apostle here supposed his readers to

8 For [y] ye were sometimes darkness, [z] but now *are ye* light in the Lord: [a] walk as children of light:

9 (For [b] the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all [c] goodness, and [d] righteousness, and [e] truth;)

10 [f] Proving what is [g] acceptable unto the Lord.

11 And have [h] no fellowship with the [i] unfruitful [k] works of darkness, [l] but rather reprove *them*.

12 For [m] it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them [n] in secret.

13 But all things that are * reproved are made manifest by the light: [o] for whatsoever doth make manifest, is light.

14 Wherefore † he saith, [p] Awake, thou that sleepest, and [q] arise from the dead, [r] and Christ shall give thee light.

y ii. 11, 12. iv. 18. vi 12. Ps. lxxiv. 20. Is. ix 2. xlii. 16. lx. 2. Jer xiii. 16. Matt. iv. 16. Luke i. 79. Acts xvii. 30 xxvi. 18. Rom i. 21. ii. 19. 2 Cor. vi. 14. Col. i. 13 Tit. iii. 3. 1 Pet. ii. 9. 1 John ii. 8. z Is. xlii 6, 7. xlix 6. 9 lx 1. 3. 19, 20. John i. 4, 5 9. viii 12. xii. 46. 1 Cor i. 30. 2 Cor iii 18. iv. 6. 1 Thes v. 4—8. 1 John ii. 9—11 ——a 2 Is. ii. 5 Luke xvi. 8 John xii 36 Gal v. 25 1 Pet ii. 9—11. 1 John i 7 ——b Gal. v. 22, 23 c Ps. xvi 2, 3 Rom. ii. 4 xv 14. 1 Pet. ii. 18 3 John 11. ——d Phil i. 11 1 Tim vi. 11. Heb i 8. xi. 33 1 Pet ii 24. 1 John ii 29 iii. 9, 10. ——e *See on*, iv. 15. 25 vi. 14 John i 47 ——f 1 Sam xvii 39 Rom. xii. 1, 2 Phil. i 10. 1 Thes v. 21 ——g Ps xix. 14. Prov. xxi. 3. Is. lviii 5. Jer. vi 20. Rom xiv 18 Phil. iv. 18. 1 Tim ii 3 v 4. Heb. xii 28 1 Pet ii. 5 20. ——h 7 Gen. xlix. 5—7. Ps i 1. 2. xxvi 4, 5 xciv 20 21 Prov. iv 14, 15. ix. 6. Jer. xv. 17. Rom xvi. 17. 1 Cor. v. 9—11. x. 20, 21. 2 Cor. vi. 14—18. 2 Thes iii. 6, 14 1 Tim. vi. 5. 2 Tim iii. 5. 2 John 10, 11. Rev xviii. 4.

i Prov. i. 31. Is. iii. 10. Rom. vi. 21 Gal. vi 8. k iv. 22 Job xxiv. 13—17. John iii. 19—21. Rom i. 23—32 xiii. 12. 1 Thes v. 7. l Gen xx. 16. Lev xix 17 Ps. cxli. 5 Prov ix. 7, 8. xiii 18. xv. 12. xix. 25. xxv. 12 xxix. 1. Is. xxix 21. Matt. xviii. 15 Luke iii. 19. 1 Tim. v. 20 2 Tim iv. 2. Tit. ii. 15. m 3. Rom i 24—27. 1 Pet. iv. 3. n 2 Sam. xii. 12. Prov. ix. 17 Ec. xii. 14. Jer. xxiii. 24. Luke xii. 1, 2. Rom ii. 16. Rev xx 12 ——* Or, *discovered* Lam. ii. 14. Hos ii. 10. vii 1. ——o Mic. vii 6. John iii 20, 21. 1 Cor iv 5. Heb iv. 13 ——† Or, *it*. ——p Is. li 17. lii 1. lx. 1 Rom xiii. 11. 1 Cor. xv 34. 2 Tim. ii 26 *Marg*. ——q ii. 5. Ez xxxvii. 4—10. John v. 25—29 xi. 43, 44. Rom. vi. 4, 5. Col. iii. 1. ——r John viii. 12. ix. 5. Acts xiii. 47. 2 Cor. iv 6. 2 Tim i. 10.

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know, that fornicators, unclean persons, and covetous men, were out of the way to heaven. The latter, though often more favoured than debauched characters, were, in the strictest sense, idolaters, seeing they loved, trusted, and expected happiness from wealth, rather than from God; and sought to increase or secure their treasures, instead of seeking first his favour, image, and glory. (*Marg. Ref.*) They were not therefore truly converted; and, not being subjects of Christ's kingdom on earth, they could not be entitled to the inheritance of that heavenly kingdom, which God, for Christ's sake, would bestow on all true believers. Some might indeed argue against this declaration; and, excusing such practices, or amusing themselves with speculations on God's mercy and the freeness of salvation, might persuade others that they were not absolutely inconsistent with a state of acceptance. But let none suffer any man to deceive them with vain words; as these very practices brought the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience, or those who persisted in unbelief, impenitence, and the allowed practice of sin. But vain, deceitful words of various kinds might be noticed, did our limits permit. The common principles which prevail even in countries professing Christianity, among those who are far removed from an antinomian perversion of evangelical truth, properly so called, dictate vain words, which deceive vast multitudes. A smattering of vain philosophy, united with these common notions, leads numbers to conclude, that God will not punish men for indulging their natural inclinations, however irregularly. Many popular writers, of late, have spoken of fornication, and even the seduction of an unmarried woman, as no crime; or merely as 'indulging the most amiable weakness of human nature!' In these, and in various other ways, ingenious men, and even moral philosophers, by moral essays, *so called*, in modern times deceive millions with vain words; and no doubt the grand deceiver of mankind had prophets of a similar stamp in ancient days. When the vilest of transgressors repent and believe the Gospel, they become "children of obedience," from whom the wrath of God is turned away; but it could not be expected that he would punish the Gentiles for such abominations, and connive at them in professed Christians. If the Ephesians therefore meant to escape the condemnation of their heathen neighbours, let them not partake of their crimes.

V. 8—14. The Ephesians had once been darkness itself, through total ignorance of God and his will; but now, by the Gospel, they were made "light in the Lord," as One with Christ, the Light of the world. Let them therefore walk as children of the Light; like persons who were born again into the spiritual world, to be trained up as heirs of the light of heaven. If they were inwardly enlightened, the Holy Spirit, by whom the change had been wrought, would lead them to a suitable conversation; as the fruit of the Spirit consisted in all kinds of goodness, mercy, equity, integrity, veracity, sincerity, and faithfulness; as well as in uprightness in their professed faith, fear, and love of God. Let them then prove, or make trial of those things, which God accepted and delighted in, and seek solid enjoyment in them. But let none of them countenance those works of darkness, from which carnal men sought pleasure and profit; but which were wholly unfruitful, and yielded no present real advantage, to counterbalance in any degree the future ruin to which they led. On the contrary, let them reprove such vices in their neighbours, by refusing to join in them, by protesting plainly against them, by showing their hateful nature and pernicious tendency; or by keeping a significant silence, when more explicit reproof might be unsuitable. For indeed it was a shame even to speak of the practices, which the heathens secretly committed; not only in taverns and brothels, but more especially in the most sacred mysteries of their abominable religion! The light, however, of divine truth, held forth in an open profession, and a suitable walk and conversation, could not fail to detect and expose the detestable nature of such shameful practices. For whatever thus tended to make things manifest according to their real nature was *light*, and equivalent, in the spiritual world, to the light of the Sun in the natural world. With a view to this, according to the tenour of the Old Testament prophecies, (*Is.* lx. 1:) the Lord now called on sinners of the Gentiles to awake from the sleep of sin, and their vain dreams of worldly happiness; yea, to arise from the death of sin; and Christ would, by his doctrine and Spirit, give them sufficient light to discover and escape every danger, and to find the way of peace and holiness. Surely, this one text ought for ever to silence the vain speculations of those, who, arguing from figurative expressions, concerning the state of sinners, as asleep, nay, dead in sin, not only object to, but absolutely condemn, as heresy, the most scriptural addresses, and calls to them to repent and turn to God, and believe in Christ, and seek salvation!

15 [s] See then that ye [t] walk circumspectly, [u] not as fools, but as wise,

16 [x] Redeeming the time, because [y] the days are evil.

17 Wherefore [z] be ye not unwise, but [a] understanding what the will of the Lord *is.*

18 And [b] be not drunk with wine, wherein is [c] excess; [d] but be filled with the Spirit;

19 Speaking [e] to yourselves in [f] psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody [g] in your heart to the Lord;

20 Giving [h] thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, [i] in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ:

21 [k] Submitting yourselves one to another [l] in the fear of God.

s 33. Matt. viii. 4. xxvii. 4. 24. 1 Thes. v 15 Heb. xii 25 1 Pet i. 22 Rev. xix. 10.
t Ex. xxiii. 13. Matt x. 16. 1 Cor. xiv. 20 Phil. i. 27. Col. i. 9, 10. iv. 5.
u 2 Sam xxiv 10. Job ii 10 Ps lxxiii 22. Prov xiv. 8. Matt. xxv. 2 Luke xxiv. 25. Gal. iii. 1. 3. 1 Tim. vi. 9. Jam. iii. 13
x Ec. ix 9. Rom. xiii. 11 Gal vi. 10 Col. iv. 5.
y vi. 13. Ec. xi. 2 xii. 1 Am. v. 13. John xii. 35. Acts xi. 28, 29. 1 Cor. vii 26 29–31.
z *See on.* 15
a Deut iv 6 1 Kings iii. 9–12. Job xxviii. 28. Ps cxi. 10. cxix. 27 Prov. ii. 5. xiv. 8. xxiii. 23. Jer. iv. 22 Rom. xii. 2. Col. i. 9. 1 Thes iv. 1–3. 1 Pet. iv. 2.——b Gen. ix. 21. xix. 32–35. Deut. xxi. 20. Ps lxix. 12. Prov. xx. 1. xxiii. 21. 29–35. Is. v. 11–13. 22 Matt xxiv. 49. Luke xii. 45. xxi. 34. Rom. xiii 13. 1 Cor v. 11. vi 10. xi. 21 Gal. v 21 1 Thes v. 7——c Matt. xxiii. 25. 1 Pet. iv. 3, 4. d Ps lxiii. 3–5. Cant iv 4 vii 9. Is xxv 6. lv 1 Zech. ix. 15–17. Luke xi 13. Acts ii. 13–18. xi. 24. Gal. v. 22–25 ——e Acts xvi 25. 1 Cor. xiv 26 Col iii. 16 Jam. v. 13 ——f Ps xcv 2. cv. 2 Matt. xxvi. 30 ——g Ps. xlvii. 7. lxii. 8. lxxxvi. 12. cv. 3. Is lxv. 14. Matt xv. 8 John iv 23. 24.——h *See on.* 4.—Job i. 21. Ps. xxxiv 1. Is. lxiii. 7. Acts v. 41 1 Cor i 4 Phil i. 3 iv 6. Col. i 11, 12 iii. 17. 1 Thes. iii 9 v. 18 2 Thes i. 3. ii. 13.———i John xiv. 13, 14 xv. 16. xvi. 23–26. Heb xiii 15 1 Pet. ii. 5 iv. 11. k 22. 24 Gen xvi. 9. 1 Chr. xxix. 24. Rom. xiii. 1–5. 1 Cor. xvi. 16. 1 Tim. ii 11 iii. 4 Heb. xiii. 17 1 Pet. ii. 13. v. 5.——l 2 Chr xix. 7. Neh. v. 9. 15. Prov. xxiv. 21. 2 Cor. vii 1 Pet. ii. 17.

22 Wives, [m] submit yourselves unto your own husbands, [n] as unto the Lord.

23 For [o] the husband is the head of the wife, [p] even as Christ is the Head of the church: and [q] he is the Saviour of the body.

24 Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* subject to their own husbands [r] in every thing.

25 Husbands, [s] love your wives, even as Christ also [t] loved the church, and gave himself for it.

26 That [u] he might sanctify and cleanse it [x] with the washing of water, [y] by the word,

27 That [z] he might present to himself [a] a glorious Church, [b] not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; [c] but that it should be holy, and without blemish.

m 24 Gen. iii. 16. Esth i 16–18. 20. 1 Cor xiv. 34. Col. iii. 18. 1 Tim ii. 11, 12. Tit ii. 5. 1 Pet. iii 1–6
n vi 5. Col iii. 22, 23.
o 1 Cor xi. 3–10.
p *See on* i. 22, 23. iv 15.
q 25, 26. Acts xx. 28. 1 Thes. i. 10. Rev v 9
r 33 Ex xxiii. 13. xxix. 35. Col. iii 20. 22. Tit. ii. 5. 9
s 28. Gen. ii. 24. xxiv. 67. 2 Sam. xi 3 Prov v. 18, 19. Col. iii. 19. 1 Pet iii. 7.
t 2. Matt xx. 28. Luke xxii. 19. 20 John vi 51. Acts xx. 28. Gal i 4 ii. 20. 1 Tim ii. 6. 1 Pet. i. 18–21. Rev. i 5 v. 9.
u John xvii. 17–19 Acts xxvi. 18 1 Cor. vi. 11. Tit. ii. 14. Heb ix 14. x. 10. 1 Pet i. 2. Jude 1
x Ez. xvi. 9. xxxvi 25 John iii. 5. Acts xxii. 16 Tit iii 5–7. Heb. x. 22. 1 Pet. iii. 21. 1 John v. 6.——y John xv. 3. xvii. 17. Jam. i. 18. 1 Pet. i. 22. 23——z 2 Cor. iv. 14. xi. 2. Col. i 22 28 Jude 24——a Ps xlv. 13. lxxxvii 3. Is lx 15–20 lxii. 3. Jer. xxxiii 9. Heb xii. 22–24 Rev. vii 9–17. xxi. 10–26——b Cant iv 7 Heb. ix 14. 1 Pet. i. 19. 2 Pet. iii. 14.——c i. 4. 2 Cor. xi. 2. Col i. 22. 28. 1 Thes. v. 23. Jude 24. Rev. xxi. 27.

V. 15–20. With these advantages, the Ephesians ought to see to it, that they walked *accurately*; and to consider how they should behave: or with *exactness*, according to the commands and example of Christ: keeping the middle way, avoiding all appearance of evil, and aiming at more complete obedience in every particular; and *circumspectly*, cautiously looking at their paths, to shun the snares laid in them; not acting as heedless, ignorant, or foolish persons, who rush into dangers, temptations, and mischief, but as wise men, who are aware of them and escape them. As a great part of their lives had been wasted in heathen darkness, they ought also to improve their time for the future the more diligently; *redeeming* or buying it off from other avocations, at the expense of much self-denial and watchfulness; that they might spend it in religious exercises, or in doing good to others according to the duties of their stations; for the days were evil, and the persecutions that awaited them might render the term of their usefulness more precarious, than in peaceful seasons: so that if they would secure their own salvation, or do good to mankind, no time was to be lost. Let them not then be as unwise servants, who were not prepared for their Lord's coming, and were ignorant of their work: nay, let them spare no pains to understand his will concerning them, that they might serve him intelligently, as well as zealously, and without giving their enemies any advantage against them. Instead of joining, or imitating the revels of their neighbours, or seeking exhilaration by intemperate drinking, which induced a temporary insanity, and various disorders both of body and mind, and led to the most ruinous and mischievous conduct, let them wait on God in every appointed means, for larger communications of the Holy Spirit, whose sacred influences would fill their souls with satisfying consolations in every circumstance, and tend to the happiest consequences in future. In order to this, they should substitute in the place of the loose odes and songs of the Gentiles, or other trifling conversation, the psalms and hymns of the sacred scripture, and such spiritual songs as pious men composed on the peculiar subjects of the Gospel, and according to the doctrine of truth. In these they should speak to themselves, or to each other; attending to the affections of their hearts; that the inward melody of holy love and gratitude unto the Lord might unite with the outward melody of poetry and singing, when they used them in this manner, either alone or in social worship. It was incumbent on them also to give thanks *always*, even in seasons of persecution and affliction; and ***for all things***, not excepting such as nature disrelished, being satisfied of their beneficial tendency. Thus let them acknowledge their manifold obligations to God, even the Father, in the name of Christ, through whom alone blessings were bestowed on sinful creatures, and praises accepted from them.

V. 21. In order to glorify God and adorn the Gospel, it was requisite, that Christians should submit to one another, and to all who had authority, according to their different situations and relations in the church or the community, and the subordination established by the word or providence of God. This should be done, not so much from secular motives of propriety and expediency, as in the fear of God, and from a reverential regard to his authority, his favour, and glory; which would obviate those multiplied excuses, that might be made for the neglect of this submission, on account of the misconduct of superior relations, and on various other grounds.

28 So ought men to love their wives [d] as their own bodies: he that loveth his wife, loveth himself.

29 For no man ever yet [e] hated his own flesh; but [f] nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

30 For we [g] are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

31 For [h] this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

32 This is [i] a great mystery: but [k] I speak concerning Christ and the church.

33 Nevertheless, [l] let every one of you in particular so love his wife, even as himself; and the wife *see* that she [m] reverence *her* husband.

d 31. 33. Gen ii. 21—24. Matt. xix 5
e 31. Prov. xi 17. Ec iv. 5. Rom. i. 31.
f Is xl 11. Ez. xxxiv. 14, 15 27. Matt xxiii 37 John vi. 50—58
g i. 23 Rom xii. 5. 1 Cor vi. 15. xii 12—27. Col. ii. 19.
h Gen. ii. 24. Matt. xix. 5. Mark x. 7, 8. 1 Cor. vi. 16.
i vi. 19. Col. ii 2. 1 Tim iii. 9. 16.
k Ps. xlv. 9—17. Cant. i.—viii. Is. liv. 5. lxii. 4, 5 John iii. 29 2 Cor. xi. 2. Rev. xix. 7, 8. xxi. 3.
l 25. 28, 29. Col. iii. 19. 1 Pet. iii. 7.
m 22 1 Kings i. 31. Esth. i. 20. Heb. xii. 9. 1 Pet. iii. 2—6.

V. 22—27. As a most important instance of that "submission to one another in the fear of God," which had been mentioned, the apostle exhorted wives to submit themselves to their own husbands, as an essential part of their obedience to the Lord, who had appointed this subordination, and required this subjection, in all things lawful, for his own glory and the benefit of mankind. For, the husband was constituted the head of the wife, as her ruler and protector, both in Providence and by the law of God: even as Christ was the Head of the Church, and the Saviour of this his mystical body. The government of Christ and the subjection of the Church, are conducive to the benefit of the latter, as Christ's authority is that of wisdom and love: and in general it is beneficial even to the women, to be subject to their own husbands, in the same manner that the Church is subject to Christ; though the rule may seem to admit of some exceptions. But to render this submission more easy, beneficial, and comfortable; husbands also ought to love their wives, with that tender, constant, faithful, and compassionate affection, which Christ showed to the Church. He had even given up himself to the death upon the cross, in order to save his people from their sins; that, having atoned for their guilt, he might also cleanse them from their pollution, by those influences of the Holy Spirit, of which the baptismal water was the external sign; and which were communicated through the word, as the means of their conversion and progressive sanctification. (*Marg. Ref.*) Thus, as the heavenly Bridegroom, he prepares the whole multitude of his people, his one espoused bride, for the completion of that sacred union; that he may "present her to himself," as the object of his choice, the purchase of his blood, and the work of his grace, a glorious and glorified Church, not having one remaining spot of sin, or wrinkle of imperfection, or any thing of the kind: but made complete in holiness, without the least remaining blemish.

V. 28—31. The apostle, having described, in the most affecting manner, the effects of the love of Christ to his Church, and the subjection of the Church to his authority; here shows, that men ought to love their wives with a wise, holy, constant, and tender affection, in conformity to that perfect pattern: in every thing seeking their comfort and advantage, sympathizing in their sorrows, bearing with their infirmities, and endeavouring to promote their salvation and sanctification. They ought indeed to love them even as they do their own bodies: for so intimate and indissoluble is this endeared relation, in its original intention, and when properly entered into and attended to; that a man, in loving his wife, may be said to love himself, as her comfort and happiness are, and should be deemed, inseparable from his own. Now, no man in his senses can hate his own flesh, or take pleasure in wounding and paining it: but, self-love teaches him to nourish and cherish it; in the same manner that the Lord doth his Church, and every believer in it; all of whom he graciously considers as members of his body, and, as it were, a part of his flesh and of his bones. And thus ought men to love their wives, be tender and kind to them, and provide for their comfort. What an affecting view does this give us of Christ's love to his people! He loves, and nourishes, and cherishes them, as a man does his own body! To instruct us in these duties, the Lord, by the original institution of marriage, commanded men even to leave their parents, in order to join interests and affections with their wives, as if they became indissolubly one body, or one flesh, with them. All that was contrary to this, had been the effect of sin, and ought to be peculiarly guarded against: that so, every man should consider the wife of his choice, or rather of God's choice for him, as a part of himself, whom he cannot abuse without injuring himself, and who cannot be hurt without his sharing the harm; as if any part of his own body had been wounded.

V. 32, 33. This is indeed, says the apostle, a great mystery, I mean the union of Christ and his Church: nevertheless, to return to our subject, let every man in particular thence learn in what manner to love his wife, even as himself, and be supplied with motives so to do; and every woman to respect and honour the person and authority of the husband, as constituted her head by the law and providence of God. It is obvious, that there must, in all cases, be manifold defects and failures on both sides, in the present state of human nature; and often grievous offences may be committed: yet, this does not materially alter the duty of the other relation, (except in some cases elsewhere provided for.) (*Notes, Matt.* xix. 3—9. 1 *Cor.* vii.) Indeed, a great part of the difficulty and duty consists in persevering good behaviour, notwithstanding unsuitable returns. It is observable that the apostle says, "let every one love his *wife*," *not wives:* so that polygamy is not even supposed by the exhortation, to exist among Christians. *Mystery.* (32.) The Vulgate, or the old Latin version, exclusively used by the church of Rome, renders this, *sacrament;* which is the only scriptural reason, or shadow of reason, for the absurdity of numbering marriage among the sacraments, even while that Church considers the married state inconsistent with high attainments in holiness, forbids its priests to marry, and discourages marriage in various other ways! Many have enlarged on this *mystery*, namely the appoint-

CHAP. VI.

The apostle exhorts children and parents to their respective duties, 1—4; and also servants and masters, 5—9. He animates his brethren to resist their spiritual enemies, by putting on the whole armour of God, 10—17: and by persevering prayers; supplicating for all saints; and for him especially, that he might preach the Gospel with all boldness, 18—20. He commends Tychicus to them, and concludes with affectionate salutations, 21—24.

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ment of marriage in the garden of Eden, as a type or emblem of Christ and his Church; (for so they understand the passage.) The following quotation gives the substance of ancient and modern expositions of the passage in this particular. 'Adam, in whom the whole human 'race began, was a natural image of Christ, in whom the 'human race was to be restored: and his deep sleep, the 'opening of his side, and the formation of Eve of a rib 'taken out of his side, were fit emblems of Christ's death, 'of the opening of his side on the cross, and of the rege'neration of believers by his death. The love which 'Adam expressed towards Eve, and his union with her 'by marriage, were lively emblems of Christ's love to 'believers, and of his eternal union with them in one so'ciety after the resurrection. And Eve herself, who was 'formed of a rib taken from Adam's side, was a natural 'image of believers, who are regenerated, both in their 'body and mind, by the breaking of Christ's side on the 'cross. These circumstances we may suppose to prefigure 'that great event; and, by prefiguring it, to show that it 'was decreed of God from the beginning.' (*Macknight.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

Wicked men follow the example of their father the devil, and may be known as his progeny. Surely then the beloved children of God should imitate his holiness, and should especially walk in love with their brethren, their neighbours, and even with their enemies, as Christ hath loved them. The perfection and obligations of this example are infinite; so that there is no kind or degree of self-denying, liberal, or forgiving love, to which it will not direct and animate the grateful believer. We should always keep our character in mind, and inquire whether this or the other conduct "becometh saints:" this will teach us, not only that gross sensualities or avarice are utterly inconsistent with this relation to our God; but that every inexpedient indulgence, and every degree of selfishness, is to be avoided. It is not enough to avoid all filthiness and foolish talking; even witty and ingenious repartees, which would ensure applause, must be repressed, with great self-denial, when they in the least infringe upon purity, piety, or charity, and are unsuitable to the Christian's profession. Our social intercourse should be conducted in another manner, in subserviency to mutual improvement: which will best be promoted by declaring the loving kindness of the Lord, and in celebrating his praises. But we must not only specify what practices are wrong; in many things we must insist upon it, that they who do them have no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ; and warn men not to be deceived with vain words, and so emboldened to those crimes for which "the wrath "of God cometh on the children of disobedience;" that they may be put on their guard, and refuse to be partakers with them. The darkness of paganism, and even that of many nominal Christians, may seem to accord with such practices; but they, who profess the Gospel, should consider themselves as "light in the Lord;" and if they indeed are the children of light, the Spirit of God will lead them far from all such scenes, and cause them to bring forth the fruit of goodness, righteousness, and truth. Yet even *they* need exhortations to walk in the light, and to prove more fully "what is acceptable to the Lord;" to avoid all degrees of fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, and boldly to protest against them by word and deed; to let the light of their holy conversation so shine before men, that sinners may be convicted in their own consciences, even in respect of those secret crimes, of which it is a shame to speak, write, or preach, in a particular manner. For the holy converse and conduct of a consistent Christian, is of the nature of light; it manifests that the contrary conduct of others is inexcusable; and his very silence is often most emphatically eloquent. After the example therefore of prophets and apostles, we should call on those, who are asleep and dead in sin, to awake and arise, that Christ may give them light: and the Lord will employ such warnings and invitations, to quicken with life from the death of sin whom he will: even as he uses the further instructions of his ministers, to guide awakened persons in the paths of peace and holy obedience.

V. 15—20.

By the light of divine truth we should walk with accuracy and circumspection; redeeming our time from sloth, needless sleep, or recreation, and impertinent visits, for useful and important purposes; because life, health, liberty, and the use of our senses and understandings, are at all times uncertain. The world also is full of misery and iniquity; and there is "no work nor counsel in the grave, "whither we are going." Let us then acquaint ourselves with the will of our Lord, attend to his work, and wait for his coming. Thus we shall practically show our wisdom, while many prove their folly by talking about religion, without knowing or doing the will of Christ.— When we are afflicted or wearied, let us not procure a vain exhilaration by any degree of intemperance, which is hateful and pernicious, and ends in deeper dejection; but, by fervent prayer, let us seek to be filled with the Spirit, and to be satisfied with his holy consolations; and let us avoid whatever might grieve our gracious Comforter. Thus we shall be animated to "speak to each other in "Psalms, and Hymns, and spiritual songs;" and, at least, with the melody of a grateful heart, to give thanks always, for all things, to our God and Father, in the name of his

CHILDREN, [a] obey your parents [b] in the Lord: [c] for this is right.

2 [d] Honour thy father and mother, (which is the first commandment with promise,)

3 That it [e] may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

4 And, [f] ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: [g] but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

a Gen. xxviii. 7. xxxvii. 13. Lev. xix. 3. Deut. xxi. 18. 1 Sam. xvii. 20. Esth. ii. 20. Prov. i. 8. vi. 20. xxiii. 22. xxx. 17. Jer. xxxv. 14. Luke ii. 51. Col. iii. 20.——b 5. 6. Rom. xvi. 2. 1 Cor. xv. 58. Col. iii. 17, 18. 23, 24. 1 Pet. ii. 13. c Neh. ix. 13. Job xxxiii. 27. Ps. xix. 8. cxix. 75. 128. Hos. xiv. 9. Rom. vii. 12. xii. 2. 1 Tim. v. 4.——d Ex. xx. 12. Deut. xxvii. 16. Prov. xx. 20. Ez. xxii. 7. Mal. i. 6. Matt. xv. 4–6. Mark vii. 9—13. Rom. xiii. 7.

e Deut. iv. 40. v. 16. vi. 3. 18. xii. 25. 28. xxii. 7. Ruth iii. 1. Ps. cxxviii. 1, 2. Is. iii. 10. Jer. xlii. 6. f Gen. xxxi. 14, 15. 1 Sam. xx. 30–34. Col. iii. 21. g Gen. xviii. 19. Ex. xii. 26, 27. xiii. 14, 15. Deut. iv. 9. vi. 7. 20–24. xi. 19–21. Josh. iv. 6. 7. 21–24. xxiv. 15. 1 Chr. xxii. 10–13. xxviii. 9, 10. 20. xxix. 19. Ps. lxxi. 17, 18. lxxviii. 4—7. Prov. iv. 1–4. xix. 18. xxii. 6. 15. xxiii. 13, 14. xxix. 15. 17. Is. xxxviii. 19. 2 Tim. i. 5. iii. 15. Heb. xii. 7–10.

beloved Son, and thus anticipate the joys of heaven in the communion of the saints on earth.

V. 21—33.

If we all were subject one to another in the fear of God, and according to our several relations in life, society would appear like a well-organized body, and every individual would share the advantages. Every relative duty should be enforced by evangelical motives and examples.—The most entire submission of wives to their own husbands will be no infringement of their liberty, if performed for the Lord's sake, and after the example of the Church's obedience to him: especially if husbands also love their wives, after the pattern of Christ's love to his chosen people. He died for them, that he might sanctify and cleanse them, to be to him for an honour and praise to all eternity, and that he might be glorious in making them happy.—While we adore, and rejoice in, this condescending love, and press forward to that perfect holiness which is intended for us; and while we reverence both the mystery of this sacred union with the Lord, as members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones; and his loving authority over us, who nourisheth and cherisheth us, as a man doth his own flesh; let husbands hence learn how to love their wives, and to show themselves justly entitled to superiority by wisdom, joined with tender sympathy and patient care; and let wives hence learn to obey and reverence their husbands. If the original appointment of marriage, and the subject before us, were duly attended to, all harshness, tyranny, and unfaithfulness, must be excluded; for no man hateth his own flesh: and on the other hand, all contests for superiority, and unreasonable attachment to humour and inclination, as interfering with cheerful obedience, would be prevented. In short, were Christianity general, and Christians more attentive to the precepts of their Lord; harmony and affectionate confidence would sweeten domestic life, without any material interruption or alloy. But, as all are sinners, it behooves every individual to make many concessions and allowances, and to persevere in the duty of the relation, though attended with many a cross.—Thus the worst evils will be prevented; and even an offending or unbelieving partner may be won upon: whereas a retaliation of misconduct can only render disagreement perpetual, and tend to the most painful and disgraceful consequences.

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1—4. (*Note, Ex.* xx. 12.) The apostle next exhorted believers, who had parents living, to be obedient to them "in the Lord," for his sake, from gratitude to him, in obedience to his commands, and for the honour of his Gospel. This general exhortation was to be limited according to the ages and particular circumstances of children. Some, it is probable, had Gentile parents, and they ought not to obey them, when their commands contradicted those of Christ; yet it would be peculiarly incumbent on them to give up their own will in all things lawful, for the credit of Christianity. Obedience of children to parents, thus limited, is in itself equitable and reasonable, a debt due to the instruments of their existence, and the tender guardians of their infancy, and generally conducive to their good. Indeed, the sentiments of all nations coincide in this; and the law of God expressly commanded children to honour the persons and authority of both father and mother, and to requite their kindness, as they had opportunity and ability. This was placed in the decalogue as the first commandment of the second table, being the first of the relative duties, and the source of all the others; and a promise of long life in the land of Canaan was annexed to it, as given to the Israelites; which might be generally applied to Christians, and encourage them to expect temporal comfort and length of days, as a gracious recompense for their obedience unless the Lord should see good to reward it more liberally in another life. Indeed, it has been observed in every age, that they who were distinguished for filial obedience were remarkably prospered. The apostle also exhorted parents, (for though fathers are only mentioned, doubtless mothers also were intended,) to use their authority without rigour, lest their children should be discouraged, prejudiced against Christianity, or provoked to obstinacy and disobedience, which always would prove painful to the parents, and often ruinous to the children. The restraints, reproofs, and corrections of parents, ought therefore always to be used in a meek, affectionate, and forgiving disposition, while they diligently educated them in such a manner, and with such instructions, as might best initiate them in the knowledge of Christ and true religion, and gave them such friendly admonitions, as might guard them against the various snares of the world, and the temptations of Satan. In these exhortations the inferior relation is constantly mentioned first; perhaps because the duty of it is most contrary to corrupt nature: yet it ought to be attended to, even when the superiors neglect theirs. 'Make 'them to read the Scriptures, says Theophylact, which is 'the duty of all Christians: for is it not a shame to in'struct them in heathen authors, whence they may learn 'bad things, and not to instruct them in the oracles of 'God?' (*Whitby.*) This is an important remark: but immensely more is required, in catechizing and other instruction, in reproof, mild correction, example, conversation, watchfulness against every thing in word or deed unbecoming in the presence of children, seizing every opportunity of drawing their attention to the great truths and duties of religion, and illustrating the effects of wickedness, the

5 Servants, [h] be obedient to them that are *your* masters [i] according to the flesh, [k] with fear and trembling, [l] in singleness of your heart, [m] as unto Christ;

6 Not [n] with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, [o] doing the will of God [p] from the heart;

7 With [q] good-will doing service, [r] as to the Lord, and not to men:

8 Knowing that [s] whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, [t] whether *he be* bond or free.

9 And, [u] ye masters, do [x] the same things unto them, * forbearing threatening: [y] knowing that † your Master also is in heaven; [z] neither is there respect of persons with him.

10 ¶ [a] Finally, my brethren, [b] be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11 [c] Put on [d] the whole armour of God, that ye may be [e] able to stand against [f] the wiles of the devil.

12 For we [g] wrestle not [h] against ‡ flesh and blood, but against [i] principalities, against powers, [k] against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against § spiritual wickedness in ‖ high *places.*

13 Wherefore [l] take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand [m] in the evil day, and having * done all [n] to stand.

h Gen xvi 9. Ps. cxxiii 2. Mal. i 6 Matt vi 24 viii. 9 Acts x. 7. 8 Col i .2 1 Tim vi. 1—3. Tit ii. 9, 10. 1 Pet ii 18—21 i Philem 16 k 1 Cor. ii 3 2 Cor vii 15 Phil. ii 12. 1 Pet. iii 2 l 24. Josh. xxiv. 14 1 Chr xxix 17 Ps. lxxxvi 11. Matt vi. 22 Acts ii 46 2 Cor i 12. xi. 2, 3 m 1. 1 Cor. vii 22. Col. iii 17—24 n Phil ii. 12 Col iii 22. 1 Thes ii. 4. o v. 17. Matt. vii 21. xii 50. Col i. 9 iv 12 1 Thes iv 3 Heb x 36 xiii 21 1 Pet ii 15. iv. 2. 1 John ii. 17. p Jer. iii 10 xxiv. 7. Rom vi. 17 Col. iii. 23.——q Gen xxxi. 6 38—40 2 Kings v 2, 3 13.——r 5, 6. 1 Cor. x. 31.——s Prov xi 18 xxxiii. 18. Is. iii. 11. Matt v. 12 vi 1. 4. x. 41, 42. xvi. 27. Luke vi. 35 xiv. 14. Rom ii. 6—10. 2 Cor. v 10. Heb x 35. xi 26.——t Gal. iii 28. Col iii. 11.——u Lev. xix 13 xxv. 39—46 Deut. xv 11—16 xxiv 14, 15. Neh v. 5 8, 9 Job xxiv 10—12 xxxi 13—15 Is. xlvii. 6. lviii. 3—6. Am. viii. 4—7. Mal iii 5. Col iv 1 Jam. v. 4.——x 5—7. Matt. vii. 12. Luke vi. 31. Jam. ii 8 13——* Or, *moderating.* 1 Sam xxv. 17 Dan. iii 6 15 v 19, 20.——y Ps. cxl 12. Ec. v 8 Matt. xxiii. 8. 10 xxiv. 48—51 Luke xii. 45, 46. John xiii 13 1 Cor. vii. 22——† Some read, *both your and their Master.* 1 Cor. i. 2. Phil ii. 10, 11.

z *See on*, Acts x 34. Rom ii. 11. Col iii 25 a 2 Cor. xiii 11. Phil iii. 1. iv. 8 1 Pet. iii. 8 b i 19 iii. 16 Deut. xx. 3, 4. xxxi 23 Josh. i. 6, 7. 9. 1 Sam. xxiii. 16. 1 Chr xxviii 10 20. 2 Chr. xv. 7. Ps. cxxxviii 3. Is. xxxv 3, 4 xl 28—31. Hag ii. 4. Zech viii. 9, 13. 1 Cor xvi. 13. 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10. Phil. iv. 13 Col i. 11. 2 Tim ii 1. iv 17. 1 Pet. v 10. c iv 24 Rom. xiii. 14. Col. iii 10 d 13 Rom. xiii. 12. 2 Cor vi 7 x. 4. 1 Thes. v. 8 e 13. Luke xiv 29. 1 Cor. x. 13. Heb. vii 25. Jude 24. f iv 14 Mark xiii. 22. 2 Cor. ii 11. iv 4. xi. 3 13—15. 2 Thes. ii. 9—11. 1 Pet v 8 2 Pet ii 1—3 Rev ii. 24 xii. 9 xiii. 11—15 xix 20 xx. 2, 3 7. 8. g Luke xiii 24. 1 Cor. ix. 25—27. 2 Tim ii. 5 Heb xii 1. 4——h Matt. xvi. 17 1 Cor. xv 50. Gal. i 17.——‡ Gr *blood and flesh.*——i i. 21. iii. 10. Rom. viii 38 Col ii. 15. 1 Pet iii. 22.——k ii 2 Job ii 2. Luke xxii 53 John xii. 31 xiv 30. xvi 11 Acts xxvi. 18. 2 Cor. iv 4 Col i 13.——§ Or, *wicked spirits.*——‖ Or, *heavenly* *See on*, i. 3 l *See on*. 11—17——m v 16 Ec xii. 1 Am vi. 3 Luke viii 13 Rev. iii. 10——* Or, *overcome*——n Mal. iii. 2 Luke xxi 36. Col iv. 12 Rev vi 17.

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love of God, the state of the world, &c. indeed immensely more, than can be even hinted at in a note, is implied in this brief exhortation.

V. 5—9. St. Paul next exhorts servants, who had embraced Christianity, to be obedient to their own masters according to the flesh, or to whom they were subjected in temporal matters. In general, the servants, at that time, were slaves, the property of their masters; and often treated with great severity, though seldom with modern cruelty. But the apostles were ministers of religion, not politicians: they had not that influence among rulers and legislators, which would have been requisite for the abolition of slavery; and in that state of society, as to other things, this would not have been expedient, as God did not please miraculously to interpose in the case; and they did not deem it proper to exasperate their persecutors, by expressly contending against the lawfulness of slavery.—Yet both the law of love and the Gospel of grace tend to its abolition; and the universal prevalence of Christianity must annihilate it, with many other evils, which in the present state of things cannot wholly be avoided. In the wisdom of God, the apostles were left to take such matters as they found them, and to teach servants and masters their respective duties; in the performance of which, the evil would be mitigated; till in due time it should be extirpated by Christian legislators. Servants were therefore taught to obey their masters, not only with a respectful attention to their persons and authority, and a fear of displeasing them, but with a jealous and trembling fear of offending and dishonouring God by an improper behaviour. This was to be done with a single desire and aim to please Christ, their great and gracious Master, whom they obeyed, in conscientiously serving even an unreasonable and tyrannical earthly master. They were also to do their work, not as eye-servants, who are diligent in their master's presence and slothful in his absence, being only desirous of pleasing man, but as the servants of God, who heartily did his will even in their secular employments. Then they would cheerfully and assiduously do service to their masters, as endeavouring to please the Lord, and not men, in so doing: being assured, that whatever good action any man did, from Christian principles, it would be graciously recompensed by the Lord; and that a poor slave would be as much accepted, in performing the duty of his place, as any free man in his apparently more important services. On the other hand, believing masters ought to act from the same principles, and in the same conscientious manner, towards their servants, whether they were Christians or not: exercising their authority with humanity and gentleness; not only without inflicting rigorous punishments, but also forbearing to menace or terrify their servants, or to express any haughty or excessive anger to them, even when most evidently faulty. For though the laws of man gave them great power in this respect, yet they must remember, that they were accountable to the great Lord and Master of all for their use of it; who will deal with men according to their conduct towards their inferiors, and expects his people to copy the example of his lenity and mercy. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 10—13. The apostle here concludes his practical instructions, by a figurative exhortation, taken from military affairs. As the soldiers of Christ, the Ephesians were called to fight under his banner, against Satan, the world, and sin: but they were too weak in themselves for this conflict, and must therefore "be strong in the Lord," by a continual reliance on his mighty power for protection, support, and assistance. In the fulness of Christ, and in the graces of the Spirit, a panoply, or complete suit of armour, was provided for every believer: this, the Lord, as it were, held out to them, that, receiving it from him, they might put it on daily, in a diligent and watchful use of the appointed means. Thus armed, they might be able to stand against the assaults of Satan, by whatever artful

14 Stand therefore, [o] having your loins girt about with truth, and having on [p] the breast-plate of righteousness:

15 And [q] your feet shod with the preparation of [r] the gospel of peace;

16 Above all, taking [s] the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able [t] to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

17 And take [u] the helmet of salvation, and [x] the sword of the Spirit, [y] which is the word of God:

18 [z] Praying always with all prayer and [a] supplication [b] in the Spirit, and [c] watching thereunto with [d] all perseverance, and [e] supplication for all saints;

19 And [f] for me, that [g] utterance may

o v 13. Is. xi. 5. Luke xii. 35. 2 Cor. vi. 7. 1 Pet. i. 13 p Is. lix. 17. 1 Thes. v. 8 Rev ix 9 17. q Deut xxxiii 25. Cant. vii. 1 Hab. iii 19 Luke xv. 22. r Is lii. 7. Rom. x 15. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. s Gen. xv 1. Ps lvi 3, 4. 10, 11. Prov. xviii 10. 2 Cor. i 24 iv 13—18. Heb. vi. 17, 18. xi. 24—34. 1 Pet. v. 8, 9. 1 John v. 5.——t 1 Thes. v. 19.——u 1 Sam. xvii. 5. 38. Is. lix. 17. 1 Thes. v. 8.

x Is xlix. 2 Heb. iv. 12. Rev. i. 16. ii 16. xix. 15. y Matt. iv. 4. 7. 10, 11. Heb. xii. 5, 6 xiii 5. 6. Rev xii. 11 z i. 16 Job xxvii. 10. Ps. lv. 16, 17 Is xxvi. 16. Dan vi. 10. Luke ii 36, 37. xviii. 1. xxi. 36. Acts i. 14 vi. 4. x. 2 xii. 5. Rom. xii. 12. Phil. iv. 6. 1 Thes. v 17 2 Tim i. 3.——a 1 Kings viii. 52. 54 59 ix 3 Esth iv. 8. Dan ix. 20. Hos. xii 4 1 Tim ii. 1. Heb. v. 7 ——b ii 22. Zech. xii 10. Rom viii. 15. 26, 27. Gal. iv. 6 Jude 20 ——c Matt. xxvi. 41. Mark xiii. 33. xiv. 38 Luke xxi 36 xxii. 46. Col iv. 2. 1 Pet. iv. 7.———d Gen xxxii. 24—28. Matt. xv. 25—28. Luke xi. 5—8. xviii. 1—8 ——e *See on* f. 19.—iii. 8 18. Phil i. 4. Col. i. 4. Philem 5.————f Rom. xv. 30. 2 Cor. i 11. Phil. i. 19. Col. iv. 3. 1 Thes. v 25. 2. Thes. iii. 1. Philem 22. Heb. xiii. 18.———g Acts ii 4. 1 Cor. i. 5. 2 Cor. viii. 7.

methods he, or his instruments, attempted to obstruct their progress. For they, and all Christians, were called to conflict and wrestle, not only against their own in-dwelling corruptions, the opposition of persecutors, the enticements of wicked men, and the allurements of the world, but also against those invisible and formidable principalities and powers, who ruled the darkness of this world; even Satan and his angels; the great authors of man's ignorance, impiety, and iniquity, all over the earth. These might be called "spiritual wickedness *in high places*," not only as they held their empire in the air, according to the general opinion, and tempted men to wickedness, especially in their religion; but also as being the authors of all idolatry. They became proud rebels and apostates even in *heavenly places*; and being spiritual wickednesses in that holy world, they were cast out from thence; and had from the beginning opposed man's entrance into heaven by every means, which malice, capacity, or sagacity, could suggest. It was therefore necessary for all engaged in this warfare to be completely armed for the conflict with such powerful and determined enemies; that they might be able to stand in the evil day of peculiar temptation, or persecution, or at the approach of death. They must be prepared every day for the conflict, and would continually be called to resist their foes: but some days would peculiarly encourage or give advantage to Satan's assaults; and as they could not know before-hand when such occasions would be afforded him, they must, as vigilant and valiant soldiers, be always ready. That, thus "withstanding in the evil day," and having done all expected from them, they might stand victorious on the field of battle, and be approved by their great Commander.

V. 14—17. The minds of Christian soldiers ought to be fortified and prepared for the assault, by conscious sincerity in their profession, and by truth in their whole conversation; as the loins of soldiers were girded by their military belt, when they marched out to the battle. "Righteousness," or an habitual and conscientious obedience to the various commandments of God, should be their breast-plate, which would defend them from fatal wounds in the day of conflict: whereas conscious negligence and disobedience would render them afraid to face persecution or death in the cause of Christ. To stand their ground in such difficult situations, or to march forward in such rugged paths, their feet must be "shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace;" that is, their motives and encouragements to obedience, amidst temptations and persecutions, must be derived from a clear and comprehensive knowledge of the Gospel; through which God is revealed, as "in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," and actually at peace with every believer, notwithstanding past trangressions, and present defects and infirmities. This assurance would make obedience delightful, though self-denying, and animate the established believer to resist temptation, to endure tribulation, and to march through difficulties and enemies, in the cause of Christ and in the way to heaven. (*Note*, *Deut.* xxxiii. 25. *Luke* xv. 22.) Over all these faith must be placed as a *shield:* by crediting the testimony of God, realizing unseen objects, resting the soul on the promises, and relying on the power, truth, mercy, wisdom, grace, and providence of God, according to his word; they would be able to ward off the temptations of Satan, as soldiers received the darts of the enemy on their shields. The suggestions of the tempter would indeed often resemble darts, by the suddenness and violence with which they were injected, and *fiery*, or poisoned darts, by the fatal effects produced by them. For as poisoned darts would fatally inflame the blood of those wounded by them; so the suggestions of Satan would inflame the anger, pride, lust, avarice, or other corrupt propensities of the heart, unless immediately intercepted and extinguished by the shield of faith. This clause is often interpreted exclusively of those harassing temptations, by which hard thoughts of God, and horrid or desponding conclusions concerning themselves, are excited in men's minds: these lead to immense distress, and eventually to guilt; and faith in God's word must extinguish them: yet, probably, the apostle meant the words in a more comprehensive sense. To all this, *Hope*, or a scriptural expectation of victory and eternal glory, must supply the place of a helmet, to cover the head in the day of battle; by couteracting that discouragement, which doubtfulness of the event would induce, in times of sharp temptation: so that it might be called the helmet of salvation, as nothing could be courageously done without it. To complete the whole, the word of God must serve the Christian soldier for a sword: an exact and comprehensive acquaintance with its various doctrines, promises, precepts, warnings, and a readiness at recollecting, and adducing, pertinent texts upon every emergency, would drive the tempter to a distance, and procure a final victory over him. (*Notes*, *Matt.* iv. 1—11.) Thus the whole suit of armour would be complete: for no covering was provided for the back, as victory must be sought by valour, not by cowardice.

be given unto me, [h] that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known [i] the mystery of the gospel:

20 For which [k] I am an ambassador [l] in * bonds: that † therein I may speak [m] boldly, as I ought to speak.

21 ¶ But [n] that ye also may know my affairs, *and* how I do, [o] Tychicus, [p] a beloved brother, and [q] faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things:

22 Whom [r] I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and *that* he might comfort your hearts.

23 [s] Peace *be* to the brethren, [t] and love with faith, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

24 [u] Grace *be* with all them that [x] love our Lord Jesus Christ ‡ in [y] sincerity. [z] Amen.

h Acts iv. 13. 29. 31 ix. 27. 29. xiii. 46 xiv. 3 xviii 26. xix 8. xxviii. 31. 2 Cor iii. 12 *Marg.* vii. 4 Phil i. 20. 1 Thes. ii 2.
i i. 9. iii 3, 4. 1 Cor. ii. 7. iv. 1 Col. i. 26, 27. ii. 2. 1 Tim. iii. 16.
k Prov xiii. 17. Is. xxxiii. 7 2 Cor. v. 20
l *See on* iii. 1. iv. 1. 2 Sam. x. 2—6.
* Or, *a chain.*
Acts xxviii 20. 2 Tim. i. 16.——† Or, *thereof* ——m *See on* h. 19.—Jer i. 7, 8. 17. Ez. ii. 4—7. Matt. x. 27, 28. Acts v. 29 Col. iv. 4. 1 John iii 16 Jude 3.——n Phil. i. 12 Col iv. 7.——o Acts xx. 4. 2 Tim. iv 12. Tit. iii 12.——p Col iv. 9. Philem. 16. 2 Pet. iii. 15.——q 1 Cor. iv. 17. Col. i. 7. 1 Tim. iv. 6 1 Pet. v. 12.

r Phil. ii. 19 25. Col. iv. 8. 1 Thes. iii 2. 2 Thes. ii. 17.
s *See on* Rom. i. 7. 1 Cor. i. 3— Gen. xliii. 23. 1 Sam. xxv. 6. Ps. cxxii. 6—9. John xiv. 27. Gal. vi. 16. 1 Pet. v. 14. Rev. i. 4.
t Gal. v. 6. 1 Thes. i. 3. v. 8. 2 Thes. i. 3. 1 Tim. i. 14. Philem. 5—7
u Col. iv. 18. 2 Tim. iv. 22.
Tit iii. 15. Heb. xiii. 25. 1 Pet. v. 14 ——x *See on* John xxi, 15—17. 1 Cor. xvi. 22. ‡ Or, *with incorruption.* Tit. ii. 7 ——y Matt. xxii. 37. 2 Cor. viii. 8. 12.——z *See on* Matt. vi. 13. xxviii. 20.

V. 18—20. To give all the rest their full efficacy to procure, keep bright, and put on this suit of armour, the soldiers of Christ must "pray always;" constantly, frequently, at stated times, in occasional ejaculations, and more abundantly in the prospect, or in the hour, of temptation; using all kinds of prayer and supplication, in dependence on the Holy Spirit, and according to his teaching and influences; and "watching unto it," against remissness, discouragement, weariness, interruptions, and unseasonable engagement: "with all perseverance;" seeing Satan would peculiarly tempt them to negligence in this matter, that he might obtain further advantages against them. They must also remember to help one another, and all the saints, by their prayers for them without distinction. Especially the apostle entreated their prayers for him, that he might have opportunity and liberty of spirit, boldly to declare his important message in the face of danger and death; for though he was Christ's ambassador of peace to the Gentiles, he was at that time executing his commission in confinement and in fetters: so greatly was his glorious Lord despised among men! He, however, did not regard this degradation, or feel any anxiety about his liberty, provided he were enabled to speak with becoming boldness, firmness, and impartiality, when called to bear testimony to the truth. The reader, who is acquainted with what hath been written on this subject, will perceive that, in some particulars, the exposition here given rather varies from that of approved writers. Perhaps zeal for particular doctrines sometimes renders pious men too apt to explain every expression in support of them; though it weakens the proof of them, makes one part of such passages coincide with the other by a needless repetition, and leaves out other matters equally important. Indeed, it may be apprehended, that by adducing every thing which can be thought of, in explaining such metaphors, many things are supposed to be contained in them, which were entirely out of the writer's mind when he penned them. *Bonds.* Or, in a chain. 'The apostle was allowed to live at 'Rome, with a soldier that kept him. To this soldier he 'was tied with a chain, fixed on his right wrist, and fas'tened to the soldier's left arm; and the chain being of a 'convenient length, the two could walk together with 'ease. The soldiers, who were thus employed, no doubt 'reaped great benefit from the apostle's conversation and 'preaching.' (*Macknight.*) This is probable, and the thought is worthy of attention; but the words, no doubt, imply more than we know on the subject.

V. 21—24. The apostle knew that the Ephesians would be anxious to know many things concerning him; but it was not requisite for him to write on that subject, as he had sent, with this epistle, a brother and minister competent to inform them, and to encourage and edify them by his converse and preaching. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'He wished the Ephe'sians, (as well as the Philippians and Colossians;) to know 'what success he had had in preaching at Rome, what 'opposition he had met with, what comfort he enjoyed 'under his sufferings, what converts he had made to 'Christ, and in what manner the evidences of the Gospel 'affected the minds of the inhabitants of Rome.' (*Macknight.*) The desire and prayer of the apostle was, that peace with God, their consciences, and each other, as connected with faith and love, and communicated from God the Father and the Lord Jesus, might abound to all the brethren. At the same time he gave them his apostolical blessing in such language, as showed that the grace or special favour and mercy of God would be on all them, and them only, who loved Christ, in sincerity, and in an uncorrupt and holy manner. (*Note,* 1 *Cor.* xvi. 21—24.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

The Gospel furnishes believers with most efficacious motives to all relative duties; and the law directs those, whom Christ hath redeemed from its curse, in what manner they may adorn his doctrine and show forth his praise; for all its commandments are right and beneficial. When children honour and obey their parents, they take a proper method to obtain temporal comfort and prosperity; and when they do it "in the Lord," it forms an evidence of their interest in his promises, which will be fulfilled in their everlasting felicity. Similar motives should induce parents to attend diligently to the education of their children, with meekness, prudence, and affection; that they may not provoke them to wrath, or tempt them to sin; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. But, alas, how sadly is this duty neglected, even among professors of the Gospel! How many parents, even among professed Christians, by their imprudence, violent passions, harshness, or unforgiving temper and conduct, disgust their children, prejudice them against religion, render them uncomfortable in their presence, and consequently disposed to prefer almost any other company! This does not excuse the children's disobedience; but it awfully occasions it. On the other hand, how commonly do we see more regard paid to every kind of instruction, or trifling embellishment, than to their religious principles and conduct! So that, too often, the education of children leads them to those habits, notions, or connexions, which make way for their subsequent ungodliness, infidelity, dissipation, licentiousness, or avarice, by which they ruin themselves, and propagate impiety, vice, and misery, in an accumulating progression. They who fear God, and love their children, should watch and pray, and even tremble, lest they should thus prove the occasion of condemnation to their own offspring; for though God alone can change the heart, yet he commonly does it by means of the good instructions and example of parents. and in answer to their fervent prayers. Whereas they, whose chief anxiety seems to be that their children may be wealthy, polite, and accomplished, whatever be the event to their souls, can have no ground to expect the blessing of God upon them. Few masters will refuse their approbation to the injunctions here laid upon their servants, or servants their approbation to the exhortations given to their masters: but, alas! they who ought to obey the precept are prone to object to it, or to explain it slightly.—The greater advantages, however, servants now enjoy, the more cheerfully should they yield obedience and perform service to their own masters; and the greater cautions should they use, not to dishonour the Gospel by a negligent, refractory, or unfaithful behaviour. They ought especially to avoid whatever may give plausibility to the imputation of their being mere eye- servants and men-pleasers, but should always act as in the fear of God, and with "good-will do service, as unto the Lord, and not unto "men." This will engage the servants of Christ to diligence in their work, even if their earthly masters behave ill to them, and it will sanctify all their employments, and secure them a gracious recompense from the Lord. The same principles will render masters considerate, kind, gentle, and conscientious in their whole deportment, remembering that they also have a Master in heaven, who is no respecter of persons. And what orderly and happy families will those be, where relative duties are thus attended to!

V. 10—17.

If we would serve the Lord in this evil world, we must depend on him for strength, as well as for instruction, and a merciful acceptance. Our enemies indeed are *mighty*, and we are without strength; but our Redeemer is *almighty*, and in the power of his might we may overcome all that oppose our course. Let us then daily put on the armour which the Captain of our salvation hath prepared for us; that, being sober and vigilant, and always ready for the battle, we may be "able to stand against all the wiles of "the devil." The potent rulers of the darkness of this world, who wrought spiritual wickedness in heaven, will oppose our march to that inheritance which they have lost, and endeavour to bring us to that hell to which they are condemned. They often have powerful allies in the principalities of the earth, and wicked men always fight under their banner; but our flesh, the corrupt nature, the traitor in the camp, is our most dangerous foe; while fear o present suffering, and desire of present gratification, continually war against our souls. We must therefore engage in this warfare as men in earnest, continually expecting the onset of our foes, either by open violence, or deep-laid stratagems. Some fiery darts will every day be thrown at us, to inflame our passions or distress our hearts; but evil days of peculiar danger and difficulty must be expected, and we shall not be able to withstand in them, and, having done all, to stand as conquerors before our Captain, unless we be habitually armed for the fight. The soldier, who is *secure* in the enemy's country, will probably be assaulted and shamefully worsted when he least expects it. (*Notes*, &c. 2 *Sam*. xi. *Matt*. xxvi. 40—43. 69—75.) Habitual sincerity in professing and obeying the truth, and uprightness towards God and man, must be the girdle of our loins, and the breast-plate in this important warfare; but then "our feet must also be shod with the preparation of the "Gospel of peace." In the constant exercise of vigorous faith and lively hope, we shall possess our impenetrable shield and helmet of salvation; while with "the sword of "the Spirit," even the word of truth, we may drive our enemies before us, and seek the victory for ourselves and our fellow combatants. Thus armed and praying always with all earnestness by the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance," we shall be made "more "than conquerors, through him that loved us."

V. 18—24.

All the saints are our fellow-soldiers in our spiritual warfare, though divided into different battalions, distinguishable by a few unimportant externals, and we must help them all with our supplications; for general success against the powers of darkness, as well as personal victory, should be our noble ambition. But all Christians are bound in a peculiar manner to pray for the ministers of the Gospel, as they are exposed to the special rage of the enemy: when they fall, it is "as when a standard-bearer "fainteth," and their honourable conduct is of the greatest importance to the triumph of the Gospel. Those ministers especially, who are exposed to great hardships and perils in their work, have a claim to the prayers of their brethren. For the ambassadors of peace from the Lord to his rebellious creatures have often been cast into prison, and put to death as criminals! It is peculiarly desirable that utterance should be given them in perilous situations, that they may boldly declare the mystery of the Gospel: for the more boldly they speak, in consistency with the meekness of wisdom and love, the better do they perform their work. Men of this stamp rather desire to make full proof of their ministry, than to enjoy personal ease or liberty; their own affairs will be inconsiderable in their judgment, compared with the success of the Gospel. They will, however, greatly rejoice to have beloved brethren and faithful ministers, who are able to comfort and establish the people in their absence; and while they wish for peace, with faith and love, to all that profess the Gospel, they must also remind them that grace will be with all them, and them only, who "love the Lord Jesus Christ "in sincerity."

THE
EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO THE
PHILIPPIANS.

The manner in which the apostle and his associates were led to pass over from Asia into Europe, and to begin their labours at Philippi, in Macedonia; as well as their success, and the persecution by which Paul and Silas were driven thence, have been already considered. (Notes, Acts, &c. xvi.) *The apostle had once afterwards visited Philippi, though few particulars are recorded.* (Note, Acts xx. 1—6.) *As this epistle was, manifestly, written from Rome, and during the latter part of the apostle's first imprisonment in that city; nearly twelve years had passed since he first preached at Philippi: but the conduct of the Christians there had uniformly been so exemplary, and their grateful affection to him so fully evinced, that he had only to rejoice over them with heartfelt gratitude, while he poured out his prayers for them; and affectionately animated them to persevere and press forward in their heavenly course. Some cautions indeed, against deceivers of different descriptions, whose base conduct and awful doom he declares in most expressive terms, are joined with his exhortations. Not one censure, however, is passed, or implied, on any of the Philippians; but unqualified commendation and confidence.* (Note, Rev. ii. 8—11.) *It is evident, that Epaphroditus, who had been sent with a supply of money to the apostle at Rome; and who seems to have been a pastor, and perhaps the principal pastor, of the Church, conveyed the epistle to Philippi. He had, either by his journey to Rome, or by his zealous labours, in assisting the apostle, when in that city, brought a dangerous sickness upon himself; the tidings of which so afflicted the Philippians, and their sorrow, when made known to Epaphroditus, so distressed him; that the apostle was induced to send him back sooner than he had intended, though to his own inconvenience. The subjects treated on, and the instructions to be deduced from them, need not be anticipated.* (Note, ii. 24—30.) *It is undeniable, that the epistle was not sent long before the two years of the apostle's imprisonment at Rome were ended; which the Oxford Bible supposes to have taken place about the close of A. D.* 65. *According to this, I have dated the epistle, (though many fix an earlier date for it,) on a full conviction, that more years were spent in the various labours of this great apostle, than are generally supposed; yet, at the same time, not considering the subject as of great importance.*

CHAP. I.

The apostle addresses the Philippians, 1, 2: *showing his thankfulness to God for their fellowship in the Gospel to that time; his love to them; and his confidence in them, as to the future,* 3—8; *and states the blessings for which he prayed in their behalf,* 9—11. *He informs them, that his imprisonment at Rome had conduced to the furtherance of the Gospel,* 12, 13: *so that many had been rendered more bold in preaching it; in which he greatly rejoices, though some did it from corrupt motives,* 14—18; *knowing that this will turn to his salvation, and trusting that Christ will be magnified in his body, whether by life or death,* 19, 20. *He declares that he is prepared for either event; that to depart and be with Christ would be far better for him; but that, as his life would be useful to them, he doubts in his choice, and supposes that he shall live, and be set at liberty, that he may further their joy of faith, by coming to them,* 21—26. *He exhorts them to walk worthy of their profession; to be of one mind, in striving for the gospel; and to suffer cheerfully for Christ, as they had already been called to do,* 27—30.

PAUL[a] and [b] Timotheus, [c] the servants of Jesus Christ, to all [d] the saints in Christ Jesus which are at [e] Philippi, with [f] the bishops [g] and deacons:

2 [h] Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 I [i] thank my God [k] upon every * remembrance of you,

4 Always [l] in every prayer of mine for you all, making request [m] with joy,

5 For [n] your fellowship in the gospel, from the first day until now;

6 Being [o] confident of this very thing, that he which hath [p] begun a good work in you, [q] will † perform *it* until [r] the day of Jesus Christ:

a *See on,* Rom i. 1. 1 Cor. i. 1

b Acts xvi. 1—3. 1 Cor xvi 10. 2 Cor i. 1. Col. i. 1. 1 Thes. i. 1. 2 Thes i 1. 1 Tim. i. 2. Heb. xiii. 23.

c Mark xiii. 34. John xii. 26. Tit. i. 1. Jam i. 1. 2 Pet. i 1. Jude 1. Rev. i. 1. xix 10 xxii. 9.

d Rom i. 7. 1 Cor. i. 2. 2 Cor. i 1. Eph. i 1. 15. Thes 2. i 10

e Acts xvi 12. &c 1 Thes. ii. 2.

f Acts i. 20. 1 Tim. iii. 1, 2. Tit. i 7. 1 Pet. ii. 25. Rev. i. 20. ii. 1 8. 12.

g Acts vi 1—7. 1 Tim. iii 8. 10. 12. 13

h *See on,* Rom i. 7.

i *See on,* Rom. i. 8. vi. 17. 1 Cor. i. 4

k Eph. i. 15, 16. Col. i. 3, 4. 1 Thes i. 2, 3. iii 9. 2 Thes i. 3. 2 Tim i. 3. Philem 4, 5.

* Or, *mention.*

l 9—11. *See on,* Rom i 9.

m ii. 2 iii. 18 iv. 1 Luke xv 7. 10. Col. ii 5 1 Thes ii. 19, 20 Philem 7 2 John 4 ——n 7. Acts xvi. 15 Rom xi. 17. xv. 27. 1 Cor i. 9. Eph ii. 19—22. iii 6 Col. i. 21—23. Philem 17. Heb. iii 14 2 Pet i. 1 1 John i. 3. 7.

o 2 Cor. i. 15 ii. 3. vii. 16 ix. 4. Gal. v. 10 2 Thes. iii. 4. Philem 21. ——p 29. ii. 13. Acts xi. 18 xvi 14. Rom viii 28—30. Eph ii 4—10. Col ii. 12. 2 Thes ii. 13, 14 Tit. iii. 4—6 Heb. xiii. 20, 21 Jam. i. 16—18. 1 Pet. i. 2, 3 ——q Ps. cxxxviii. 8. Eph. iv. 12. 1 Thes. v. 23, 24. 2 Thes. i. 11. 1 Pet. v. 10. ——† Or, *finish it.* Heb. xii. 3. ——r 10. *See on,* 1 Cor. i. 8.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1. As St. Paul's apostleship had never been called in question at Philippi, and as he wrote this epistle not only in his own name, but in that of Timothy who was then at Rome with him, he styles himself and Timothy the *servants of Christ.* He addressed himself to "the saints at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:" hence we learn that the distinction between bishops and presbyters was not then generally established; but that the pastors of the Church were distinguished from the deacons, who managed the secular matters and the charities of the Church. (*Notes, Acts* vi. 1—7. xx. 17—28. 1 *Tim.* iii. 1—7.) Much labour and learning have, indeed, been employed to set aside this conclusion; but with little success, even by the allowance of decided Episcopalians. 'Though it be generally resolved, that the 'word *bishop* and *elder* are equivalent in scripture; yet 'this is not to be understood so that either, or both of 'them, signifies indifferently those whom we now call '*presbyters;* but that they both signify *bishops,* one settled 'in each Church by the apostles, there being no use of 'the second order in the Church, till the numbers of 'believers increased.' (*Hammond.*) Beyond doubt, the apostle ordained more than one, either bishops or presbyters, in some of the churches. (*Marg. Ref.*) But this learned expositor did not perceive that one bishop, without any presbyters under him, comes to precisely the same thing, as one presbyter, without any bishop over him. Till the churches were multiplied, the bishops and presbyters were the same; but afterwards, probably in the times of the apostles, the senior or more eminent presbyter was called *episcopus,* or *overseer,* not of the Church only, but also of its pastors.

V. 3—6. The converstion and subsequent good conduct of the Philippians never occurred to the apostle's mind, (and they would occur very frequently,) without animating him to thank God in their behalf; so that "always, in every prayer of his," secret or social, he made request for them, with such lively emotions of joy, as helped to solace him in his confinement. He thanked God for their fellowship in the Gospel, and its blessings, from the first day of their conversion to that present time, (which was about twelve years,) without having turned aside or grown remiss in their profession. (*Note,* 1 *Cor.* i. 4—9.) He was therefore confident, that he, even God the Spirit, who had begun the good work of sanctification in their souls, would carry it on, and perform it, till the perfection of their redemption in body and soul, at the day of Christ. Some learned men render the words here translated "*fellowship* in the gospel," *communication towards the gospel;* and understand them of the liberality which the Philippians had shown towards the apostle.—But this, in itself, was a cause of gratitude to God vastly inferior to the conversion of very many souls, to partake of all the blessings and salvation of Christ; the sentiment is not at all in the apostle's manner in other epistles, or even in the other parts of the epistle, where he mentions that subject openly and perspicuously; the word κοινωνια, far more frequently at least, means *participation,* than *communication;* and even when it has the latter meaning, it implies that the giver made the receiver his *partner,* or a *sharer* with him in his abundance; and

7 Even as [s] it is meet for me to think this of you all, [t] because * I have you in my heart, inasmuch [u] as both in my bonds, [x] and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are † partakers of my grace.

8 For [y] God is my record, [z] how greatly I long after you all [a] in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

9 And [b] this I pray, that [c] your love may abound yet more and more, [d] in knowledge, and *in* all ‡ judgment;

10 That [e] ye may § approve things that are excellent; [f] that ye may be sincere, [g] and without offence, [h] till the day of Christ;

11 Being [i] filled with the fruits of righteousness, which [k] are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

s 1 Cor. xiii. 7. 1 Thes. i. 2—5. v. 5 Heb. vi. 9, 10.
t 2 Cor. iii. 2. vii. 3.
* Or, *ye have me in your heart.* Gal. v. 6 1 John iii. 14.
u Acts xvi. 23—25. xx. 23 Eph. iii. 1. iv 1 vi. 20. 2 Tim. i. 8. ii 9. Heb x. 33, 34.
x 17. iv 14
† Or, *partakers with me of grace. See on,* 5. 1 Cor. ix. 23. Heb. iii 1. 1 Pet. iv. 13. v. 1.——y *See on.* Rom i. 9. ix. 1. Gal. i. 20.——z ii. 26. iv. 1 2 Cor xiii. 9. Gal iv 19 Col ii. 1. 1 Thes. ii 8. 2 Tim. i. 4.——a ii. 1. Is. xvi 11. lxiii. 15 Jer. xxxi. 20. Luke i 78. *Marg.* 2 Cor. vi. 12. vii. 15 *Marg.* Col. iii. 12. Philem. 12. 20. 1 John iii. 17.——b *See on,* 4——c iii. 15, 16. Job xvii 9. Prov. iv. 18. Matt. xiii. 31—33. 2 Cor. viii 7. 1 Thes. iii. 12. iv. 1. 9, 10. 2 Thes. i. 3. 1 Pet. i. 22.
d 1 Cor. xiv. 20. Eph. v 17 Col. i. 9 iii. 10 2 Pet. i. 5, 6 iii 18.
‡ Or, *sense.* Heb v. 14 *Gr.*
e Is. vii 15, 16. Am. v. 14, 15. Mic iii. 2. John iii. 20. Rom ii. 18. vii. 16. 22. viii. 7. xii. 2 9.
§ Or. *try things that differ* Job xii 11 xxxiv. 3. Rom. xii. 2. 2 Cor. xi. 13—15. Eph. v 10 1 Thes. v. 21 Heb v 12—14 1 John iv. 1. Rev. ii 2——f 16 Gen. xx. 5. Josh. xiv. 14. John i. 47. 2 Cor. i. 12 ii. 17. viii. 8 Eph. iv. 15. *Marg.* vi 24.——g Matt. xvi 23. xviii 6. 7. xxvi. 33 Rom xiv. 20, 21. xvi. 17. 1 Cor. viii. 13. x. 32. 2 Cor. vi. 3 Gal. v. 11, 1 Thes. iii. 13.——h *See on,* 1 Cor. i. 9——i iv. 17. Ps i. 3. xcii. 12, 13 Is v. 2. Luke xiii. 6—9. John xv 2. 8. 16. Rom. vi 22. xv. 28. 2 Cor. ix 10. Gal. v. 22. 23. Eph. v. 9. Col i 6. 10. Heb. xii. 11. Jam iii. 17, 18.——k Ps xcii. 14, 15. Is. lx. 21. lxi 3 11. Matt. v 16. John xv. 4, 5. 8. 1 Cor x. 31. 2 Thes. i. 12. Heb. xiii. 15, 16. 1 Pet. ii. 5 9. 12. iv. 10, 11. 14.

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the verb κοινωνεω in this resembles it, as also the other words from the same root. (iii. 10. iv. 15. *Matt.* xxiii. 30. *Luke* v. 10. *Acts* ii. 42. *Rom.* xii. 13. xv. 26, 27. 1 *Cor.* i. 9. x. 16. 18. 20. 2 *Cor.* i. 7. viii. 4. 23. xiii. 14. *Gal.* ii. 9. vi. 6. 1 *Tim.* v. 22. vi. 18. *Philem.* 6. 17. *Heb.* ii. 14. x. 33. xiii. 16. 1. *Pet.* v. 1. 2 *Pet.* i. 4. 1 *John* i. 3. 6, 7. 2 *John* 11.) These are nearly all the places in which this word, and those from the same root, occur in the New Testament; and it is evident that in most places it means *partnership*, or *participation;* and in the rest implies such a communication as admits others to share with the givers. 'To have all things common, 'κοινα.' (*Leigh.*) In not one of them does it clearly denote a number of persons joining together to raise a sum of money; as has been in this place interpreted, both in ancient and modern times, though it evidently enervates and obscures the sense. *The day,* &c. (6.)—'The Spirit of God will not desert us to the end, until 'even our mortal bodies, being restored to life and glori-'fied, shall stand in judgment before Christ.' (*Beza.*)—

V. 7, 8. Many who had made a credible profession of Christianity afterwards fell away, having "no root in "themselves;" yet it was meet for the apostle to hope better things of the Philippians, and to be satisfied that a good work of new creation had indeed been wrought upon them; for their long continued consistency of conduct had given them a peculiar place *in his heart;* or, as it may be rendered, they had shown that they had *had him in their hearts,* and had abundantly evinced their love to Christ by their kindness to his afflicted servant. During his imprisonment they had cordially sympathized with him, and endeavoured to alleviate his sufferings; and in all that he undertook for the defence and confirmation of the Gospel, they had concurred with him, and shown themselves partakers of the same grace which had been bestowed upon him, acting from the same holy principles, and returning his love with reciprocal affection. Indeed, God was witness how greatly he longed after them, with a holy, tender, and compassionate affection, like that of Christ to his people; how he longed to see them, and how gladly he would exert himself in any self-denying services, by which he might be further useful to them in their spiritual concerns.

V. 9—11. The apostle next gave the Philippians a compendious account of his constant prayers for them.—He was confident that they were true believers, and "loved the Lord Jesus in sincerity; and he therefore prayed that love of him, his cause, people, truths, and ordinances, of the holy character, law, and government of God, and of all men for his sake, might "*abound* more "and more," in all its varied exercises and happy effects; and that it might be regulated by an enlarged and exact knowledge of divine things; and by that sound judgment, which was the result of a holy relish for spiritual excellency, a matured discernment in the various parts of religion, and deep experience of its power in their own hearts. For when these concur, they enable the Christian to judge, as it were, *extempore,* in a variety of cases; even as the healthy eye distinguishes objects, the ear sounds, and the palate meats. Thus false affections, unjustifiable measures and enthusiasm, would be prevented, and all those evils into which vehement zeal, without proportionable knowledge and judgment, betrayed men, to the scandal of the Gospel and the division of the Church; and their abundant love would be directed in forming and executing designs of extensive usefulness. He further prayed, that they might be enabled to *distinguish things that differed,* and so to guard against counterfeit revelations, false affections, and all those specious errors and evils, by which Satan and his ministers imposed upon the unwary; thus they would choose and "approve things that "were excellent," and reject others, however plausibly stated. The marginal reading, "Try," or *prove* things "which differ," seems more exact than that inserted in the text. (*Marg. Ref.*) He also prayed that they might be "sincere," not only as true believers, but as uncorrupted with base alloy, whether of false doctrine, superstition, or a worldly spirit and conduct. The original word is taken from any transparent object being held in the light of the sun, by which every mote or atom of dross becomes visible. The word *sincere,* derived from the Latin, is *mel sine cerâ, honey without wax,* or entirely pure and unmixed. If the Philippians were thus *sincere,* the apostle trusted, that, according to his prayers for them, they would be "without offence, &c.;" neither stumbling at the scandals laid in their way by others, nor misleading or grieving their brethren, or causing their neighbours to stumble at the word by their misconduct; for both the active and passive sense may be implied. Accordingly, he further prayed that each of them might be thus upheld, till he should honourably finish his course; and even that the Church of Philippi might be thus preserved through

12 ¶ But I would ye should understand, brethren, [l] that the things *which happened* unto me, have fallen out [m] rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;

13 So that [n] my bonds * in Christ are manifest in all † the palace, and ‡ in all other *places*;

14 And many of the [o] brethren in the Lord, [p] waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word [q] without fear.

15 Some indeed [r] preach Christ [s] even of envy and strife; [t] and some also of good-will:

16 The one preach Christ of contention, [u] not sincerely, [x] supposing to add affliction to my bonds.

17 But the other of love, knowing that [y] I am set for the defence of the gospel.

18 [z] What then? Notwithstanding, every way, [a] whether in pretence, or in truth, [b] Christ is preached; [c] and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

19 For [d] I know that this shall turn to my salvation [e] through your prayer, and the supply of [f] the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

20 According to my [g] earnest expectation, and *my* hope, that [h] in nothing I

[l] Acts xxi 28, &c. xxii—xxviii
[m] Ex. xviii. 11. Esth ix. 1. Ps. lxxvi 10. Acts viii 4 xi 19—21. Rom viii. 28. 37 2 Tim ii. 9.
[n] Acts xx 23, 24 xxi. 11—13. xxvi. 29 31. xxviii. 17. 20. Eph iii 1 iv. 1. vi. 20. Col iv. 3. 18.
* Or, *for Christ.* 1 Pet iv 12—16
† Or, *Cæsar's court.* iv 22.
‡ Or, *to all others,* 1 Thes. i 8, 9.
[o] iv. 1 Col. i. 7.
[p] Acts iv. 23—31. 2 Cor. i. 3—7. Eph. iii. 13. vi. 19, 20. Col iv. 4. 1 Thes. ii 2.
[q] Luke i 74. xii. 5—7
[r] 16 18. Acts v. 42 viii 7. 35 ix 20. x 36. xi. 20 1 Cor. i. 23. 2 Cor. i. 10. iv 5. 1 Tim iii. 16
[s] ii. 3. Matt xxiii. 5 Rom xvi. 17, 18. 1 Cor. iii. 3, 4. xiii. 3. 2 Cor. xii. 20 Gal ii. 4 Jam. iv. 5, 6.——[t] 17. 1 Pet v 2—4.

[u] *See on,* r. 10. 2 Cor ii. 17 iv 1. 2.
[x] Job vi. 14 xvi. 4. Ps. lxix 26.
[y] 7. Rom. i. 13—17. 1 Cor ix. 16, 17. Gal. ii. 7, 8. 1 Tim. ii. 7. 2 Tim. i. 11, 12. iv. 6, 7 Luke xxi. 14. Acts xxii 1 xxvi 1. 24 2 Tim. iv. 16 *Gr.*
[z] Rom. iii 9. vi. 15 1 Cor. x 19. xiv 15.
[a] 14—17. Matt. xxiii. 14. Mark xii. 40.
[b] *See on,* r. 15.
[c] Mark ix. 38—40. Luke ix 49, 50. 1 Cor. xv. 11. 2 John 9—11
[d] Rom. viii 28. 2 Cor. iv. 17. 1 Pet. i 7—9.
[e] 2 Cor i. 11. Eph. vi 18, 19.
[f] Rom. viii 9. Gal. iv 6. 1 Pet. i 11.——[g] Ps. lxii. 5. Prov. x. 28. xxiii. 18 Rom. viii. 19——[h] Ps. xxv. 2 cxix. 80 116. Is. xlv. 17 l. 7 liv. 4 Rom. v. 5. ix. 33 2 Cor vii. 14. x 8. 1 Pet. iv. 16. 1 John ii. 28.

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successive generations, until the day of Christ: and that "trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD," might not only be in some measure fruitful; but that they might resemble those trees, which are laden with fruit on every bough; being filled with all holy tempers, all kinds of good works, all the fruits of the Spirit, through every day of their future lives, in the full improvement of their talents, and according to the duties of their several relations. For these good fruits would not only be beneficial to men, and eventually advantageous to themselves; but, through Christ, as the effects of his grace, and accepted through his mediation, they would redound to the praise and honour of God, adorning and recommending the Gospel, silencing gainsayers, and bringing sinners to glorify God in the obedience and worship of faith.

V. 12—14. It is probable the apostle had been informed, that the Philippians feared lest his imprisonment should check the progress of the Gospel, and intimidate others from preaching or embracing it; and, no doubt, Satan and his servants expected this effect from it. He however would have his friends to know, that his sufferings had rather conduced to promote the cause of Christianity, through the interposition of God; and that the restraint put upon his personal ministry had been more than counterbalanced by other circumstances. So that his bonds for Christ's sake, and his constancy in them, the doctrine for which he was confined, and which he preached even in that situation, had become openly known even in Nero's palace among his courtiers, and in all other parts of Rome; which had excited a general attention to the Gospel through that immense city, whence the report would circulate almost throughout the earth. Moreover, many Christians, who were appointed to the ministry, and qualified for it, but who had before been timorous, perceiving how the apostle was protected, comforted, and prospered in his imprisonment, were greatly emboldened to preach, without fear of persecution, in the most open and useful manner; by whose labours the knowledge of the Gospel was rapidly diffused.

V. 15—18. Indeed, while some preached Christ of good-will, there were others, who were actuated by envy of Paul's reputation, success, or measure of liberty, and who aimed to cause divisions, even by preaching the Gospel of peace! Probably, these were Judaizers, who concealed part of their sentiments, and preached the substance of the Gospel, in order to form a party under their influence, and in opposition to the apostle and his friends; that so they might gradually impose the Mosaic law on the Gentile converts. The designing, ambitious, and selfish conduct of these men proved them insincere in what they preached, and that they only wanted to excite contentions, which would not only have added affliction to the apostle's mind during his imprisonment, but, as they supposed, would also increase the virulence of his persecutors. Others, however, acted from love to him, for the sake of Christ; knowing that he was appointed, as the apostle of the Gentiles, to defend as a bulwark the pure Gospel, against all that opposed or perverted it; and that he was now lodged in prison in the metropolis, not only as a witness for the truth, concerning justification and Christian liberty, against Judaizers; but also to bear testimony before senators, prætors, and courtiers, nay, perhaps, before the emperor himself, concerning the holy doctrine of salvation through Christ Jesus. But, though some aimed to oppose, grieve, or expose him the more, yet, as Christ was preached by that means, either in a pretended or a sincere zeal for his honour, among great numbers that had hitherto been strangers to the Gospel, who might in due time be more fully instructed in the faith, the apostle rejoiced, and he determined to do so, whatever consequences might ensue. *Not sincerely.* (16.) Or, *purely.* 'Not indeed, with a pure mind, though otherwise their 'doctrine was pure.' (*Beza.*) It is not certain who these preachers were, or whether they meant to excite divisions between the Jewish and Gentile converts, or to stir up the persecuting rage of idolaters against the apostle, for boldly propagating a doctrine subversive of idolatry; or that of the emperor and statesmen against him, for "preaching another King, one Jesus." But the whole tenour of his writings and conduct shows, that had the doctrine which they taught been materially erroneous, he would have opposed them, instead of rejoicing in their success.

shall be ashamed, but *that* [i] with all boldness, as always, *so* now also, [k] Christ shall be magnified in my body, [l] whether *it be* by life, or by death.

21 For to me [m] to live *is* Christ, and [n] to die *is* gain.

22 But if I [o] live in the flesh, [p] this *is* the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose [q] I wot not.

23 For I am [r] in a strait betwixt two, having [s] a desire to depart, and to be [t] with Christ; which is [u] far better:

24 Nevertheless, [x] to abide in the flesh *is* more needful for you.

25 And, having [y] this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all, [z] for your furtherance and [a] joy of faith;

26 That [b] your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me, by my coming to you again.

27 Only [c] let your conversation be as it becometh [d] the gospel of Christ, that [e] whether I come and see you, or else be absent, [f] I may hear of your affairs, [g] that ye stand fast [h] in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for [i] the faith of the gospel;

28 And [k] in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them [l] an evident token of perdition, [m] but to you of salvation, [n] and that of God.

29 For unto you [o] it is given in the behalf of Christ, [p] not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake:

30 Having [q] the same conflict [r] which ye saw in me, *and* [s] now hear *to be* in me.

[i] *See on* 14 2 Cor. ii. 14—16

[k] ii 17 Rom. vi. 13. 19. xii. 1. 1 Cor vi. 20. vii. 34 2 Cor v. 15 1 Thes. v. 23

[l] 23, 24 John xii. 27, 28. xxi. 19. Acts xx. 24 xxi. 13. Rom. xiv. 7—9 1 Cor. xv. 31. 2 Cor. iv. 10. Col. i. 24. 2 Tim. iv. 5—7. 2 Pet. i 12—15.

[m] *See on*, 20. ii. 21. 1 Cor i 30 Gal. vi 14. Col. iii 4.

[n] 23 Is. lvii. 1, 2 Rom. viii. 35—39. 1 Cor. iii. 22 2 Cor. v. 1. 6. 8. 1 Thes iv. 13 — 15 Rev. xiv. 13

[o] 24. 2 Cor. x. 3. Gal. ii. 20. Col. ii. 1. 1 Pet. iv. 2.

[p] Ps. lxxi 18. Is. xxxviii. 18, 19.

[q] Gen xxi 26. xxxix 8. Ex. xxxii. 1. Acts iii. 17. Rom xi. 2 ——— [r] 2 Sam xxiv 14. 1 Chr xxi. 13 Luke xii. 50. 2 Cor. vi. 12 [s] Luke ii. 29, 30. John xiii 1. 2 Cor v. 8 2 Tim iv. 6.——————— [t] Job xix 26, 27. Ps. xlix. 15. Luke viii. 38. xxiii 43. John xiv. 3. xvii 24. Acts vii. 59. 2 Cor v. 8. 1 Thes iv 17 Rev. xiv. 13.———— [u] Ps. xvi 10, 11. xvii. 15. lxxiii. 24—26 Rev. vii 14—17.———— [x] 22 25, 26. John xvi. 7 Acts xx. 29—31.———— [y] ii. 24. Acts xx. 25 ———— [z] Luke xxii. 32. John xxi. 15—17. Acts xi. 23 xiv. 22. Rom i. 11, 12. xv. 13. 29. 2 Cor. i. 24 Eph. iv. 11—13.———— [a] Ps. lx. 6. Rom. v. 2. xv. 13. 1 Pet i. 8

[b] ii. 16—18 iii 1. 3. iv. 4. 10 Cant. v. 1 John xvi. 22. 24. 2 Cor. i. 14. v 12. vii. 6.

[c] iii. 18—21 Eph. iv 1 Col. i. 10. 1 Thes. ii. 11, 12. iv 1. Tit ii 10. 2 Pet. i. 4—9. iii. 11. 14.

[d] Rom. i 9 16. xv. 16. 29. 2 Cor. iv. 4. ix. 13. Gal. i. 7

[e] ii. 12. 24.

[f] Eph. i 15. Col. i. 4. 1 Thes iii. 6. Philem. 5. 3 John 3, 4.

[g] ii. 1, 2 iv. 1 Ps cxxii 3 cxxxiii. 1 Matt. xii. 25 1 Cor. i. 10 xv. 58 xvi. 13, 14. 2 Cor xiii. 11

[h] Jer. xxxii 39. John xvii 20, 21. Acts ii 46. iv. 32. Rom xii. 4, 5. 1 Cor. xii. 12, &c. Eph. iv. 3—6. Jam. iii. 18. Jude 3.

[i] Prov. xxiii. 23. Acts xxiv. 21. Rom. i. 5 x 8. Eph i 13. 1 Tim i. 11. 19 2 Tim. iv. 7.——— [k] Is li. 7 12. Matt. x. 28. Luke xii. 4—7. xxi. 12—19. Acts iv 19—31 v 40—42. 1 Thes. ii. 2. 2 Tim. i. 7, 8. Heb xiii. 6 Rev. ii. 10.——— [l] 2 Thes. i. 5. 6 1 Pet iv. 12—14 ——— [m] Matt. v. 10—12 Rom. viii. 17 2 Tim. ii. 10, 11.——— [n] Gen. xlix. 18 Ps l 23 lxviii. 19 20. Is xii 2. Luke iii 6 Acts xxviii. 28. [o] Acts v 41. Rom. v. 3. Jam. i. 2. 1 Pet iv. 13.——— [p] Matt xvi 17. John i. 12. 13 vi 44, 45. Acts xiii 38. xiv 27. Eph. ii. 8. Col vi. 12 Jam. i 17, 18 ——— [q] John xvi 33. Rom. viii 35—37. 1 Cor. iv 9—14. xv. 30—32 Eph. ii. 11—18 Col. ii 1. 1 Thes. ii. 14. 15 iii. 2—4. 2 Tim ii 10—12 iv 7 Heb. x. 32, 33. xii 4. Rev. ii. 10, 11. xii. 11.——— [r] Acts xvi. 19—40. 1 Thes ii. 2.——— [s] *See on*, 13.

V. 19, 20. The apostle knew that these afflictive dispensations, however aggravated, would help forward his final salvation, through the prayer of his brethren, and the communication of the Spirit of Christ to his soul, to promote his humility, spirituality, and meetness for heaven. This satisfied him, as to his personal concern, as he was willing to endure any abasement or suffering, for the honour of Christ. And indeed he earnestly expected a happy event of his trials; as one who with out-stretched neck eagerly looks for the coming of some beloved friend, and he confidently hoped that he should not be made ashamed in any thing, by the disappointment of his expectations or endeavours: but that, as in all former instances, he had boldly and successfully stood his ground, in this present case, also, he should be strengthened, and inspired with courage, that Christ might be magnified in and by his frail body; whether his life were spared that he might again labour in spreading the Gospel, or whether he should be called to shed his blood in confirmation of his testimony. *Salvation.* The connexion between *salvation*, and "the "supply of the Spirit of Christ," fully proves, that eternal salvation, and not temporal deliverance, was meant.

V. 21—26. With peculiar animation, the apostle here declared the happy frame of his mind, in his perilous situation. As Christ was the Author and Support of his spiritual life, so was he the End and Object of his life on earth. He had no other business, interest, honour, or pleasure, for which to live, but Christ and his glory, service, and favour, and therefore he knew that to die would be his greatest gain; as he should then be enabled more perfectly to know, love, serve, and enjoy the favour of his gracious Lord; and have done with sin, temptation, and suffering for ever. Yet, if he continued to live in the flesh, and to endure hardship a little longer, it would be *worth his while*, as his labour would be fruitful of good to himself, as well as to others. So that he knew not which he should choose, if it were left to him, being in a strait between two, and drawn both ways, by the reasons which he had to desire life on the one hand, and death on the other. Indeed, he had a most *vehement longing* to depart from this world of sin and sorrow, that he might immediately go and be with Christ, exchanging the life of faith, hope, and feeble love, for that of sight, fruition, and perfect holiness; as this was incomparably more desirable, than any thing which could be possessed or enjoyed on earth. Nevertheless, his continuance here being the more needful for the benefit of his beloved people, he was willing to postpone the completion of his own happiness for their advantage. And indeed, having this confidence respecting his own concerns, he was also assured, by intimations from the Lord, that he should abide some time longer, to promote their growth and establishment in the faith, and the joy or glorying in God connected with it; and that, being permitted to come and renew his labours among them, he should be an instrument of increasing their abundant rejoicing in Christ. "Christ is gain "to me, living and dying." (21.) Thus Beza and many others translate and understand the words; but the antithesis between the two parts of the verse is destroyed; the meaning is *comparatively* cold, nay, selfish; and, though I would speak diffidently, after such eminently learned critics, the original seems incapable of this construction. *Far better.* (23.) 'The original is the highest superlative which it is possible to form in any language.' (*Macknight.*) 'Better beyond expression.' (*Doddridge.*) 'Could St. Paul think a state of insensibility much better than a life tending so much, as his did, to the glory of God, to the propagation of the Gospel, and to the furtherance of the joy of Christians?' (*Whitby.*) The doctrine of the soul's immediate happiness, with Christ in glory, is here declared beyond almost the possibility of doubt, except as men disbelieve the apostle's testimony.

CHAP. II.

The apostle earnestly, and by the most affecting topics, exhorts his brethren to humble, condescending, and self-denying, love, 1—4; after the example of Christ, in his incarnation, humiliation, and death on the cross; as terminating in his glorious exaltation, 5—11. He exhorts them to diligence, in working out their own salvation, as depending on the grace of God, 12, 13; and to profess the gospel, and adorn it, among their neighbours, by a harmless and blameless example, in such a manner, that he might rejoice with them at the day of Christ, in the success of his labours, 12—16; and assuring them that he should joyfully become a martyr for their sakes; and exhorting them to re-

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V. 27—30. None of the events before referred to, nor any other, could harm the Philippians, if they *only* took heed to have their conversation becoming the Gospel, which they had embraced. (*Note, Eph.* iv. 1—8.) The original word, rendered ***conversation***, denotes the conduct of citizens, when it accords to their privileges, and tends to the credit, safety, peace, and prosperity of the city. Thus the Philippians, being graciously made citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, ought to act suitably to that high character, and to seek the honour of the Gospel and the welfare of the Church in all their actions. Then it would be well with them, and gladden the apostle's heart, whether he came to see them, or only heard of their affairs, that they stood firm in the profession of the faith, and in obedience to Christ, amidst surrounding temptations and bad examples; avoiding all dissentions; continuing as one body actuated by one spirit; being of one heart and mind in the great concerns of religion; not striving one against another, either about their temporal interests or reputation, or about any things of subordinate importance in religion, in which they did not exactly agree; but, as one compact phalanx, striving with united force against the common enemy, to exclude false teachers, to prevent abuses, to bear up under persecution, and by every means to promote the cause of Christianity. In attending to these things, they ought in no wise to be intimidated by the number, power, menaces, or cruelties, of their adversaries, whose malignant rage against such excellent persons proved them enemies to God and holiness, and in the way of perdition: while the meek and patient conduct of those who suffered for Christ's sake, united to the holiness of their characters, was an additional evidence that they were the friends of God, and partakers of that salvation, which he wrought in the hearts of his people, (*Note,* 1 *Pet.* iv. 12—16.) For indeed they were called to an additional honour and privilege; in that it was *given* to them, not only to believe in Christ for salvation, but to be distinguished among his disciples by a nearer conformity to him in suffering, for which their reward would be great in heaven; (*Note, Matt.* v. 10—12;) as they were then enduring that same honourable conflict, which they had seen the apostle engaged in, when scourged and imprisoned at Philippi; and which they heard that he was at that time sustaining, by his confinement at Rome. Many expositors are very exact, in this and other passages, in distinguishing between the persecutions, which the apostle and the churches were exposed to, from the Jews, and those which they endured from the Gentiles. But this rather embarrasses than clears the interpretation; and the practical instruction, if not thus lost sight of, is the same in either case. No doubt the Jews excited most of the persecutions, to which the apostle was exposed; and his zeal for the admission of the Gentiles into the Church, without circumcision or regard to the ritual law, rendered him peculiarly obnoxious to them. But it is also evident, that zeal for idolatry and for local customs, and fear of innovations and insurrections, as well as enmity against God and holiness, disposed the Gentiles generally to concur, and often to take the lead in persecution.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

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Those servants of Christ, who most resemble their Lord, will thank God on every remembrance of the congregations among whom they have laboured, when they know that ministers and people, in their proper places, attend to their several duties, in such a manner as evinces them to have fellowship with Christ, and to share the blessings of his Gospel. But, alas! how often are faithful pastors constrained to make request *with tears,* instead of *joy,* for those in whom they once were confident, but for whom they now tremble! We may, however, be always confident that God will perform his good work in every soul, in which he hath really begun it by regeneration: though we should warn men not to trust in superficial appearances, sudden emotions, external reformation, change of sect or sentiment, or in any thing short of a new creation unto holiness. But it is meet for us to hope the best of those who profess the truth, and do not disgrace it; and greatly to desire the spiritual welfare of those who have showed us kindness for the Lord's sake, sympathized in our sorrows, and helped us in our labours for the defence and confirmation of the Gospel, as we may well conclude that they are really partakers of divine grace. We should "long after them in the bowels of Jesus Christ;" and pour out our prayers for them, when incapable of doing them other service. We cannot in general pray for ourselves, and in behalf of those who possess that faith which worketh by love, in a better manner, than by copying the example before us; and requesting that our love may abound yet more and more, and be exercised in knowledge and in all judgment; that we and they may discern between things that differ, and know how to choose the good and refuse the evil; that we may be sincere and diligent disciples, preserved from all scandals and offences, and "filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are "through Christ, to the praise and glory of God." For those things, which most honour God, will eventually most benefit us: we should not therefore leave it dubious, *joice with him*, 17, 18. *He hopes to send Timothy to them shortly, whom he highly commends*, 19—23; *as he does also Epaphroditus, their messenger to him; who had been sick, and was grieved that they had heard it; and, as God had mercifully restored him, longed to return to them*, 24—27; *The apostle therefore sends him back; exhorts them highly to value him, and such as he, seeing he had disregarded his life, to supply their lack of service*, 28—30.

whether any good fruit be found on us, or not; a small measure of love, knowledge, judgment, spirituality, and fruitfulness, should not satisfy us: but we ought to long and pray to be filled with all good fruits; as aiming at great things, and nobly aspiring to do much good, and to be holy as God is holy.

V. 12—20.

The consideration, that the Lord "worketh all things "after the counsel of his own will," should reconcile us to those afflictive dispensations, which seem to preclude us from usefulness. Whatever Satan or wicked men may intend or expect, our God can further the success of his Gospel, by the very events which arise from men's endeavours to stop its progress. He often works by apparent contraries; and his most able ministers have been immured in prisons, that their bonds in Christ might bring the knowledge of his truth into the courts of justice, nay, even into the palaces of princes; and the blood of the martyrs hath more abundantly made fruitful the good seed of the word of God. Nay, the extremest sufferings and cruel deaths of his saints, instead of intimidating, have infused courage into their brethren, while they witnessed the triumphant consolations of the happy sufferers. Indeed, Satan will endeavour to prevent these blessed effects, even by stirring up men to preach the Gospel from unworthy motives: and not only have ambition and avarice *moved* vast numbers to take this sacred office upon them; but envy, malice, and contention, have done the same: and Christ and his truth have often been preached, in order to grieve, perplex, or expose his faithful suffering servants! So varied are the effects of human depravity! We should, indeed, grieve to see tares sown in the Lord's field, and the souls of men deceived by damnable heresies; but when the substance of the truth is preached among ignorant persons, we should neither so much regard our own reputation, or that of our party, nor be so concerned about the motives of the persons employed, as not to rejoice, if, by such men and means, sinners are brought acquainted with the all gracious Saviour. The mortifying circumstances, which sometimes attend these transactions, will turn to our salvation, if we bear them in a proper manner, through the supply of the Spirit of Christ, granted in answer to the prayers made for us and by us. Our earnest expectation and hope should not be to be honoured by men, or to escape the cross; but to be so upheld amidst contempt and affliction, that we may not be put to shame, or disgrace the cause of God; and that we may act with such boldness and constancy amidst dangers and enemies, that Christ may be magnified in our bodies, whether by our laborious services, or by the honourable conclusion of our work and warfare.

V. 21—30.

We have not made that progress in the divine life which holy Paul had; yet, if we are true believers, we habitually consider Christ as our Life. Our main interest, work, honour, and comfort, in this world are centered in him; and his glory is the great end to which we desire to direct all our conduct. In proportion to the depth of our experience in this respect should be our well-grounded assurance, that to "die will be our gain." If we have this earnest of our inheritance, death can take us away from nothing but what is vain, vexatious, defiling, ensnaring, and utterly insufficient for our felicity: and it will convey us to the fountain-head of those holy joys, which here we relished and sometimes tasted, but were never able to participate without alloy or interruption: and what a blessedness must that be, which can render death the richest gain, and make us long earnestly for the approach of the king of terrors, as the messenger of our Father, to put us in possession of our eternal inheritance! And how cold and heartless, compared with this, are philosophy's antidotes against the fear of death! We should, however, be willing to live in this evil world, if the Lord see good: this will retard, but it will also increase, our complete felicity, if our days be spent in diligent labours and patient sufferings for Christ's sake. We need not wish to choose in this respect; for we should not know what choice to make. It is blessed indeed to be in that strait between two which the apostle described; to "have a longing desire to depart and be with Christ, "which is far better;" and yet to be willing to abide in the flesh, in order, if the Lord pleases, to be helpful to the faith and holy joy of our brethren. Yet it can hardly be expected, that believers should generally be found thus superior to the love of life, and the fear of death; and thus willing to live and suffer, from love to their brethren, when assured of their own salvation. Nor should we despise the day of small things, either in ourselves or others; though we should press forward to this full assurance of hope, and this entire submission to the Lord's will. But nothing can harm us, if we "only let "our conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of "Christ." In that case, all changes, personal or relative, in the Church or in the world, will be working together for our good. This then should be our primary personal concern; and all the company of believers, however divided and subdivided, should consider themselves as one great army, and endeavour to "stand fast in one Spirit, with "one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel;" and to recommend the salvation of Christ to all around them. In such a cause, we should not allow ourselves to be terrified by any adversaries; for their reproaches and menaces against such as thus serve Christ, is a manifest proof that they are in the broad road to destruction, as

IF *there be* therefore [a] any consolation in Christ, [b] if any comfort of love, [c] if any fellowship of the Spirit, [d] if any bowels and mercies,

2 [e] Fulfil ye my joy, [f] that ye be [g] like-minded, having the same love, *being* of [h] one accord, of one mind.

3 *Let* [i] nothing *be done* through strife or vain-glory; [k] but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

4 [l] Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

a iii 3. Luke ii. 10, 11 25. John xiv. 18. 27. xv. 11. xvi. 22–24 xvii 13. Rom v. 1, 2. xv. 12, 13 1 Cor xv 31. 2 Cor i. 5, 6. ii 14. 2 Thes. ii. 16, 17. Heb. vi 18. 1 Pet. i 8. b Ps. cxxxiii. 1. John xv. 10–12 Acts ii. 46. iv. 32. Gal. vi. 22 Eph iv. 30–32 Col. ii. 2 1 John iv. 7, 8. 12. 16. c Rom. v 5 viii 9–16 26 1 Cor. vi. 19. 20 xii. 13. 2 Cor. xiii. 14. Gal. iv. 6. Eph. i 13, 14. ii. 18–22. iv. 4. 1 Pet. i. 2. 22, 23. 1 John iii 24.——d *See on,* i 8——e 16. i. 4. 26, 27. John iii 29. 2 Cor ii. 3. vii. 7. Col. ii. 5. 1 Thes. ii. 19, 20. iii 6–10 2 Thes ii 13 2 Tim i. 4. Philem. 20 1 John i. 3, 4 2 John 4 3 John 4.——f *See on,* i. 27——g 20. iii. 15. 16 iv 2. Rom. xii. 16. xv. 5, 6. 1 Cor i. 10 2 Cor. xiii 11. 1 Pet iii. 8, 9——h Acts i 14. ii. 1. 46 v. 12.——i 14. i. 15 16 Prov. xiii. 10 Rom xiii. 13. 1 Cor iii. 3 2 Cor. xii. 20 Gal v. 15 20, 21. 26. Col iii. 8 1 Tim. vi 4 Jam. iii 14–16 iv 5, 6. 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2.——k Luke xiv. 7–11 xviii. 14. Rom. xii. 10. 1 Cor. xv. 9. Eph iv 2 v. 21. 1 Pet. v. 5.——l Matt xviii 6. Rom. xii. 15. xiv. 19–22. xv. 1. 1 Cor viii. 9–13. x. 24. 32, 33. xii 22–26. xiii. 4, 5. 2 Cor vi. 3. xi. 29 Jam. ii 8.

5 Let [m] this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being [n] in the form of God, [o] thought it not robbery to be equal with God;

7 But [p] made himself of no reputation, and took upon him [q] the form of a servant, and was made [r] in the [*] likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion [s] as a man, [t] he humbled himself, [u] and became obedient unto death, even [x] the death of the cross.

m Matt. xi. 20 xx. 26–28. Luke xxii. 27. John xiii 15. Acts x. 38 xx 35 Rom. xiv. 15. xv 3. 5. 1 Cor. x. 33. xi. 1 Eph. v. 2. 1 Pet ii 21. iv. 1. 1 John ii 6 n Is viii 14. viii. 8. ix. 6. Jer xxiii. 6 Mic. v. 2 Matt. i. 23. John i 1, 2. 18. xvii. 5. Rom. ix 5. 2 Cor. iv. 4 Col. i. 15, 16. 1 Tim. i. 17. iii. 16 Tit. ii. 13. Heb i 3. 6. 8 xiii 8. o Gen. xxxii. 24–30. xlviii 15, 16 Ex iii 2–6. Josh v. 13–15. Hos. xii. 3–5. Zech xiii 7. John v. 18. 23. viii. 58, 59. x. 30 38. xiv 9. xx 28 Rev. i. 17, 18. xxi 6——p Ps. xxii. 6. Is. xlix. 7. l. 5, 6. lii. 14 liii. 2, 3 Dan. ix. 26. Zech ix. 9. Mark ix. 12. Rom. xv. 3 2 Cor. viii. 9. Heb. ii 9–18. xii. 2. xiii. 13. q Is. xlii 1. xlix. 3 lii. 13 liii 11. Ez. xxxiv. 23, 24. Zech iii. 8. Matt xii 18. xx. 28 Mark x. 44, 45 Luke xxii. 27 John xiii. 3–14 Rom. xv 8.——r 6 John i. 14. Rom viii. 3 Gal. iv. 4. Heb ii. 14–17. iv. 15.——* Or, *habit.*——s Matt. xvii. 2. Mark ix 2, 3 Luke ix. 29.——t Prov. xv. 33. Acts viii. 33. Heb. v. 5–7. xii. 2. u Ps xl. 6–8 Is. l 5, 6. John iv 34. xv. 10. Heb. v. 8, 9. x. 7–9.——x Deut. xxi. 23. Ps xxii 16 John x. 18. xii. 28–32 xiv. 31. Gal. iii. 13. Tit ii. 14. Heb. xii. 2. 1 Pet. ii 24. iii. 18

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they hate the truth and image of God in his people. This enmity of ungodly men against us for Christ's sake, when we love, and are beloved by the brethren, is an evident token to us, that we partake of salvation by the grace of God, as both friends and foes discern his seal upon us; and to us "it is given in the behalf of Christ," to believe the same truths, to love and suffer for the same holy cause, and to endure the same conflict which prophets, apostles, and martyrs, have believed and maintained before us.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1—4. (*Note,* i. 27—30.) The apostle evidently deemed harmony among Christians essential to a conversation becoming the Gospel. He therefore speaks, as it were, to this effect: 'By all the consolation and animating motives derived from Christ; from the pardon of your sins, and your deliverance from the bondage of corruption; from the love of Christ and communion with him; from the fellowship of the sanctifying Spirit; from the favour of God and the hopes and anticipations of heaven; by all the sweet comforts arising from the very exercise of love; I beseech and exhort you: if the Lord has manifested his tender compassions towards you; if you have any feeling for your spiritual father, now also a prisoner for your sakes; or any for your brethren in Christ, redeemed by the same Saviour, heirs of the same heaven, and sufferers from the same trials and conflicts with yourselves; "Fulfil ye my joy," 'the joy that I felt at your conversion, by living together in entire peace and harmony.' 'If any force of exhortation, in the name 'of Christ.' (*Whitby.*) The original word signifies exhortation, as well as consolation, or rather an encouraging, animating exhortation. The authority of Christ, speaking by his apostle, as well as the consolation derived from him, seems implied. (*Marg. Ref.*) The expressions that follow are varied, to include all that can be imagined in the most cordial amity, unity, and sympathy. Let them live together as members of one body, animated by one soul: let their common love to Christ, and delight in his holy service, unite them in love to each other: let them be of one accord in every undertaking to promote the common cause; and let them seek, in behalf of themselves and each other, that degree of spiritual illumination, which might make them of one judgment, and of the same sentiments, as much as possible. But as differences in some things might take place, and even in the concerns of the church, some would judge more favourably of persons or measures than others, of which Satan would take advantage, in order to disturb their harmony, let them all watch themselves, that they did nothing from self-will, a contentious temper, or an ambitious desire of obtaining applause, influence, or superiority. On the other hand, let them see to it, that they were actuated by a humble spirit, and that, from a consciousness of the evils in their heart and conduct, which others could not observe, and from candour to their brethren, they were ever ready to deem others more deserving esteem than themselves. In many cases this could not be done, in respect of talents or spiritual gifts, though self-flattery and vain-glory in these things also would readily and dangerously intrude; but if the endowments, and the obligations connected with them, were properly estimated, they would rather tend to humble than to exalt them, even as the apostle spake of his knowledge in the mystery of Christ, when he deemed himself less than the least of all saints. (*Note, Eph.* iii. 4—8.) They ought not therefore to regard either their own attainments or interests, alone or principally, but, in humble, self-denying love, to recede from every personal concern, for the benefit of the brethren, and the peace of the church. 'Be as ready to 'assist and help others, as if you were their subjects and 'inferiors: so the example of Christ requires, and so the 'precept runs, that he who is the greatest should be the 'servant to others.' (*Whitby.*)

V. 5—8. To illustrate and enforce in the most effectual manner that conduct which he had recommended, the apostle here called on them to cultivate and manifest the same judgment and disposition which had been so conspicuous in Christ Jesus. He had been "in the form of

9 Wherefore [y] God also hath highly exalted him, [z] and given him a name which is above every name:

y Gen. iii. 15. Ps. ii. 6—12 viii 5—8. xlv. 6, 7. lxix. 29, 30. lxxii. 17—19. xci. 14. cx. 1—5. Is. ix 7. xlix. 6—8. lii. 13. liii. 12. Dan. ii. 44, 45. vii. 14. Matt. xi. 27. xxviii. 18. Luke x. 22. John iii. 35, 36. v. 22—27. xiii. 3 xvii. 1—3, 5. Acts ii. 32—36. v. 31. Rom. xiv. 9—11. 1 Cor. xv. 24—27. Heb ii 9. xii. 2. 2 Pet. i. 17. Rev. i 5 v. 12. xi. 15. xix. 16.——z Ps. lxxxix. 27. Eph. i. 20—23. Col. i. 18. Heb. i. 4. 1 Pet. iii. 22.

10 That at the name of Jesus [a] every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* [b] under the earth;

a Gen xli. 43. Is. xlv. 23—25. Matt. xxvii 29. Rom xi. 4 xiv. 10, 11. Eph. iii. 14 Heb i. 6. Rev. iv. 10. v. 13, 14.

b Matt. xii. 40. John v. 28, 29. Eph. iv. 9. Rev. xx. 13.

"God;" he appeared in divine majesty and glory, as the Creator and Lord of all, in the heaven of heavens, and all the angels worshipped him as God, One with and coequal to the Father. He had manifested himself, as JEHOVAH, to patriarchs, prophets, and the Church of Israel, through successive ages; and had not thought it a robbery to be equal with God, and to receive divine adoration from men. To this he was conscious of having a full right, without in the least interfering with the honour due to the eternal Father. Nevertheless, he emptied, or impoverished, himself; he divested himself of his divine glory, that he might appear on earth like one of no dignity or reputation: as princes travel without the insignia of royalty, and are not known from private persons. He did not come down from heaven "in the form of God," as when he gave the law from mount Sinai; he appeared, not like himself, "the Lord of glory," but "in the form of a servant," even of the lowest servant. As he was really a Servant to the Father, when in the form of a servant, so was he really God, when in the form of God. By this voluntary susception of a new character, in order to man's salvation, "he was made in the likeness of men;" he assumed our nature, and became like us in all things but sin. Thus the only begotten of the Father tabernacled here on earth "in fashion as a man," being truly man, but more than man at the same time: and he was pleased still more to abase himself, by submitting to the most indigent circumstances, and the most accumulated hardships for our good; especially he became obedient to the whole divine law, as our Surety, and fulfilled all righteousness, amidst inconceivable difficulties and temptations. In this he persevered to the end, and, his voluntary obligations requiring it of him, he submitted to suffer death; even that of crucifixion, the most ignominious and tormenting, and accursed kind of execution, to which the vilest of malefactors were condemned: and he was most perfectly resigned and obedient to the Father, through all the inward agony, and multiplied indignities and cruelties which he endured. Thus low he voluntarily stooped from "that "glory, which he had with the Father before the world "was." He not only abased himself to become man; but he denied and humbled himself as man, to the very depth of suffering and shame, from love to worthless hell-deserving rebels and enemies! The example can never be done justice to by human language; and all our imitation must necessarily fall infinitely short of it. In this view of the subject, how important and energetic is the apostle's argument! How striking is the illustration!—But many persons have laboured to prove, that the apostle only meant that 'the man Jesus, though he acted as the Ambassador and Representative of God, did not think of robbing him of his glory, by claiming equality with God!' And this would sink the meaning not only into insipidity, but absurdity; for it would propose, as an example of the most perfect self-denial and humility, a bare exemption from the most horrible impiety and ambition imaginable! as certainly it must be such, for any mere creature, in any circumstances, to harbour a thought of equality in honour and majesty with the infinite God. Indeed, this sense cannot be consistent with our Lord's frequent and most express declarations concerning himself. (*John* v. 17, 18. 23. viii. 58. x. 30—33. xiv. 9.) Nay, the whole interpretation of the passage must be forced and unnatural; the reality of our Lord's human nature, "in the likeness of man," and "in fashion as a man," might as justly be questioned, as the reality of his Deity "was in the form of God;" and his taking upon him the form of a servant, and becoming obedient, are unmeaning words upon the Socinian interpretation, but exceeding emphatical upon that before proposed. ***But.*** (7.) Or, *Yet*, or *Nevertheless*, or *Notwithstanding*. See the following passages, among many others, comparing the translation with the original. (*Mark* xiv. 29. 36. *John* xi. 15. xvi. 7. *Rom.* v. 14. 1 *Cor.* ix. 12. xiv. 20. *Gal.* iv. 30. 2 *Tim.* i. 12. *Rev.* ii. 4. 14.) On a portion of Scripture which is of so great importance, both in respect of its general import, and also in the argument concerning our Lord's Deity, and which, at the same time, has been perplexed by discordant interpretations, more than most other passages, a few additional quotations may be properly adduced, which indeed may be omitted, when read in a family.—'Who does not perceive that Paul declares what Christ was, *before* he assumed the form of a servant? Christ himself, when he was God, and consequently in that glory and majesty which belong to God alone, and when he did not think that he usurped any thing not belonging to him; yet, as laying aside this glory, abased himself even so far as to become such as the servants of God are, that is, to become man: yea, and then also he conducted himself towards the Father, not as towards his equal, but his Lord; so that he voluntarily submitted to undergo the most ignominious death! And shall not we mortal and mean slaves be ashamed of our arrogance, *in acting* as if we excelled our brethren! This I say, is Paul's argument, than which nothing can be more weighty and forcible.' "He thought it no "robbery." 'Or, as a most learned interpreter renders it, "He did not *think it prey to be seized on.*" 'For he refers that which follows to the manifestation made in the flesh; that this should be the meaning. Christ, as God, possessed of eternal glory and majesty, knew, indeed, that it was just and lawful for him to appear, not in humble flesh, but with a dignity worthy of God: but he chose rather to abase himself. 'But I think that this also belongs to the pristine glory of Christ, which he mentions, (*John* xvii. 5.) and that this is the meaning; Christ, when possessed of that eternal glory of Deity, was not ignorant, that in this thing, (that is, in being coequal with God the Father,) he did no

11 And *that* [c] every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ [d] *is* Lord, [e] to the glory of God the Father.

12 ¶ Wherefore, [f] my beloved, [g] as ye have always obeyed, not as in my

c Ps. xviii. 49. Marg Matt. x 32 John ix. 23. xii. 42. Rom. x 9. xv 9 1 John iv. 2. 15. 2 John 7. Rev. iii. 5 d Ps. cx 1. Jer. xxiii. 6. Luke ii. 11. John xx. 28 Acts ii. 36 x 36 Rom x. 9—12 xiv. 11. 1 Cor viii 6. xii. 3 xv 47.——e John v. 23 xiii. 31, 32. xiv. 13 23 xvi. 14, 15 xvii 1. 1 Pet. i. 21.——f iv. 1. 1 Cor. iv. 14 1 Pet ii. 11.——g i. 5. 27. 29.

presence only, but now much more in my absence, [h] work out your [i] own salvation [k] with fear and trembling:

13 For it is [l] God which worketh in

h iii. 13, 14 Prov. x. 16. xiii. 4. Matt xi 12. 29. Luke xiii. 23, 24. John vi. 27—29. Rom. ii. 7. 1 Cor ix. 24—27 xv. 58. Gal. vi 7—9. 1 Thes ii. 3. Heb. iv. 11 vi 10, 11. xii 1. 2 Pet. i 5—10 iii. 18.——i i. 19. Rom xiii. 11—14 1 Cor ix 20-23 2 Tim. ii. 10.——k Ezra x 3. Ps ii. 11. cxix 120. Is lxvi. 2 5 Acts ix 6. xvi. 29. 1 Cor ii 3. 2 Cor. vii 15. Eph. vi. 5 Heb iv. 1. xii. 28, 29.——l 2 Chr xxx. 12 Is xxvi 12 Jer. xxxi 33 xxxii. 39 John iii. 27. Acts xi. 21. 2 Cor. iii. 5. Heb. xiii. 21. Jam. i 15—17.

'injury to any one, but used his own right; nevertheless 'he, as it were, receded from his right, when he reduced 'himself even to nothing, by taking on him the form of 'a servant, &c.' (*Beza.*) The word, rendered *robbery*, is not found in any other place in the New Testament, and but very seldom in other writers, but the derivation of it fixes it to the meaning given to it in our translation. The word, rendered *equal*, is ισα, not ισον, and many have argued from this circumstance, that *similitude*, not *equality*, is meant; but the learned bishop Pearson has shown, that ισα, especially used with ειναι, may express equality as well as ισον. Socinus inquires, 'How can God be said to be 'equal to himself?' To this it may be answered, that the Son may be equal to the Father, in the unity of the Godhead, which is all that the apostle's language implies, and all that Trinitarians contend for; nor can this be denied without begging the question, and denying that there is any distinction of Persons in the unity of the Godhead. 'He emptied himself, taking the form of a ser'vant, being made in the likeness of men.' Thus bishop Pearson literally translates the seventh verse. If any man doubt how Christ emptied himself, the text will satisfy him, by "taking on him the form of a servant;" and if any still question how he "took on him the form of a "servant," he has the apostle's answer, by "being made "in the likeness of men." Here it may be observed, that if Christ had originally been a creature of God, he must have also been his servant before his incarnation; and this concludes against the Arians, as well as the Socinians. So afterwards, "Being found in fashion as a man, "he humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, "even the death of the cross." As therefore his humiliation consisted in his obedience unto death, so his emptying himself consisted in the assumption of the form of a servant, and that in the nature of man. The clauses are connected, (in the original,) not by way of conjunction, in which there might be some diversity, but by way of opposition, which signifieth a clear identity. The grand point, in order to understand the passage, is this, to determine in what sense Christ "was in the form of "God," and how "he emptied himself;" and the above remarks, suggested by bishop Pearson's learned and able disquisitions on the passage, and sometimes in his words, give, as it appears to me, the most complete satisfaction. —The passage indeed is full to the point as to our Lord's Deity, and all who oppose this construction of it are evidently baffled in the argument; so that, after all their efforts, it stands unmoved, as the deep rooted rock amidst the raging billows. But, had some deeper impression been made on it, the Bible would still afford the humble believer abundant proof of this "great Mystery of godli"ness," on which every well-grounded human hope must be established.

V. 9—11. When the eternal Word and Son of God had fulfilled his engagements as our incarnate Surety, God the Father most highly exalted him, in our nature, by advancing him to the mediatorial throne. For the two circumstances, that it is Christ, as Man, who is thus exalted, and that he is exalted as Mediator, render this perfectly consistent with his eternal glory and dominion, as "God over all, blessed for evermore." The absolute kingdom of the Creator, and the mediatorial kingdom of the Redeemer, established for the benefit and salvation of rebels against the Creator, who are condemned by his law, must be distinguished. (*Note, 1 Cor.* xv. 24—28.) It was in consequence of the engagements of the eternal Son, that the dispensation of mercy was introduced. It was "for this joy set before him, that he endured the "cross, &c." Nothing could be deducted from his authority, as God, nor any thing added to it; but it did not consist with the honour of the divine law and justice to deal with men, except through a Mediator, who was one with the Father and one with them, their Surety, Sacrifice, and Intercessor. The mediatorial kingdom alone was *given* to Christ, and given to him as man; but had he not been God also, and possessed of all divine perfections, how could he possibly have administered it? (*Note, Matt.* xxviii. 18.) Thus God the Father *gave him a name*, and a degree of honour and authority, above that of every other name, so that no created being ever was, or could be, so honoured as he was, who had been the Man of sorrows, and crucified between two thieves! Insomuch, that at the name of Jesus, the name given to a poor Babe, born in a stable and laid in the manger, (because that Babe was Emmanuel, "God with us," that Child born was the "mighty God,") every knee should bow, in submission and adoration. That is, all rational creatures shall either willingly adore him, or be punished as the enemies of God and his kingdom. This includes angels and saints in heaven, men on earth, the bodies of the dead who are under the earth, and indeed all the principalities and powers of darkness. In short, every tongue shall confess, every creature must, one way or another, acknowledge, that Jesus Christ is Lord of all, the Lord of glory, yea, JEHOVAH the Saviour; and this will be so far from interfering with the honour of God the Father, (as Anti-trinitarians object,) that it will be to his glory. For Christ and the Father are One, and the whole Deity is more displayed and glorified in his Person and Redemption before the whole universe, than by all his other works: so that all the honour and worship which is rendered to the Person of the Son, as "God manifest in the "flesh," is virtually rendered to the Godhead, through the medium of his humanity, by which alone sinners can know, approach unto, or worship, the infinite God. (*Notes*, &c. *Ps.* ii. *Is.* xlv. 21—25. *Rom.* xiv. 10—12.)

you, both [m] to will and to do of *his* [n] good pleasure.

14 Do all things [o] without murmurings and [p] disputings:

15 That ye may be [q] blameless [r] and * harmless, [s] the sons of God, without

m 1 Kings viii 58 1Chr. xxix 14—18. Ezra i 1 5 vii 27. Neh. ii 4. Ps. cx. 3 cxix 36. cxii. 4 Prov. xxi. 1 John vi 45 65 Eph. ii. 4, 5 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14. Tit. iii. 4, 5. 1 Pet. i. 3
n Luke xii 32. Rom ix. 11. 16. Eph. i. 5 9. 11 ii. 8. 2 Thes i 11 2 Tim i. 9 ——— o 3 Ex. xvi. 7, 8 Num. xiv. 27 Ps cvi. 25 Matt. xx 11. Mark xiv 5 Acts vi 1 1 Cor x 10 Jam v. Jude 16. ——— p Prov xiii 10 xv. 17, 18. Mark ix. 33, 34. Acts xv 2. 7 39 Rom. xii. 18. xiv 1 xvi 17. 1 Cor. i. 10—12 iii. 3—5 2 Cor. xii 20 Gal. v 15. 26. Eph. iv. 31, 32. 1 Thes. v 13. 15. 1 Tim. vi 3—5. Heb. xii 14 Jam i. 20. iii. 14—18. iv. 1. 1 Pet. iii. 11. ——— q Luke i. 6. 1 Cor i. 8. Eph. v 27 1 Thes. v. 23. 1 Tim iii 2. 10. v. 7. Tit, i 6. 2 Pet. iii. 14. ——— r Matt. x. 16. Rom xvi. 19 *Marg.* Heb vii 16. ——— * Or, *sincere*. i 10 ——— s Matt v 45 48. Luke vi 35, 36. 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. Eph. v. 1, 2, 7, 8 1 Pet. i 14—17. ii. 9, 10 1 John iii. 1—3.

[t] rebuke, in the midst of [u] a crooked and perverse nation, among whom † ye shine as lights in the world;

16 [x] Holding forth [y] the word of life; [z] that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, [a] that I have not run in vain, [b] neither laboured in vain.

17 Yea, [c] and if I be ‡ offered

t 1 Tim v. 14. 20. Tit. ii 10. 15 Rev. iii. 19.
u Deut. xxxii. 5. 6. Ps. cxxv. 5. Matt. xvii. 17 Acts xx. 30
† Or, *shine ye* Is. lx 1, 2. Matt v. 14—61. John v. 35 Eph v 8.
x i. 27. Ps. xl. 9, 10 lxxi. 17, 18. Matt. x 27 Luke xii. 8. Rom x. 8—15 Rev. xxii. 17. ——— y John vi. 63. 68. Acts xiii. 26. 2 Tim ii 15—17 Heb. iv 12, 13. 1 Pet i. 23. 1 John i. 1 ——— z i. 26. 2 Cor. i 14. 1 Thes. ii. 19, 20. ——— a Is xlix. 4. Gal ii. 2. iv. 11. 1 Thes iii 5. ——— b 30 1. 20 Acts xx. 24. xxi. 13. 2 Cor xii 15 ——— c 1 Thes ii. 8. 2 Tim iv. 6 1 John iii 16 ——— ‡ Gr. *poured forth*. Num xxviii. 7. Is liii 12

V. 12, 13. As the Philippians, whom the apostle addressed in the language of cordial love, had so endearing and encouraging an example before their eyes, let them continue to act as they had hitherto done. They had always been prompt to obey the will of Christ made known by his apostle, not merely while he abode among them, but even with increasing attention when he had left them; and he desired that they should now, in his absence, labour diligently in all the means of grace, and in the performance of every duty, to obtain more complete deliverance from the power of sin, by the renewal of their souls to holiness. Thus they should *work* earnestly in the great concern of *their own salvation*, "with fear and trembling;" lest any of them should seem to come short of the pomised rest, and be proved to have no root in themselves, by falling away in the hour of temptation; lest by negligence they should lose their comfort, and subject themselves to darkness and terror at the approach of death; or lest they should dishonour God, and prejudice men against the Gospel by falling into scandalous sins. 'The phrase, ("with fear and trembling,") 'in other places of these 'books, seems to imply, not only lowliness of mind, but 'diligence, and caution, and solicitude, and fear of displeasing.' (*Hammond.*) (*Marg. Ref.*) 'Though we 'are freely saved in Christ alone, apprehended by faith, 'yet we must press forward unto salvation in the way of 'righteousness, seeing that the sons of God are led by the 'Spirit of him, by whom they are justified, that they 'may walk in good works.' (*Beza.*) *Salvation* here signifies, not justification, either exclusively or primarily, but deliverance from sin and all its consequences, which must be and will be diligently and vigilantly laboured for by all the regenerate, so long as any sin remaineth, and which will not be in all things completed, till death shall be swallowed up in victory. The righteousness, atonement, and mediation of Christ, have made all things ready for our salvation, the Gospel calls us to partake of it, the regenerating Spirit of Christ quickens us when dead in sin, and brings us to repentance and faith. Thus excited and animated, we first diligently seek an interest in Christ, then to "make our calling and and election sure," and then for the full assurance of hope unto the end. In this way of diligence we also receive daily more and more of *salvation* itself, by liberty from sin, victory over it, peace and communion with God, and the earnests of heavenly felicity; and at the same time we glorify God, adorn the Gospel, are useful to our brethren, and shine as lights in the world. In doing these things, the Philippians should consider that God was even then working in them that willingness to repent, believe, and obey, of which they were conscious, and that ability to reduce their good desires to effect, which their past conduct evinced. In this he had acted according to his sovereign purpose of goodwill to men, and what they had experienced in this matter should animate them to more vigorous exertions, and direct them to depend wholly on God to enable them for every good work. *To will*, &c. 'We are not therefore 'stocks, but are willing in doing well; not that God 'helps the imbecility of our will, but that from being evil 'he makes it good, and that wholly of his grace.' "*And* "*to do.*" 'He does not say, that we may have the faculty of willing and doing well, if we will; but he says, 'that the efficacious gift of willing and doing well is bestowed on us.' (*Beza.*) This shows the nature of divine influences upon the mind, according to the constitution of rational nature, and not against it, by producing in us a willing mind to use all means of obtaining help and deliverance, and not by driving or constraining us against our will. By the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, the mind and heart are prepared to discern and love truth and holiness; the Gospel sets objects before us, and proposes them to us, suited to this new state of mind and heart, and we accordingly choose them, without the least infringement of our liberty. We feel no force, we are perfectly voluntary, we act according to our present feelings and desires, as if the whole were from ourselves; and perhaps it is not till long after, that we learn from what Author and Source the revolution in our judgment and affections, which led to newness of life, originated; nay, numbers cannot clearly discern this during their subsequent earthly course. In short, "the carnal mind "is enmity against God;" all are by nature carnally minded; none are of themselves willing to repent and believe the Gospel, according to the word of God; none can be compelled to do this against their will; but "God works "in us to will and to do of his good pleasure," (*Marg. Ref.*) 'the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may 'have a good will, and working with us, when we have 'that good will.' (*Art.* x.) If the opposers of the doctrine, improperly called Calvinistic, in former and latter times, had been *willing* and *able* to understand those against whom they contend, it would have saved them immense labour, in combating sentiments, which few indeed maintain in the sense which they seem to suppose. One of them, however, has repeatedly quoted, "*operatur in no*"*bis velle*," as one of Calvin's dreadful dogmas, when it is exactly the vulgate translation of St. Paul's words, which we render, "works in us to will!"

upon [d] the sacrifice and service of your faith, [e] I joy, and rejoice with you all.

18 For the same cause also [f] do ye rejoice with me.

19 * But [g] I trust in the Lord Jesus [h] to send Timotheus shortly unto you, [i] that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state.

20 For [k] I have no man † like-minded, who will naturally care for your state.

21 For [l] all seek their own, not [m] the things which are Jesus Christ's.

22 But [n] ye know the proof of him, that, [o] as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.

23 Him therefore I hope to send presently, [p] so soon as I shall see how it will go with me.

d iv. 18. Rom xii. 1. xv 16. Heb. xiii. 15, 16 1 Pet. ii. 5.
e Col. i. 24. 1 Thes. iii. 7—9.
f iii. 1. iv. 4. Eph. iii 13. Jam i. 2—4.
* Or, *moreover.*
g 24 Jer xvii. 5. Matt xii. 21. Rom. xv. 12. Eph i. 13 2 Tim. i 12 *Marg.* Jam iv 15 1 Pet i. 21.
h 23. 25. i. 1 Rom. xvi 21. 1 Cor. iv. 17. Eph. vi. 21, 22. Col. iv 8, 9. 1 Thes iii. 2. 6.——i 23 1 Thes. iii 6—8. 2 Thes. i. 3. Philem 5—7. 3 John 3, 4.
k 2. 22 Prov. xxxi 29 John x. 13. xii. 6. 1 Cor. i. 10, 11. Col iv. 11. 1 Tim. i. 2. 2 Tim. i. 5
† Or, *so dear unto me* 1 Sam. xviii. 1. 3
l 4 Is. lvi 11. Mal i. 10 Matt. xvi 24 Luke ix 57—62. xiv. 26. Acts xiii 13. xv 38. 1 Cor. x. 24 33 xiii 5. 2 Tim. i. 15. iv. 10. 16.
m i. 20 21 2 Cor. iv. 5 v. 14, 15.——n Acts xvi 3—12 2 Cor ii. 9. viii. 8. 22. 24.——o *See on*, 20. 1 Tim. i. 18. 2 Tim, i. 2. Tit i. 4.——p 1 Sam. xxii. 3.

V. 14—18. In all their concerns, whether secular or religious, the Philippians were exhorted to avoid every kind of *murmuring* against the appointments of God, and *grudging* of one another; and all angry controversies, or ambitious competitions for pre-eminence. Thus they would be blameless, and not liable to be accused by their neighbours, as contentious, selfish, deceitful, or injurious; their whole conduct would be harmless and inoffensive, as well as benevolent; and they would appear to be the children of God, by the purity, equity, and love, exhibited in their characters. They would escape the reproach and censure of observers; and their bold profession of the Gospel in the face of persecutors, joined with their holy conversation and spiritual worship, would cause them to shine, amidst their immoral, idolatrous, and licentious countrymen, as "lights in the world." The words may be rendered as the imperative, "Shine ye, &c." The nation indeed, to which they belonged, was crooked, deceitful, injurious, and perverse; which appeared in their conduct towards one another, as well as in their persecution of the Christians: but the doctrine and example of consistent believers would tend to enlighten them, and to direct their way to Christ and holiness; even as the light-house warns the mariners to avoid the rocks, and directs their course into the harbour. This must be attempted, not only by *holding fast* the truth, but by "hold-" ing forth the word of life," in their profession, discourse, public ordinances, and holy actions. In this manner they would certainly be saved themselves, and be instruments of saving others; and the good work, begun among them, would be diffused and perpetuated to other generations. This would enable the apostle to anticipate the joy reserved for him in the day of Christ, when it would appear that his labours at Philippi had not been fruitless, and that he had not run as one that loses the race. And, provided their faith, and its blessed fruits, were thus presented in Christ Jesus, as an acceptable and honourable sacrifice and service to God; if he should be offered on that sacrifice, by the shedding of his blood, as a martyr in the glorious cause, as the drink offerings were poured upon the sacrifices; (*Marg. Ref.*) he would be so far from regretting this event, that he would rejoice at thus suffering for the confirmation of their faith, and congratulate them, yea, share their happiness, even while enduring the agonies of death. He would not therefore have them be troubled on his account; but rather rejoice with him and for him as a very happy man, even in his imprisonment, and in the prospect of a violent death! Nothing can exceed the genuine magnanimity and disinterested love, expressed in this most beautiful passage.

V. 19—23. The apostle did not, it seems, suppose, that he was at that time to suffer death: he "trusted in " the Lord Jesus," in whose hand all hearts and events were, that he should be enabled shortly to send Timothy, to inquire into the state of their souls and of the Church, the result of which, he was persuaded, would conduce to his comfort. He had selected him for this service, because he had at that time no one with him of so excellent a spirit as Timothy, and so entirely coincident with himself in his views and aims; or who would be concerned for their welfare, with so prudent, tender, and assiduous an affection, like the natural love of parents to their children. For all too much sought their own ease, safety, interest, credit, or indulgence, which often interfered with the work, honour, and cause of Christ. Probably, this was wholly the case with several, who had offered their assistance to Paul, but had declined difficult and perilous services: others perhaps had rendered themselves suspected by the same selfish conduct; and most concerned had given the apostle cause for dissatisfaction, by preferring easier and more secure services to those of far greater importance, but connected with more self-denial, labour, and peril. It may be supposed that several of his most approved helpers were absent on other services, and others might be fully employed at Rome: but, after all deductions and limitations, the apostle's complaint must stand as a lamentable testimony to the selfishness of human nature. The Philippians, however, had already had experimental proof of Timothy; and they well knew, that he had imbibed the very mind of the apostle, as his genuine son in the faith: and that he was ever ready to enter into his views, to concur in his measures, to observe his directions, to consult his comfort, and to labour, venture, and suffer in the cause of Christ; and in serving with him in spreading the Gospel, as a son with his father. But he deemed it better not to send him, till he knew how his own cause would be decided, which he continually expected to come on before the Emperor's tribunal. The words, "trust in " the Lord Jesus, &c." as introduced with reference to a providential concern, and not any thing immediately relating to his salvation and grace, should not pass unnoticed. Perhaps the most satisfactory assurance of our Lord's Deity may be obtained, by carefully noting such words, as seem to drop, without design, from the pen of the sacred writer, and which are seldom noticed in the controversy; but which can in no other way be reconciled to

24 But [q] I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly.

25 Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you [r] Epaphroditus, [s] my brother, [t] and companion in labour, [u] and fellow-soldier, [x] but your messenger, [y] and he that ministered to my wants.

26 For [z] he longed after you all, and was [a] full of heaviness, because that [b] ye had heard that he had been sick.

27 For indeed he was sick [c] nigh unto death: [d] but God had mercy on him: and not on him only, [e] but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

28 I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when [f] ye see him again, ye may rejoice, [g] and that I may be the less sorrowful.

29 [h] Receive him therefore in the Lord [i] with all gladness; [k] and * hold such in reputation:

30 Because for [l] the work of Christ he was [m] nigh unto death, not regarding his life, [n] to supply your lack of service toward me.

q *See on*, 19. i. 25, 26. Rom. xv. 29, 30. Philem. 22. 2 John 12 3 John 14.
r iv. 18.
s 2Cor. ii. 14. viii. 22. Philem 1
t iv 3. 1 Cor. iii. 9. 2 Cor viii. 23. Col. i. 7 iv 11. 1 Thes. iii 2. Philem. 1. 24.
u 2 Tim. ii. 3, 4. Philem. 2
x Prov xxv. 13. John xvii. 16. 2 Cor viii. 23. Heb. iii. 1. *Gr.*
y iv. 18. 2 Cor. xi. 7, 8.
z i. 8. iv. 1. 2 Sam xiii 39. Rom. i. 11. 2 Cor ix. 14.——a Job ix 27. Ps. lxix 20. Prov. xii 25 Is. lxi 3. Matt xi. 28 xxvi. 37. Rom. ix. 2. 1 Pet. i 6.——b 2 Sam. xxiv. 17. John xi. 35, 36 Acts xxi 13 Rom. xii 15. 1 Cor. xii. 26 Gal vi 2. Eph iii. 13.——c 30 2 Kings xx. 1. Ps cvii 18. Ec ix 1, 2. John xi. 3, 4. Acts ix. 37.——d Job v. 19 Ps xxx. 1—3 10, 11. xxxiv. 19. xliii 2. 38. ciii. 3, 4. cvii. 19—22. Is. xxxviii. 17. Acts ix. 39–41.
e Is xxvii 8 Jer. viii 18. ix. 24. xlv. 3 Hab. iii. 2. 1 Cor. x. 13. 2 Cor ii 7.
f 26 Gen xlv. 27, 28. xlvi. 29, 30. xlviii 11. John xvi. 22. Acts xx. 38. 2 Tim 1. 4
g *See on*, 26. 2 Cor. ii. 3. 1 John i. 3, 4.
h Matt. x 40, 41. Luke ix. 5. John xiii. 20. Rom. xvi. 2. 1 Cor. xvi. 10. 2 Cor. vii 2. Col. iv. 10. 3 John 10.
i Is lii. 7. Luke ii. 10, 11. Acts ii 46. viii 8. Rom. x 15. Eph iv. 9—11.——k 2 Cor. x. 18. 1 Thes. v 12. Heb. xiii. 17 ——* Or, *honour such.* Acts xxviii. 10 1 Tim v 17——l 1 Cor. xv. 58. xvi 10.——m 17 27. i 19. 20 Matt xxv. 36–40 Acts xx. 24 Rom. xvi. 4 2 Cor xii 15. Rev. xii. 11.——n iv 10 18 1 Cor. xvi. 17. Philem. 13.

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other scriptures. (*Marg. Ref.*) *Proof*, &c. (22.) This shows that Timothy was at Philippi with the apostle; yet the history does not expressly mention it: but, by carefully comparing one part of the narrative with another, this appears evidently to have been the case. (*Marg. Ref.*) Undesigned coincidences of this kind, between the history and the Epistles, prove that both are genuine; and if genuine, then inspired.

V. 24—30. The apostle was satisfied, confiding in the Lord that he should speedily regain his liberty, and be enabled to pay the Philippians another visit. But before he could either spare Timothy or come himself, he deemed it expedient to send Epaphroditus, whom he owned as a brother, and whom they had sent as their messenger, to bring him a supply to his urgent necessities. Probably, Epaphroditus was a pastor of the Church at Philippi; and, being absent from his stated charge, he longed after them, and his labours of love among them: especially he was in heaviness, because they had heard of his sickness, and the thoughts of their sorrow on his account were more painful to him than his own sickness! What a beautiful and admirable instance of genuine sensibility and affection is here! In what book, except the Scriptures, do we meet with such? Indeed, Epaphroditus had been dangerously ill; but God had graciously restored him for further usefulness: and in this he had shown mercy to the apostle also; to whom it would have been an additional sorrow, if so excellent a person had lost his life by ministering to him in his bonds. It does not appear that any miracle was wrought in this case; and we may thence infer that the gift of miracles could only be exercised on particular occasions, of which those endued with them had some previous intimation. This is clearly intimated; and it shows that the apostle was as ready to own his want of power, when truth required it, as to speak of his miracles when needful. On account therefore of the late sickness of Epaphroditus, the apostle had been the more careful to send him back, that the joy of the Philippians might be increased by seeing their beloved minister in health again; for the very thought of that joy would alleviate his sorrows, though at a distance from them; and though by the loss of Epaphroditus' assistance and company. He would, therefore, have them to receive him, for the Lord's sake, with all expressions of thankful joy; and to esteem and highly honour such affectionate laborious ministers: for indeed the sickness of Epaphroditus had been the effect of his excess of diligence in the work of Christ; as he had not even regarded his life, that, in the place of the absent Philippians, he might render every possible service to the apostle, both in his personal concerns, and in those relating to the propagation of the Gospel. As Philippi lay at a great distance from Rome, Epaphroditus must have continued with the apostle a long time; or the report of his sickness at Rome could not have reached Philippi, and that of their sorrow have reached Rome, before Epaphroditus left that city, and consequently the epistle must have been written towards the close of the apostle's two years imprisonment. *Messenger.* (25.) The original is *apostle.* The marginal references, distinguished by *Gr.* will show the reader the different ways in which that word is used by the sacred writers; and impartiality requires me to observe, that it does not appear, in any one instance, to be used for *bishop*, in the general acceptation of the word.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

All our consolations, hopes, and experience, in the fellowship of the Spirit, and the bowels and mercies of God our Saviour, as well as all our regard to our own peace, should engage us to be of one mind with our brethren, and so to fulfil the joy of all wise ministers and Christians. Nothing so honours Christ, defeats the machinations of his enemies, or fills the soul with consolation, as this holy love: but envy, contention, and ambition, not only disturb the peace of the Church, but torture the soul that entertains them. Neither inward nor outward peace can be enjoyed, except in proportion as "in lowliness of mind "we esteem others better than ourselves, and look at the "things of others as well as at our own." These are hard lessons to the proud and carnal heart of man. Many have learned the doctrines of the Gospel very accurately, who have not "thus learned Christ." We cannot study this subject successfully, except by continually looking unto Jesus; but whilst faith penetrates the veil of sensible objects, and contemplates the Saviour "in the form of "God, and thinking it no robbery to be equal with God;" yet "making himself of no reputation," assuming the form

CHAP. III.

The apostle exhorts to joy in the Lord; and gives cautions against false teachers, 1, 2: *shows that Christians are the true circumcision,* 3; *and that he had better grounds of carnal confidence than most had, who trusted in the law,* 4—6; *but that he counted this, and all other things, as loss and dung, compared to the knowledge of Christ, and the righteousness of God by faith in him,* 7—9; *desiring also to know the power of his resurrection, and to be conformed to him, even in suffering and death; if so be he might attain to the resurrection of the just,* 10, 11. *He owns, that he was not yet perfected; but that he anxiously and earnestly sought this prize of his calling,* 12—14. *He exhorts to an imitation of his example,* 15—17; *as many professing Christianity, walked after the flesh, in the way of destruction,* 18, 19; *with whom he contrasts true christians, their heavenly conversation, and their expectation of Christ, to raise their vile body, like to his glorified body,* 20, 21.

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of a servant and the nature of man; appearing as an infant in the stable, as a poor carpenter at Nazareth, as an indigent and despised preacher in Galilee and Judea; as obedient to the law during his life, and as an insulted criminal at his death upon the cross; when these things are contemplated, and the height of his essential glory is contrasted with the depth of his voluntary abasement, and with the motives and effects of this stupendous transaction, we see such obligations and encouragements to self-denying love, as the whole universe besides can never supply; and " beholding, as in a glass, this glory of our Lord, we " are gradually changed into his image." And whilst we contemplate his subsequent exaltation, and the name given to this lowly Sufferer above every name, we learn to abase ourselves, that we may be exalted, to serve others in order to our own best interest, and to labour and suffer reproach, that we may ensure glory, honour, and immortality. But, as every knee must bow to Christ, as every tongue must confess him to be " Lord, to the glory of God the Father," let us examine whether we do indeed thus reverence, love, obey, and worship, the incarnate Son of God, or whether we are yet among those enemies, who must be bruised under his feet shortly.

V. 12—18.

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Even those professed Christians, of whom we have the most favourable opinion, should be exhorted not only to be obedient, as in the presence of their pastors, but to increase in circumspection, when removed from under their faithful care. Thus ought we all to " work out our own " salvation" with jealous fear and humble caution; waiting for the full assurance of hope, and the renewal of our souls to holiness, in the way of simple dependence, diligent obedience, and serious attendance on the ordinances of God; thanking him for working in us the willing mind, and calling upon him for grace to perform the duties incumbent on us. Surely, some zealous advocates for evangelical truths have never read this chapter, for they can do nothing " without murmurings and disputings!" These are their element; these are the unhallowed weapons of their warfare. How can they be " blameless and harmless," on this plan, when envy and strife are inseparable from " confusion and every evil work?" And how can they think themselves the children of God, who in so many features bear the express image of Satan? But let us pray to be made peaceable, humble, unambitious, and inoffensive, both in the Church and in the community, that " by well " doing we may put to silence" the calumnies of ungodly men; and that we may be without rebuke in the midst of this our nation; which, alas! is proved to be crooked and perverse, by the prevalence of infidelity, impiety, and every kind of immorality, under a Christian profession, and abundant means of religious instruction. Let us then endeavour to shine among our neighbours as lights in the world, and to hold forth the word of life in our families and circle, by an open profession of evangelical truth, connected with a holy conversation. Then the ministers who have preached the Gospel will anticipate their rejoicings in the day of Christ, assured that it will then appear that " they did not run nor labour in vain," and hoping that far more extensive and permanent good was done than they lived to witness. In such a prospect, a zealous servant of Christ would be animated to a readiness for death in his Master's cause; whilst the exultation of faith and grace would conquer nature's reluctance to suffering; and certainly they, who have been thus offered upon the sacrifice of their brethren's faith, are to be considered as objects of peculiar congratulation, for they have almost universally died rejoicing, and triumphant.

V. 19—30.

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Alas! in the best times how few are like-minded with the apostle, and naturally care for the state of the Church and of their fellow-christians! For while numbers evidently and wholly seek their own interest, reputation, ease, or indulgence, " and not the things of Jesus Christ," we are all too attentive to personal concerns, and sometimes allow them to interfere with our usefulness. So that a man who is ready to engage even in a service of great importance, where no emolument or credit can be expected, and in which losses, hardships, perils, sufferings, must be encountered, is deemed a prodigy, and rather an object of astonishment than of imitation. But let us seek deliverance from this mean regard to our own accommodation, by increasing zeal for the glory of God and love to the souls of men; that they who best know the proof of us may perceive, that we should have been ready to

[a] FINALLY, my brethren, [b] rejoice in the Lord. [c] To write the same things to you, to me indeed *is* not grievous, but for you *it is* safe.

2 Beware [d] of dogs, beware of [e] evil workers, beware of [f] the concision.

3 For [g] we are the circumcision, which [h] worship God in the Spirit, and [i] rejoice in Christ Jesus, and [k] have no confidence in the flesh:

a iv. 8. 2 Cor. xiii. 11. Eph. vi. 10. 2 Thes. iv. 1. *Gr.* 1 Pet. iii. 8.
b 3. iv. 4. Deut. xii. 18. xvi. 11. 1 Sam. ii. 1. 1 Chr. xv. 28. xvi. 10. 31—33. xxix. 22. 2 Chr. xxx. 26, 27. Neh. viii. 10. Job xxii. 26. Ps. v. 11. xxxii. 11. xxxiii. 1. xxxvii. 4. xlii. 4. xcvii. 1. c. 1, 2. cxlix. 2. Is. xii. 2, 3. xli. 16. lxi. 10. lxv. 14. lxvi. 11, 12. Joel ii. 23. Hab. iii. 17, 18. Zeph. iii. 14. 17. Zech. x. 7. Matt. v. 12. Luke i. 47. Rom. v. 2, 3. 11. 1 Thes. v. 16. Jam. i. 2. 1 Pet. i. 6—8. iv. 13.——c ii. 17, 18. 2 Pet. i. 12. iii. 6.——d Prov. xxvi. 11. Is. lvi. 10. Matt. vii. 15. xxiv. 10. Gal. v. 15. 2 Tim. iv. 14, 15. 2 Pet. ii. 22. Rev. xxii. 15.——e 19. Matt. vii. 22, 23. 2 Cor. xi. 13. Gal. v. 13. 1 Tim. i. 19. 2 Tim. iii. 1—6. iv. 3, 4. Tit. i. 16. 2 Pet. ii. 18—20. Jude 4. 10—13. Rev. xxi. 8.——f 3. Rom. ii. 28. Gal. ii. 3, 4. v. 1, 2. 6. Rev. ii. 9. iii. 9.——g Gen. xvii. 5—11. Deut. x. 16. xxx. 6. Jer. iv. 4. ix. 26. Rom. ii. 25—29. iv. 11, 12. Col. ii. 11.——h Mal. i. 11. John iv. 23, 24. Rom. i. 9. vii. 6. viii. 15. 26, 27. Eph. vi. 18. Jude 20.——i *See on,* b. 1. 7—9. Ps. cv. 3. Is. xlv. 25. Jer. ix. 23, 24. 1 Cor. i. 29—31. Gal. vi. 13, 14.——k 4—6. 1 Pet. i. 23—25.

4 Though [l] I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:

5 [m] Circumcised the eighth day, [n] of the stock of Israel, [o] *of* the tribe of Benjamin, [p] an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, [q] a Pharisee;

6 Concerning [r] zeal, [s] persecuting the church; [t] touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

7 But what things [u] were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

l 2 Cor. xi. 18—22.
m Gen. xvii. 12. Luke ii. 21. John vii. 21—24.
n Acts xxii. 3. 2 Cor. xi. 22.
o Rom. xi. 1.
p Gen. xiv. 13. xl. 15. xli. 12. 1 Sam. iv. 6. Jon. i. 9. Acts vi. 1. 2 Cor. xi. 22.
q Acts xxiii. 6. xxvi. 4, 5.
r 2 Sam. xxi. 2. 2 Kings x. 16. Acts xxi. 20. Rom. x. 2. Gal. i. 13, 14.
s Acts viii. 3. ix. 1. &c. xxii. 3, 4. xxvi. 9, 10. 1 Cor. xv. 9. 1 Tim. i. 13.——t Matt. v. 20. xxiii. 25. Mark x. 20, 21. Acts xxvi. 9. Rom. vii. 9. ix. 31, 32. x. 2—5.——u 4—6. 8—10. Gen. xix. 17. 26. Job ii. 4. Prov. xiii. 8. xxiii. 23. Matt. xiii. 44—46. xvi. 26. Luke xiv. 26. 33. xvi. 8. xvii. 31—33. Acts xxvii. 18, 19. 38. Gal. ii. 15, 16. v. 2—5.

have served with Paul in all his self-denying labours, like dutiful sons with an honoured father. Thus young ministers should attach themselves to the most faithful, zealous, and useful of their seniors: to learn, as it were, the spiritual warfare under such veteran and experienced soldiers; and thus aged ministers should communicate their views to their younger brethren, and endeavour also to instil those principles of activity, by which they have been excited to self-denying, disinterested diligence in the work of the Lord; that they may be able to introduce them into useful services, as their companions in labour, and approved fellow-soldiers. What an ingenuous spirit doth the Gospel inspire! The most eminent ministers, who most simply trust the Lord Jesus for every thing, will yet frankly acknowledge their obligations for temporal assistance to those who owe their salvation to their labours of love. The affectionate pastor will be more full of heaviness for the grief of his people on his account, than for his own pain and sickness; and he will long after them, and to renew his labours among them, as a tender mother doth after her beloved infant. The Lord often afflicts such men, to manifest the excellency of their disposition; but he will have mercy upon them, and not let them have sorrow upon sorrow; and they will readily put themselves to inconveniences to remove the grief, or increase the comfort, of their brethren; rejoicing, though at a distance, in the thoughts of their joy, as an alleviation of their own sorrow. Such ministers as thus spend their strength, and disregard even life and health in his cause, and to supply the lack of service of those who are incapable of performing it, should be peculiarly honoured by the Church, and by every Christian; yet none should, without necessity, be kept from the people of their peculiar charge.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1—7. The apostle deemed it needful to close the preceding practical exhortations by calling on the Philippians to rejoice in the Lord Jesus, and in their relation to him as their Glory and Salvation. This he had often inculcated by various methods, and it was not difficult for him to repeat the same instruction; but it was safe for them, and suited to their afflicted circumstances. Some think he meant that it was easy for him, but safe for them, to write the same things to them which he had done to other Churches. He also warned them to "beware of *dogs.*" The Jews contemptuously called the Gentiles *dogs;* but the bigoted selfish Judaizing teachers are supposed to be here intended by that emblem, as they could fawn on those that favoured them, yet were greedy, snarling, and ready to bite or devour such as opposed them. Perhaps apostates from Christianity are meant. (*Marg. Ref. Note, Is.* lvi. 9—12.) The evil workers may also include those teachers and professors who abused the doctrines of grace, and indulged themselves in sin as a part of their Christian liberty. The Philippians, however, were especially cautioned to "beware of *the concision,*" or the *cutting off:* the Judaizers laid much stress on *cutting off* the foreskin, though they did not mortify the deeds of the body; they wanted to *cut off* the Gentiles from the Church, but they *cut off* themselves and others from salvation by their dependence on the works of the law. The honourable title of *the circumcision* did not therefore belong to them. That ancient rite was no longer of any value; Christians were the true circumcision, the covenant-people of God, the spiritual seed of Abraham; "the "righteousness of faith" was sealed to them by the circumcision of the heart, of which baptism was the outward sign. They worshipped God, not so much according to external forms as spiritually, and under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, (*Note, John* iv. 23, 24;) and they rejoiced and *gloried* in Jesus Christ, the Subject of all the prophecies, and the Substance of all the shadows of the old dispensation. The apostle did not thus put himself on a level with the Gentile converts, because he had nothing of a carnal or external nature to depend on; for if any man supposed himself to have distinctions of this kind to glory in, he could evince that he had more. He had been circumcised on the eighth day, according to the law and custom; he could trace back his genealogy to Israel and Abraham; he was of the tribe of Benjamin, which was descended from Rachel, the wife of Jacob's choice; and which never apostatized from the worship of God at the temple, as most of the other tribes had done. Both his parents were Hebrews; so that he was neither born nor educated a Hellenist Jew, who might be supposed less exact in the law. As a Pharisee, he had been peculiarly strict, both in the Mosaic ceremonies and the traditions of the elders; his persecution of the Church proved his

8 Yea [x] doubtless, and [y] I count all things *but* loss for [z] the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus [a] my Lord: [b] for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them [c] *but* dung, that I may [d] win Christ,

9 And [e] be found [f] in him, [g] not having mine own righteousness, [h] which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, [i] the righteousness which is of God by faith:

x Num xiv. 30. Ps cxxvi 6 Luke xi. 20 1 Cor. ix 10 1 John ii 19. y Acts xx. 24. Rom viii 18 z 10 Is. liii 11. Jer. ix. 23, 24. Matt. xi 25—27 xvi. 16, 17 Luke x. 21, 22 John xiv. 7. 20. xvi 3. xvii 8 1 Cor. ii. 2 2 Cor. iv 4. 6. Gal. i. 16. Eph i 17 18 iii 8, 9. 16, 19 Col ii 2, 3 1 Pet ii. 7 2 Pet i. 3. iii. 18. 1 John v 20.

a Luke i. 43. xx. 42—44 John xx 13. 28 ——b *See on*, 7 Matt. xix. 27—29. 1 Cor. iv 9—13. 2 Cor xi. 23—27. 2 Tim iv. 6 ——c 1 Kings xiv. 10 2 Kings ix. 37 Job xx. 4. Mal. ii. 3. ——d Matt. xiii 44—46 Heb iii. 17. 1 John i. 3. —e Gen. vii. 23. Deut xix. 3, 4. Heb. vi. 18. 1 Pet. iii 13, 20 ——f *See on.* Rom. viii. 1. xvi. 7. 1 Cor. i. 30 2 Cor. v 17 ——g 6. 1 Kings viii. 46. 2 Chr xxxii. 25 31. Job ix. 28—31. x. 14, 15. xv. 14—16 xlii. 5 6 Ps xiv. 3 xix 12 cxxx. 3, 4 cxliii. 2 Ec vii 20 Is vi. 5 liii. 6 lxiv. 5, 6 Matt. ix. 13. Rom ix 31, 32. x 1—3. 2 Tim. i. 9 Tit iii. 5. Jam. iii. 2. 1 John i. 8—10 ——h Deut. xxvii. 26. Luke x. 25—29. Rom. iii 19, 20. iv. 13—15. vii. 5—13. viii. 3 x 4, 5 Gal. iii 10—13. 21, 22. Jam ii. 9—11. 1 John iii. 4. ——i Ps. lxxi. 15, 16. Is xlv 24, 25. xlvi. 13. liii 11. Jer. xxiii 6. xxxiii. 16 Dan. ix. 24 John xvi. 8—11. Rom i. 17. iii. 21, 22. iv. 5, 6. 13. v. 21 x. 3. 6 10. 1 Cor. i. 30. 2 Cor. v. 21. Gal. ii. 16 iii. 11. 2 Pet. i. 1.

10 That [k] I may know him, [l] and the power of his resurrection, [m] and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death;

11 If [n] by any means I might [o] attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

12 ¶ Not as though [p] I had already attained, either were [q] already perfect: but [r] I follow after, if [s] that I may apprehend that for which also I am [t] apprehended of Christ Jesus.

13 Brethren, [u] I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* [x] one thing

k *See on*, z. 8. 1 John ii. 3. 5. l John v. 21—29. x. 18. xi. 25, 26. Acts ii. 31—33. Rom vi 4—11. viii. 10, 11. 1 Cor xv. 21—23. 2 Cor. i 10. iv. 10—13. xiii. 4. Eph. i. 19—21. Col. ii. 13 iii. 1. 1 Thes. iv. 14, 15. 1 Pet. i. 3 iv. 1, 2 Rev. i. 18. m Matt. xx 23. Rom. vi. 3. 5. viii. 17. 29. 2 Cor. i. 5 Gal. ii. 20 Col. i. 24. 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12. 1 Pet. iv. 13, 14. n Ps xlix. 7. Acts xxvii. 12. Rom. xi. 14. 1 Cor. ix. 22. 27. 2 Cor. xi. 3. 1 Thes. iii. 5 2 Thes ii. 3 ——o Luke xiv. 14 xx. 35, 36. John xi. 24 Acts xxiii. 6. xxvi. 7 Heb. xi. 35. ——p 13. 16. Ps. cxix. 5. 173—176. Rom. vii 19—24 Gal. v. 17. Jam. iii 2. ——q Job xvii. 9 Ps. cxxxviii. 8. Prov iv. 18. 1 Cor xiii. 10. 2 Cor. vii 1 xiii 9. Eph. iv. 12. Heb. xii. 23. xiii. 21. 1 Pet. v. 10 2 Pet. i. 5—8. iii. 18. r 14 Ps. xlii. 1. lxiii 1—3 8. lxxxiv. 2. xciv. 15 Is li. 1. Hos vi 3. 1 Thes. v. 15 1 Tim. v. 10. vi. 11 Heb. xii. 14. 1 Pet. iii. 11—13. ——s 14 1 Tim. vi. 12 ——t Ps. cx. 2, 3. Act ix. 3—6. 15. Eph. i 4. 2 Thes. ii. 13. ——u 8. 12. i. 18—21. iv. 11—13. ——x Ps. xxvii. 4. Luke x. 42 2 Pet. iii. 8.

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zeal for that kind of religion; and his whole conduct, was externally so conformable to the letter of the law, that in respect of that kind of righteousness, no one could lay any thing to his charge. But all those things, which he once deemed most advantageous to him, and conducive to his acceptance with God, as well as to his reputation and preferment, he at length learned to account loss for Christ; being assured, that if he depended on them, or cleaved to them, they would prevent his salvation by Christ. He had therefore willingly renounced them all, as the merchant, in a storm, casts overboard his most valuable property, lest it should occasion the loss of his life. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8—11. 'The present time is to be noted; so that 'the apostle, as to what relates to justification before God, 'excludes all works; those which follow, as well as those 'which precede, faith.' (*Beza.*) The apostle not only had judged, at his first conversion, that his legal righteousness, and his worldly prospects, were loss to him, compared with Christ; but after many years spent in successfully preaching the Gospel with apostolical authority, miraculous gifts, immense labour, multiplied sufferings, and most exemplary holiness, he decidedly deemed all these things to be loss, in comparison of the most excellent knowledge of Christ by faith, in the glory of his Person and redemption. For his sake, whom he rejoiced to call his Lord, he had suffered the loss of his worldly friends, prospects, interests; and his strength of mind, his superior talents, his learning, and his connexion with the great, seemed to promise great prosperity. But he had renounced all; even his country and liberty; and he continually expected that he should be called to lay down his life in this cause; yet he accounted all these likewise to be most worthless in comparison of Christ, as the ground of his hope of acceptance with God, and of eternal salvation. He therefore gladly parted with them, in order to win "the Pearl of great price," which alone could make him rich, honourable, and happy for ever. For his great desire was "to be found in Christ," in the hour of death, and at the day of judgment; as Noah was in the ark, when the deluge swept away an unbelieving world: and to stand before God, not having, as his plea or title to life, "his own righteousness," which, having reference to the law, as its measure, could only condemn him; but "that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteous-"ness which is of God by faith;" even that righteousness, which God bestows on and imputes to the believing sinner; namely, the perfect obedience unto death of his incarnate Son, which alone can answer the demands of the law, and render a transgressor's salvation consistent with the perfect justice of God. (*Notes, Rom.* iii. iv. v. 2 *Cor.* v. 21.) All things else the apostle deemed worthless, compared with this knowledge of Christ, and that joyful, transforming view of his glory, and experience of his grace, which resulted from saving faith: that he might know more of the power of his resurrection, by the new creation of his soul to holiness; that he might have fellowship with him in his sufferings, both by the mortification of his sinful nature, and by enduring patiently the enmity of the world for his sake: "Being made con-"formable to his death;" both by dying to sin that he might live to God, and by laying down his life when called to it in the service of his beloved Saviour: and that so, by any means, at any rate, by making any sacrifice, or bearing any afflictions, he might attain to that perfect felicity to which the saints will be admitted at the resurrection, and of which their preceding joys are an anticipation. The apostle did not mean that he doubted of this happy event of his labours, (i. 21:) but he showed what that great object was which he pursued, and for which he renounced all other hopes and prospects, and endured such complicated trials; and he instructed others in the way of possessing an assured hope. It is evident, that the apostle speaks, not of the resurrection in general, for this will be both "of the just and of the unjust," but of "the "resurrection to eternal life," in that glorious view of it which is afterwards given. (*Note*, 20, 21.) When the sinner believes in Christ, he is immediately "justified by "faith, and has peace with God:" yet he, "through the "Spirit, waits for the hope of righteousness by faith;" for at the day of judgment, when living faith will be distinguished by its fruits from dead faith, the sentence of justification will not only be confirmed, but proclaimed to the whole assembled world.

I do, [y] forgetting those things which are behind, [z] and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

14 I [a] press toward the mark, for the prize of [b] the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

15 Let us therefore, [c] as many as be perfect, [d] be thus minded; and if in any thing ye be otherwise-minded, [e] God shall reveal even this unto you.

16 Nevertheless, [f] whereto we have already attained, [g] let us walk by the same rule, [h] let us mind the same thing.

y Ps. xlv. 10. 2 Cor. v. 16. Heb. vi. 1.
z ii. 12. Rom xv. 23—29. 1 Cor. ix 24—27 Heb. xii. 1, 2.
a Luke xvi. 16. 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18 v. 1. 2 Tim. iv 8. Rev. iii. 21.
b Rom. viii. 28—30 ix. 23, 24. 1 Thes ii. 12 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14. Heb. iii 1. 1 Pet i. 3, 4. 13. v. 10. 2 Pet i 3.
c Rom. xv. 1. 1 Cor ii. 6. xiv. 20. Col. i 28. iv. 12. 2 Tim. iii. 17. Heb. v. 14. *Gr* Jam i. 4 1 John ii. 5.
d 12—14. Gal v. 10 ——e Ps. xxv 8, 9. Prov ii. 3—6. iii. 5, 6. Is xxxv. 8. Luke xi. 13 John vii. 17 Jam. i 5.——f Gal. v. 7. Heb. x 38, 39. 2 Pet. ii. 20—22. Rev. ii. 4, 5. iii. 3
g Gal. vi. 16. Eph. v. 2—8 Col. ii. 6.——h *See on*, i. 27. ii 2 iv. 2.

17 Brethren, [i] be followers together of me, [k] and mark them which walk so, as ye have us for an ensample.

18 (For [l] many walk, of whom [m] I have told you often, and now tell you [n] even weeping, *that they are* the [o] enemies of the cross of Christ:

19 Whose [p] end *is* destruction, [q] whose god *is their* belly, and [r] *whose* glory *is* in their shame, [s] who mind earthly things.)

i iv. 9. 1 Cor iv. 16 x. 32, 33. xi. 1. 1 Thes. i. 6. ii. 10 14. 2 Thes. iii 7. 9 1 Tim. iv. 12 Heb. xiii. 7 1 Pet. v. 3.
k Ps. xxxvii 37. Rom. xvi. 17. 2 Thes. iii 14.
l Is. viii 11. Dan. iv. 37 Gal. ii. 14. Eph iv 17. 2 Thes. iii 11. 2 Pet. ii. 10. Jude 18.
m 1 Cor vi. 9. Gal v. 21 Eph. v. 5, 6. 1 Thes. iv 6.
n i. 4. Ps. cxix. 136. Jer ix 1. xiii. 17. Luke xix. 41. Acts xx 19 30, 31. Rom. ix. 2. 2 Cor. ii. 4. xi 29 ——o i 15, 16. 1 Cor i. 18. Gal. i. 7 vi. 12 ——p Matt. xxv 41. Luke xii. 45, 46 2 Cor. xi 15. 2 Thes. ii 8. 12. Heb. vi 6—8. 2 Pet. ii. 1 3 17. Jude 4. 13. Rev. xix. 20 xx. 9. 10. xxi 8. xxii 15 ——q ii. 21. 1 Sam ii 11—16. 29. Is. lvi. 10—12. Ez. xiii 19. xxxiv. 3 Mic. iii. 5 11. Mal. i. 12 Luke xii 19 xvi 19 Rom. xvi. 18. 1 Tim vi. 5. 2 Tim. iii 4. Tit. i. 11 2 Pet. ii 13. Jude 12.——r Ps. iii 1. Hos iv. 7. Hab ii. 15, 16 Luke xviii. 4. 1 Cor. v. 2. 6 2 Cor. xi. 12 Jam. iv. 16 2 Pet ii 18, 19. Jude 13 16. Rev. xviii. 7.——s *Ps.* iv 6, 7. xvii. 14 Matt. xvi. 23. Rom. viii 6, 7. 1 Cor. iii 3. 2 Pet ii. 3

V. 12—14. The apostle did not mention his simple dependence and earnestness of soul, as a proof that he had attained the prize, or was already perfected in his Saviour's image. On the contrary, he continued still pursuing, and aiming, by further labours, and progress in holiness, to finish his course and obtain the prize, for which he had been graciously arrested by the Lord Jesus, at the time when he was a malignant persecutor. He disregarded all past attainments and services; as the racer, in the Isthmian games, seemed to forget the ground over which he had run, and the competitors whom he had left behind; and he reached forth to further labours, and increased conformity to Christ, without loitering or weariness; as the racer exerted all his vigour and agility to outstrip those before him, and to pass over the remainder of his course. *One thing* engaged his attention, to the exclusion of all interfering considerations: thus he pressed forward to the mark with unremitting speed, that he might receive the prize of heavenly glory, which God had called on him, by Jesus Christ, to aspire after; even as the racer urged his course to the goal, keeping the victor's crown full in view, and animated by the acclamations of those, who excited him so to run that he might obtain. (*Note*, 1 *Cor*. ix. 24—27.)—The word rendered "were perfect," (12,) is different from that translated perfect in the fifteenth verse. It is the preterite passive of the verb, which is often translated *accomplish* or *accomplished;* and it is the same word which St. John uses concerning our Saviour, and which is rendered, "It is finished;" except that here it is in the first person singular, and there in the third. Whereas the word in the next verse is an adjective, derived indeed from the verb, but often used in a rather different meaning.

V. 15, 16. The apostle here exhorted all those that were *perfect* to be like-minded with him in these things, counting all but loss for Christ, deeming present attainments inconsiderable, and pressing forward to the mark. The very exhortation, (*Note*, 12—14.) implies that the temper and conduct, before described, form the Christian's highest perfection in this world. The word here used may signify the sound character of the established believer: the man who is matured in judgment and experience, and hath made most progress in Christianity. It is used in the Greek authors, for men of full age, (about thirty,) as distinguished from boys and young men; and the apostle conveys a similar idea by it in other passages, (1 *Cor*. ii. 6. xiv. 20. *Eph*. iv. 13. *Heb*. v. 14. *Gr*.) which seems to be the meaning of it in this place. In this way the Philippians would best wait for further instruction; and if any of them were otherwise minded than their brethren, or than the apostle, and under any mistake or misapprehension, in thus avoiding disputation, and diligently practising what they knew, from evangelical principles, they might hope that God would make known to them those things, of which they still remained ignorant: and their stronger brethren should bear with their prejudices, till they were in this manner obviated. Nevertheless, they all ought to be careful, not to decline from that measure of faith, diligence, constancy, and holiness, to which they had attained: but that, by walking according to the same rule of divine truth, and minding the same means of improvement, in which they had hitherto proceeded, they might keep the ground that they had gained, and make further progress; not growing slack in one part of their duty by zeal in another!

V. 17—19. With full confidence that he acted with propriety, the apostle called on his children at Philippi to imitate him; and to observe and copy such Christians as followed his example, and that of Timothy and Silas, in these respects: for alas! many walked in a very different manner. He had often spoken to them against their contagious principles and examples; and he now mentioned them, not with acrimony of resentment, but with tears of compassion for their souls, and of grief for the dishonour which they brought upon the Gospel. For in fact, they were the most dangerous enemies to the cross of Christ. They did not enter into, nay, they hated, the holy import of that instructive transaction, which was the grand display of the divine holiness, of the excellency of the law, and of the evil of sin; and their licentious lives more disgraced the doctrine of the cross, than all the obloquy and opposition of avowed enemies. The end of their vain profession, if persisted in, would certainly be final perdition; as "their god was their belly," the indulgence of their appetites was the end which they proposed to themselves, and the chief satisfaction which they sought: to this base end they sacrificed the most important interests, and from it they expected their happiness, instead of seeking it from the Lord. At the same time, 20 For [t] our conversation is in [u] heaven; [x] from whence also [y] we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ;

t i. 18–21. Ps. xvi. 11. xvii. 15. lxxiii. 24–26. Prov. xv 24 Matt. vi 19–21. xix 21 Luke xii. 21. 32–34. xiv. 14. 2 Cor. iv. 18. v. 1. 8. Eph ii 6 Col. i. 5 iii. 1–3. Heb. x. 34 35 1 Pet i 3, 4. ——u Gr. Is xxvi 1, 2. Gal. iv 26. Eph. ii. 19. Heb xii. 22 Rev. xxi 10–27 ——x Acts i 11. 1 Thes iv. 16 2 Thes i. 7, 8 Rev. i. 7.——y i 10. 1 Cor. i 7 1 Thes i. 10. 2 Tim. iv. 8. Tit ii 13. Heb. ix. 28. 2 Pet. iii. 12–14.

21 Who [z] shall change our vile body, [a] that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to [b] the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

z 1 Cor. xv. 42–44 49–54. a Matt xvii. 2. Col iii 4. 1 John iii. 2. Rev. i. 13, &c b Is xxv. 8. xxvi. 19 Hos. xiii 14. Matt. xxii. 29. xxviii. 18. John v. 25–29 xi. 24–26. 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26. 53–56. Eph. i. 19, 20 Rev i. 8, 18. xx. 11–15.

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they gloried in their licentious doctrines, practices, and success in making proselytes, and corrupting others; of which they ought to have been ashamed, and which would certainly terminate in their deep disgrace. For they were carnally minded, and, not savouring heavenly things, they regarded only their worldly pleasures and interests. Some expositors explain this almost exclusively of the Judaizing teachers and their followers, and some suppose the Gnostics to be especially meant; and doubtless many of each of these were of this stamp. Yet there were others who perverted the Gospel; and the apostle's words point out at least equally licentious Antinomian professors, whether Jews or Gentiles; of which we cannot doubt but many sprang up in every part of the church. Nor is it prudent to represent all the danger to lie on one side, when the opposite extreme is equally fatal.

V. 20, 21. In opposition to the base and grovelling characters before described, the apostle here showed that true Christians were citizens of heaven, where their hearts and treasures were lodged, and whence their hopes and comforts were derived: so that their judgment, affections, and conduct, would be of a heavenly nature. Thence also all true believers expected the coming of Christ to be their judge, and were continually preparing to meet him. Instead of idolizing animal gratifications, they deemed the body itself at present to be *vile*, and in a *humiliating condition;* being the seat of ensnaring appetites, the instrument of sins, the encumbrance of the soul in duty, liable to manifold loathsome diseases, and condemned to return to corruption and dust. But they expected that Christ, at his second coming, would change their bodies, fashioning them into a complete conformity to his glorified body, rendering them incorruptible and spiritual, and thus preparing them to participate and improve the holy felicity of the immortal soul to all eternity. This the Saviour would effect by his *omnipotent* operation, according to that *divine* power, by which he is able to subdue all things to himself, and so give them final deliverance from death, their last enemy. The contrast between "the body of our humiliation," and "the body of his glory," into which Jesus will *change* our bodies, is remarkable. There seems to be a reference to the transfiguration. If omnipotence is an incommunicable divine perfection, the apostle's language doubtless attests his Deity in the most emphatical language.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

◆

We should be *zealous* of good works, but we must *rejoice* in the Lord Jesus alone. Repetitions on such important subjects, though easy to the teacher, are safe to the hearers, and must not be deemed superfluous; being often more useful than the most original, ingenious, and learned disquisitions. We cannot too earnestly guard men against those who either oppose or abuse the doctrine of free salvation. Many of them are greedy of their own interest, fierce against their opposers, and ready to rend in pieces the church, in order to propagate their own peculiar notions or observances. The true Christian will be aware of them; he "worships God in the Spirit, glories in Christ "Jesus," has the circumcision of the heart, and confides in nothing of which unregenerate men are capable. But how far short do many, who have confidence in the flesh, come of the attainments of Saul the persecutor! Their birth of Christian parents, early baptism, and form of godliness, can scarcely be imagined superior to his distinctions of a similar nature: but where is their strictness, their zeal, their morality, and their blameless conduct? Yet they trust in their poor scanty worthless forms and duties, and deem them too valuable to be exchanged for Christ and his salvation! But, if they ever "come to them-"selves," and become acquainted with God, his law, and their own characters, they will count all their gain to be "loss for Christ:" and if, in consequence of their conversion, they should lose all outward things, and endure all kinds of persecutions in the Lord's service; if they should labour more abundantly, and walk more holily than their brethren; they will still count even all these things but loss and "dung, for the excellency of the knowledge of "Christ:" they will renounce all dependence on their best services, and esteem all worldly objects worthless, compared with the hope of winning Christ, and being found in him. They will deprecate, as sure destruction, having their eternal state in any measure decided according to their own righteousness: they will desire above all things to have the gift of righteousness by the faith of Christ. They will see that no additions need be made to his unsearchable riches, no security added to his sure refuge, no appendages to his robe of righteousness. Thus they will account themselves rich, safe, and happy, in proportion to their assurance of being "found in Christ," and "made the right-"eousness of God in him;" but, in seeking for this assurance, as well as in order to glorify so bounteous a Friend, they will also earnestly desire and aim at a more transforming knowledge of Christ, a deeper experience of the power of his resurrection, and a nearer conformity to him in his sufferings and death, by dying to sin, and crucifying the flesh, with its affections and lusts. And, at the same time, the love of Christ will constrain them, if called to it, to suffer, yea, to die with him, that they may be also glorified together.

V. 12—21.

◆

Thousands and ten thousands have testified, that the above is the judgment and experience of true Christians: nor can any measure of personal holiness, or self-denying labours, satisfy the man, who "counts all but loss that he "may win Christ," and be justified by faith in him alone. He still "counts not himself to have attained;" he is continually humbled for his manifold defects and defile-

CHAP. IV.

The apostle affectionately exhorts and encourages the Philippians to steadfastness in the faith, concord among themselves, and joy in the Lord, 1—4; *and to moderation, confidence in God, constant prayer and thanksgiving, and universal good behaviour,* 5—9. *He declares his joy in the Lord, on account of their renewed care of him, in sending by Epaphroditus a supply for his wants,* 10; *for, though he had learned, and was able, through Christ strengthening him, to be content in any station; they had done well in communicating with him in his affliction,* 11—14. *Indeed, they alone had formerly thus communicated with him: and he rejoiced that they were thus fruitful; as it would redound to their own profit; being a spiritual sacrifice peculiarly acceptable to God through Christ, who would abundantly supply all their wants,* 15—19. *To him he ascribes eternal glory,* 20; *and concludes with salutations and benedictions,* 21—23.

[a] THEREFORE, my brethren, dearly beloved [b] and longed for, [c] my joy and crown, [d] so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.

2 I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, [e] that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

3 And [f] I entreat thee also, [g] true yoke-fellow, [h] help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and *with* other my fellow-labourers, [i] whose names *are* in the book of life.

a iii. 20, 21. 2 Pet. iii. 11—14
b *See on,* i. 8. ii. 26
c ii. 16. 2 Cor. i. 14 1 Thes. ii. 19, 20 iii. 9.
d i. 27. Ps xxvii. 14 cxxv 1 Matt. x. 22 John viii. 31. xv. 3, 4. Acts ii 42. xi. 23. xiv 22 Rom ii. 7 1 Cor xv. 58. xvi. 13. Gal v. 1. Eph vi. 10—18 Col. iv 12. 1 Thes. iii 8. 13 2 Thes ii. 15 2 Tim ii 1. Heb. iii. 14 iv. 14 x 23 35 36. 2 Pet iii 17. Jude 20, 21 24, 25. Rev. iii 10, 11.
e ii 2, 3. Gen. xlv. 24. Ps. cxxxiii. Mark ix. 50. Rom. xii. 16—18. 1 Cor. i. 10. Eph. iv. 1—3. 1 Thes. v. 15. Heb. xii. 14. Jam. iii. 17, 18. 1 Pet. iii. 8—11.
f 2. Rom. xii 1. Philem 8, 9.——g *See on,* ii. 20—25. Col. i. 7——h Acts ix. 36—41. xvi. 14—16 Rom. xvi. 2—4. 9 12. 1 Tim. v 10, 11.———i Ex xxxii. 32. Ps. lxix. 28. Is. iv 3. Ez. xiii. 9. Dan. xii. 1 Luke x 20. Rev. iii 5. xiii. 8. xviii. 8. xx. 12. 15. xxi. 27.

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ments; he still follows after, in hope of attaining to that prize for which he was apprehended, when a careless sinner, a wretched sensualist, or a proud formalist, by the Saviour's preventing grace. In his Christian course "he "forgets the things which are behind, and reaches forth "to those that are before;" and "presses forward to the "mark, for the prize of his high calling in Christ Jesus." In these respects there are indeed vast disparities among real Christians; but all know something of these things. They who are most perfected in the life of faith and grace, need exhortations to be thus minded: they who are newly set out should be called on to emulate such honourable examples: and while they judge and act in this manner, as to these grand concerns, the Lord will guide them into the further knowledge of his truth and will. For satisfactory views of divine things are far better acquired, by peaceable meditation and diligent obedience, than by noisy disputations. We should, however, be very careful not to grow remiss and languid, in those things to which we have already attained; but still continue to "walk by "the same rule, and mind the same things," that we may make a perpetual progress in the divine life, and secure, as it were, every post, of which we have got possession. Let us then study to walk after the example of apostles and evangelists, that our conduct may be meet for others to copy with advantage: for, alas! in every age there are professors of the Gospel, of whom the humble zealous Christian can scarcely think or speak without sorrow and weeping. Of these, ministers must tell their flocks in tender love; seeing "their end is destruction;" sensual indulgence is their filthy deity; they glory in their shameful abuse of the Gospel; and mind earthly things under a religious profession. But let us, as citizens of heaven, have our conversation of a contrary nature: may we continually prepare for the coming of our Judge, "that we may be found of him in peace, without spot, "and blameless:" may we expect confidently to have our vile bodies changed by his almighty power into the fashion of his glorified body: and, in this prospect, may we apply to him daily to new-create our souls unto holiness; to deliver us from our enemies, to bruise Satan under our feet, and to employ both our bodies and souls as instruments of righteousness, in his service on earth, till he shall come to receive us to his heavenly kingdom!

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. This verse evidently relates to the subject with which the former chapter concluded. Seeing the Philippians had such hopes and so powerful a Friend, let them stand fast in faith and obedience, amidst all enemies and temptations; as they had hitherto done, and as had been recommended to them. The verse is principally remarkable for the variety of expressions, in which the apostle poured out the affection of his heart towards his brethren, or rather children, at Philippi. They were indeed dearly beloved; with them he longed to commune; and he earnestly desired to be still more useful to them. He counted them "his joy and crown," amidst all his sorrow and disgrace; and he expected that they would be so in the day of Christ.

V. 2, 3. It is probable that Euodias and Syntyche were women of note at Philippi, who on some account had disagreed; this both impeded their usefulness, and tended to cause divisions in the church. The apostle therefore entreated them to accommodate their differences, by mutual concessions and forgiveness; that so they might be of one mind in Christ, for his sake, and in seeking the peace and welfare of his church. The "true-"yoke-fellow," or *genuine associate* in the work of Christ, whom the apostle addressed without naming, was doubtless well known at Philippi; though our conjectures respecting him must be precarious. The word is masculine in the original, and some think that the person intended was husband to one of the women above-mentioned; others that he was some eminent minister at Philippi. The apostle, however, entreated him to use his influence in bringing those women to a cordial agreement, and in helping them to accomplish all their good designs. for the honour of Christ, and the promulgation of the Gospel: for

4 [k] Rejoice in the Lord [l] alway: *and* [m] again I say, rejoice.

5 Let [n] your moderation be known unto all men. [o] The Lord *is* at hand.

6 Be [p] careful for nothing; but [q] in every thing by prayer and supplication, with [r] thanksgiving, let your requests be made [s] known unto God.

7 And [t] the peace of God, which [u] passeth all understanding, [x] shall keep your hearts and minds [y] through Christ Jesus.

k *See on* b. iii. 1. l Ps. xxxiv. 1, 2. cxlv. 1, 2. cxlvi. 2. Matt. v. 12. Acts v. 41. xvi. 25. Rom. v 2, 3. 1 Thes. v. 16—18 Jam. i. 2—4. 1 Pet. iv. 13. m iii 1. 2 Cor. xiii. 1, 2. Gal. i. 8 9.——n Matt v. 39—42. vi. 25. 34. Luke vi 29—35 xii. 22—30 xxi 34 1 Cor vi. 7 vii. 29—31. viii. 13. Tit. iii 2. Heb. xiii. 5, 6. 1 Pet. ii. 11. o Matt. xxiv. 48—50. 1 Thes. v. 2—4. 2. Thes. ii. 2. Heb x. 25 Jam. v. 8, 9, 1 Pet. iv. 7. 2 Pet. iii. 8—14——p Dan. iii. 16. Matt vi. 25—33. x. 19. xiii 22. Luke x. 41. xii 29, 1 Cor. vii. 21. 32. 1 Pet v. 7——q Gen. xxxii 7—12. 1 Sam 1. 15 xxx. 6. 2 Chr xxxii. 20 xxxiii. 12, 13. Ps. xxxiv 5—7. li. 15 lv. 17. 22. lxii 8. Prov. iii. 5, 6. xvi. 3. Jer. xxxiii. 3 Matt. vii. 7, 8. Luke xviii. 1. 7. Eph. vi. 18. Col. iv. 2. 1 Thes. v. 17, 18. 1 Pet. iv. 7. Jude 20, 21.

r 1 Sam. vii. 12. 2 Cor. i. 11. Eph. v 20. Col. iii. 15. 17. s Prov. xv. 8. Cant. ii. 14. Matt. vi 8. t i 2. Num. vi. 26 Job. xxii. 21. xxxiv. 29. Ps. xxix. 11 lxxxv. 8. Is. xxvi 3. 12. xlv. 7. xlviii. 18. 22. lv. 11, 12 lvii. 19—21. Jer. xxxiii. 6 Luke i. 79. ii. 14 John xiv 27. xvi. 33 – *See on* Rom i. 7.—v. 1. viii. 6. xiv. 17. xv. 13. 2 Cor. xiii 11. Gal. v. 22. Col iii. 15. 2 Thes. iii. 16. Heb. xiii. 20. Rev i. 4.——u Eph. iii. 19. Rev. ii. 17.——x Neh viii. 10. Prov. ii. 11. iv. 6. vi. 22.——y 1 Pet. i. 5, 6. Jude 1.

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they had formerly laboured, by their private endeavours, to promote the success of his public ministry; as Clement also had done, and several others, whom he acknowledged as his fellow-labourers; and whose zeal and love emboldened him to say, that their names were enrolled in the book of life, among the elect of God and the heirs of heaven. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is not certain that this was Clemens Romanus, an epistle of whose writing is yet extant: but it is generally supposed that the apostle meant him.

V. 4. The apostle again exhorted the Philippians to "rejoice in the Lord alway:" even in the midst of persecutions, afflictions, and temptations; though they should be poor, bereaved, sick, imprisoned, or in danger of death: yea, notwithstanding their manifold sins, and their present lamented imperfections and defilements, the deplorable evils which they must witness among professed Christians, and the wretched state of the world around them. For the favour, mercy, salvation, protection, and consolation of their all-sufficient and almighty Lord; the honour of their relation to him, the felicity of communion with him, and the eternal glory which he had purchased for them, comprised a joy which might more than counterbalance all the causes of their sorrow, and which would satisfy and sanctify their hearts, and fortify them for self-denial, suffering, and death. Nor were they to consider this exhortation as given, without due consideration of their inward and outward impediments: lest they should suppose this to be the case, he would again call upon them to rejoice; for he knew, that if they lived up to their privileges, they could never want cause for joy, and would generally be enabled to rejoice.

V. 5—7. In connexion with the holy joy above inculcated, and in order to it, the apostle exhorted his beloved brethren to manifest an indifference concerning those worldly possessions, distinctions, and enjoyments, about which men in general contend and quarrel: that so the *meekness* of their disposition might be known to all men, even to their enemies; who would perceive how moderate they were, as to the acquisition and use of outward things; and how composedly they suffered the loss or want of them, or any of those hardships, to which the injustice of their persecutors exposed them. This they should aim at, under a realizing assurance that the Lord was at hand: the present life, with all its trials or enjoyments, was speedily vanishing; the Lord would soon come to receive the souls of his people to glory, and to terminate the prosperity of his enemies; nay, the day of final retribution would speedily arrive, with complete redemption to believers, and perdition to ungodly men. Whatever then was taken from them, or wanting to them; whatever discouraged or distressed them, in their own concerns or those of their brethren, they ought to watch against unbelieving anxiety and an useless solicitude about events: and let them in every case, by prayer and supplication for themselves and others, make their requests known unto God; pouring out their hearts before him, and joining their fervent prayers with thanksgivings for mercies already received. In thus seeking to God, under a consciousness of their indigence, dependence, and unworthiness, and in believing reliance on his mercy, power, truth, and grace; they would find, that the peace which he alone could bestow, consisting of an inward thankful admiring sense of his forgiving love, an acquiescence in his will, a confidence in his help, and a serene composure of soul, would be vouchsafed to them. This peace indeed could not be understood by those who did not experience it, nor could any words give them an adequate idea of it; nay, even true believers could not fully explain its nature and excellency; but they would find their affections, and all the powers of their souls, possessed and garrisoned by it, to the exclusion of anxious cares and harassing temptations, through the merits of Christ, the supply of his Spirit, and the exercise of faith in him. The word rendered "moderation," or the substantive of nearly the same import, is translated *clemency*, (*Acts* xxiv. 4;) *gentleness*, (2 *Cor.* x. 1;) *patient*, (1 *Tim.* iii. 3;) and *gentle*, (*Tit.* iii. 2. *Jam.* iii. 17. 1 *Pet.* ii. 18.) 'It means, 'meekness under provocation, readiness to forgive injuries, equity in the management of business, candour in 'judging characters and actions, sweetness of disposition, 'and the entire government of the passions.' (*Macknight.*) 'Equity; a mind moderate as to the things of this life, 'and by no means strictly exacting what is justly due.' (*Beza.*) "The Lord is at hand," (5;) or *near*. Some understand the clause of his being a present Help in trouble, &c. Others suppose that the apostle meant, that the Lord would speedily come to destroy Jerusalem, and deprive the Jews of that power and influence, by which they became the general instigators of persecution. This interpretation was probably adopted, lest it should be inferred that the apostle erroneously supposed the day of judgment to be near at hand; but it is by no means satisfactory. It is, however, the manner of the sacred writers, to consider all temporal things as short, and the "end of them as at hand," and "the Judge as at the "door:" and, seeing death is the same, in a great measure, to individuals, as judgment will be to the world at large; their language is in this respect highly suitable and proper. "With thanksgiving." (6.) 'Thus David, very often 'beginning with lamentations and tears, concludes with 'thanksgiving.' (*Beza.*) *Keep*, &c. (7.) The *mind* and *heart* are distinguished. The peace of God, and the happy experience of it, fortifies and garrisons the intellectual faculties, against the cavils, objections, and vain rea-

8 [z] Finally, brethren, [a] whatsoever things [b] are true, whatsoever things [c] *are* * honest, whatsoever things [d] *are* just, whatsoever things [e] *are* pure, whatsoever things [f] *are* lovely, whatsoever things [g] *are* of good report; if *there be* any [h] virtue, and if *there be* any [i] praise, [k] think on these things.

9 Those things, [l] which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, [m] do; and [n] the God of peace shall be [o] with you.

[z] *See on*, a. iii. 1.
[a] Rom. xii. 9—21. 1 Cor xiii. 4—7. Gal. v. 22, 23. Jam. iii. 17. 2 Pet. i. 5—7.
[b] Matt. xxii 16. John vii 18. Rom. xii 9. 2 Cor. vi. 8. Eph. iv. 25. v. 9. vi. 14. 1 Pet i. 22. 1 John iii. 18.
[c] Acts vi 3 Rom. xii. 17. xiii. 13 2 Cor. viii. 21. xiii. 7. 1 Thes. iv. 12 1 Tim. ii. 2. Tit. iii. 14. *Marg.* Heb. xiii. 18. 1 Pet. ii. 12.
* Or *venerable.* 1 Tim iii. 4 8 11 Tit. ii. 2. 7 *Gr.*——[d] Gen xviii. 19, 2 Sam xxiii 3 Ps lxxxii. 2 Prov. xi. 1. xvi. 11. xx. 7. Mark vi. 20. Luke ii. 25 xxiii 50. Acts x. 22. Tit. i. 8.——[e] 1 Tim. iv. 12, v. 2. Tit. ii. 14 Jam. i 27 iii 17. 2 Pet. iii 1. 1 John iii. 3——[f] 2 Sam i. 23. Cant v. 16 1 Pet. iv. 8——[g] Acts vi. 3. x. 22. xxii 12 1 Thes v. 22. 1 Tim. iii. 7. v 10——[h] Ruth iii 11 Prov xii. 4. xxxi. 10. 29. 2 Pet. i. 3, 4.——[i] Prov. xxxi. 31. Rom. ii. 29. xiii. 3. 1 Cor. iv. 5. 2 Cor viii. 13——[k] Luke xvi. 15. 1 Thes v. 21. 1 John iv. 1.——[l] iii. 17. 1 Cor. x. 31—33. xi. 1. 1 Thes i 6 ii. 2—12 14. iii 6—10. iv. 1—8.——[m] Deut. v. 1. Matt. v 19, 20. vii. 21 24—27. Luke vi 46 viii. 21 John ii 5 xiii 17. xv 14. Acts ix. 6. 2 Thes iii. 4 Jam i 22 2 Pet i. 10. 1 John iii, 22.——[n] 7 Rom. xv. 33. xvi. 20 1 Cor xiv. 33. 2 Cor. v. 19, 20. xiii. 11. 1 Thes. v 23 Heb. xiii. 20, 21.——[o] Is. viii. 10. xli. 10. Matt i. 23. xxviii. 20. 2 Tim. iv. 22.

10 But [p] I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last [q] your care of me † hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but [r] ye lacked opportunity.

11 Not that I speak [s] in respect of want; for [t] I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content.

12 I know both [u] how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things [x] I am instructed, both to be full, and to be hungry, both to abound, and to suffer need.

13 I [y] can do all things [z] through Christ which strengtheneth me.

[p] *See on*, iii. 1. 3.—2 Cor. vii. 6, 7.
[q] 2 Cor xi. 9. Gal. vi. 6.
† Or, *is revived.* Ps lxxxv. 6. Hos. xiv. 7.
[r] Gal. vi. 10.
[s] 1 Cor. iv 11, 12. 2 Cor. vi. 18. viii 9. xi 27.
[t] iii. 8. Gen. xxviii. 20 Ex. ii. 21. Matt vi. 31—34 Luke iii. 14. 1 Tim. vi. 6—9. Heb. x. 34. xiii. 5. 6.
[u] 1 Cor. iv. 9—13 2 Cor. vi. 4—10. x. 1. 10. xi. 7. xii. 7—10.
[x] Deut. xxxii. 10. Neh. ix. 20. Is. viii 11. Jer. xxxi. 19 Matt. xi. 29. xiii. 52. Eph iv. 20. 21.
[y] John xv. 4 7. 2 Cor. iii. 4. 5.
[z] *See on*, 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10. Eph. iii. 16. vi. 10. Col. i. 11.—Is. xl. 29—31. xli. 10. xlv. 24

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sonings of infidels, skeptics, philosophers, and heretics; and the *affections* against the allurements and terrors of worldly objects.

V. 8, 9. The substance of the practical exhortations, which the apostle had further to give, might be comprised in few words. Whatsoever tempers, words, or actions, in any way expressed truth, candour, sincerity, or fidelity: whatsoever appeared grave, *venerable*, or respectable; whatsoever was just and upright, stamped with probity and integrity; whatsoever evinced purity, chastity, and temperance; whatsoever was amiable, or *friendly*; whatsoever was justly of good report, and approved as virtuous or commendable among men: let them continually think of such things, form a due estimate of the value of each, adopt such as were really good, and endeavour to manifest them in every part of their conduct. In short, let them practise what he had taught them, and what they had received as teachable scholars; what they had heard from him, and witnessed in his example: and then he could confidently assure them of the comforting and protecting presence of their reconciled God, (as the Author of inward and outward peace,) with their souls and in their assemblies.

V. 10—13. The apostle would not conclude the epistle, without a special acknowledgment of the kindness shown him by the Philippians. It had indeed "greatly "rejoiced him in the Lord," with reference to his providence, will, and glory, that, after a considerable time, their care of him had flourished again, as a tree shoots forth its buds in the spring. 'You have made your care 'of me to flourish again.' (*Hammond.*) This not only excited him to thank God, for putting it into their hearts to supply his urgent necessities; but it made him glad, as it evinced the prosperous state of their souls. Indeed, he then was satisfied, that they had all along been careful for him, and desired to help him; but they had wanted the opportunity or ability of doing it so soon as they had intended: yet perhaps his godly jealousy over them might make him fear, lest they were become disaffected or remiss. He did not speak this with respect to the want which he had suffered, as if that were an intolerable evil; for he had learned in the school of experience, under the tuition of Christ, to be content and well satisfied with the appointments of God, in whatever situation he was placed. He knew how to be *abased* by the deepest poverty, labouring hard for a mean subsistence, neglected and despised; without repining, or using any dishonourable means of obtaining relief: and he was able to *abound*, without deviating from the strictest rules of temperance and humility, and without growing reluctant to the most self-denying and afflictive labours. In every respect, and in all things, he was initiated into the mysterious life of faith, and communion with God, as the Source of consolation: so that he knew how to be full, and able to impart to others, without being betrayed into inexpedient indulgence, pride, or love of worldly things; or to be hungry, and destitute of bare necessaries for himself, without being discomposed or unfitted for his place and work. Thus he found, by experience, that he could do all things, in this respect, and in whatever was connected with his duty: not by his natural ability, nor yet by the grace which he had already received; but through the strength communicated to him from Christ, whose power rested upon him, and enabled him for every service and situation to which he called him. He seems to have learned these things, by a deep sense of his own unworthiness, and his obligations to the Lord; by continually contemplating the poverty, abasement, and sufferings of Christ; by a believing confidence in the wisdom, faithfulness, and love of God, who ordered all such matters in the best manner possible; by a lively hope of immortal felicity; and an ardent desire, by any labours or sufferings, to promote the cause of Christ in the world. It appears wonderful, that the apostle, in so affluent a city as Rome, where a flourishing church of Christ had been for a considerable time established, and even after his imprisonment for the Gospel had excited general attention, should want the necessaries or comforts of life. But the Gentiles, in general, were little in the habit of giving to the poor, or contributing to the support of the ministers of religion: and the apostle, like Elisha in respect of Naaman, would be extremely careful not to excite their prejudices, or interrupt the success of the Gospel, by his own concerns; so that, probably, it was not generally known that he was in want.

14 Notwithstanding [a] ye have well done, that [b] ye did communicate with my affliction.

15 Now, ye Philippians, know also, that [c] in the beginning of the gospel, when [d] I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me, as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.

16 For even [e] in Thessalonica ye sent [f] once and again unto my necessity.

17 Not [g] because I desire a gift: but I desire [h] fruit that may abound [i] to your account.

18 But * I have all, and [k] abound: I am full, having received of [l] Epaphroditus the things *which were sent* from you, [m] an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice [n] acceptable, well-pleasing to God.

19 But [o] my God shall [p] supply all your need, [q] according to his [r] riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

20 Now [s] unto God and our Father *be* glory for ever and ever. [t] Amen.

21 [u] Salute every [x] saint in Christ Jesus. [y] The brethren which are with me greet you.

22 All [z] the saints salute you, chiefly [a] they that are of Cesar's household.

23 The [b] grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

a 1 Kings viii. 18. 2 Chr vi. 8. Matt xxv. 21. 3 John 5—8 b 18 i. 7. Rom. xv 27. 1 Cor ix. 10. 11. Gal. vi. 6. 1 Tim vi. 18. Heb x. 34. xiii. 16 c 2 Kings v. 16. 20 2 Cor. xi. 8—13. xii. 11—15 d Acts xvi. 40 xvii 1—5. e 1 Thes ii. 9. f 1 Thes ii 18. g 11. Mal. i. 10. Acts xx 32, 33. 1 Cor. ix 12—15. 2 Cor. xi 16. 1 Thes. ii. 5. 1 Tim. iii. 3. vi 10 Tit. i. 7. 1 Pet. v. 2 2 Pet. ii. 3. 15. Jude 11 h 1. 11 Mic. vii 1. John xv. 8. 16. Rom xv. 28. 2 Cor. ix 9—13. Tit. iii 14 i Prov xix. 17. Matt x. 40—42. xxv 34—40 Luke xiv. 12—14. Heb. vi. 10.——* Or, *I have received all.*——k 12. 2 Thes. i. 3.——l ii. 24, 25.

m John xii 3—8. 2 Cor. ii. 15. 16. Eph. v 2 Heb. xiii 16 1 Pet. ii. 5 n Rom xii 1. 2 Cor ix. 12 o 2 Sam xxii. 7. 2 Chr xviii 13. Neh. v 19. Dan. vi. 22 Mic vii. 7. John xx. 17. 28. Rom. i. 8. 2 Cor xii. 21. Philem 4 p Gen. xlviii. 15. Deut. viii. 3. 4. Neh. ix 15 Ps. xxiii. 1—5. xli. 1—3 lxxxiv. 11. cxii 5—9 Prov. iii. 9, 10 xi. 24, 25 Mal. iii. 10. Luke xii. 30—33 2 Cor. ix 8—11 q Ps. xxxvi. 8 civ. 24. cxxx 7. Rom. ix. 23. xi. 33. Eph i 7. 18. ii. 7. iii. 8 16. Col. i 27. iii. 16. 1 Tim vi 17.——r Rom. viii. 18. 2 Cor. iv. 17. 1 Thes. ii. 12. 1 Pet. v 1. 10.——s i. 11 Ps lxxii. 19. cxv. 1. Matt. vi. 9. 13. Rom xi. 36 xvi. 27 Eph iii 21. 1 Tim. i. 17. Jude 25 Rev. i. 6. iv. 9—11. v. 12 vii. 12. xi. 13 xiv 7——t 23. *See on,* Mat. vi 13. xxviii 20.——u *See on,* Rom xvi 3—16——x i. 1 1 Cor. i 2. Eph. i. 1.——y Rom xvi 21. 22 Gal ii 3. Col. iv. 10—14. Philem. 23, 24——z Rom. xvi. 16. 2 Cor. xiii 13 Heb. xiii. 24. 1 Pet. v. 13. 3 John 14. a i. 13——b *See on,* Rom. xvi. 20. 24. 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

The Christians at Rome, as in other places, were, it may be supposed, chiefly of the lower orders; and they had already to provide for their own pastors, the poor, and the expenses of their religious worship. Yet, after all these considerations have been allowed their full weight, not only the disinterestedness of the apostle, but the inattention, to say no more, of the Christians, must excite our astonishment. *Abased.* (12.) 'He who is poor is 'despised by most men, how much soever he may be 'adorned with the excellent gifts of God.' (*Beza.*) (*Note, Ec.* ix. 13—18.)

V. 14—20. Though the apostle could well have endured his poverty without murmuring, yet he was not on that account, by any means, the less entitled to assistance; and the Philippians had done a good work in communicating with him in his affliction, by straitening themselves to relieve him. This renewed instance of their liberal affection made it proper for him to mention, what they indeed knew, that at the beginning of the Gospel being preached among them, when he *was departing* from Macedonia; no church, except that at Philippi, had maintained Christian fellowship with him, by giving him a supply for his urgent wants, and by his receiving it from them. Even when he was successfully preaching at Thessalonica, and labouring with his own hands for a maintenance, they had repeatedly sent him presents. This demanded his grateful remembrance; not because he desired a gift for its own sake, or coveted the property of his hearers; but because he desired to see them fruitful in those good works, which would conduce to their present comfort and future felicity: whereas, no doubt, it grieved him to see professed Christians tenacious of their worldly goods, and leaving their ministers to struggle with deep poverty. But, in every respect, he had all he could wish for; he was fully satisfied with their conduct and with his own circumstances, having received from Epaphroditus the supply which they had sent. This he knew to be far more acceptable to God than the most fragrant incense, being a spiritual sacrifice, well pleasing to him, as the genuine fruit of faith in the Lord Jesus, and love to him, (*Eph.* v. 2.) The apostle indeed could not make them the return which he wished; but his God and Father, "whose "he was, and whom he served," would surely supply all their wants of every kind, according to the riches of his all-sufficiency and bounty; especially by bringing them to his eternal glory through Christ Jesus. To him therefore, as the common Father of the whole family, he ascribed the glory of all that was done in them, for them, and by them; and of all his manifested perfections, and wonderful works, which he desired might be universally adored for ever and ever. Amen. Nothing could more fully show the peculiar confidence which the apostle had, concerning the Christians at Philippi, (as well as his fervent prayer for them,) than this conduct. Thessalonica was indeed a larger city than Philippi, but, probably, the converts to Christianity were poorer; and perhaps they had not been so fully *proved*, when he was driven from them, as the Philippians had been. (*Note*, 2 *Cor.* viii. 1—3.) As Thessalonica was the chief city of Macedonia, at which St. Paul continued some time, it has been supposed that the clause, "when I departed from Macedonia," relates to a supply sent to him, after he was gone into Achaia, distinct from what had been sent to him in Thessalonica.

V. 21, 22. *The brethren*, may here either mean the ministers at Rome, or such of the apostle's friends as were come from other parts to be with him. There were true saints even in Nero's household, who kept their places, and served Christ, in that most perilous and ensnaring situation! It is probable, that they were generally in inferior stations. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

◆

Affectionate ministers, like tender parents, can scarcely find words emphatical enough to express their love, and fervent desires after the felicity of those whom they regard as their present joy and their future crown. They greatly long after their steadfastness in the faith, and constant devotedness to God, amidst the temptations and allurements of the world: and their good conduct for a season makes them the more earnest with them, to acquit themselves in like manner for the future. They so love the blessed office of peace-makers, that they will even *supplicate* by name their own children, to be of one mind in the Lord: and they so much desire the success of every good work, that they use all their influence to excite every one to help all those who labour in any way to promote the Gospel, and thus give assurance that their names are written in the book of life. Believers have always ground of rejoicing in the Lord, though they are not always able to rejoice: the perfection of their duty, and the full enjoyment of their privilege, are precisely the same: their disconsolations arise from weakness of faith and grace, and they should be called upon to "rejoice in the Lord "alway," though they be not able to come up to the standard that they may aim high; for the nearer they come to it, the more will the Lord be glorified in and by them. Living upon these holy, satisfying, and substantial joys, we should make it appear that we are not of this world. Let the carnal and selfish grasp at, and contend about, the possessions and parade of a day; our moderation about temporal things, and our composure amidst injuries and losses, should be manifest to all men. The Lord is at hand; the hour of death, and the day of judgment, will speedily arrive. The transient joys and sorrows of the present scene are not worth our solicitude; all our temporal and eternal interests are in the Lord's hands; we should therefore be careful for nothing, except to know the state of our souls, and the path of duty.—In all our sorrows, fears, or wants, we should make our requests known unto God: for, though he knows them beforehand, he loves to hear them from us. Whatever our difficulties may be, we have always cause to unite grateful praises with our prayers and supplications; and in this way we shall find an inward satisfaction, and experience that peace of God which passeth all understanding; so that our hearts and minds will be preserved in serenity, whatever storms may rage around us. All our privileges and salvation originate wholly from the free mercy of God; yet the actual enjoyment of them is intimately connected with our holy conversation. Therefore, whatsoever things are true, respectable, just, pure, loving, lovely, or of good report; whatsoever is virtuous and commendable; whatsoever prophets, apostles, or martyrs, have exemplified; whatsoever excellency we have heard, and read of, or witnessed, in the conduct of the saints; nay, whatever things the world, on good grounds, regards and approves as virtuous; these we should continually think of, and diligently practise; and in this way we may hope for the presence and blessing of the God of peace and love.

V. 10—23.

Even they, who prosper in religion, have their winter, as well as their spring seasons: sometimes their zeal and love seem to languish, and then again at last they flourish more abundantly. Yet they often lack opportunity, when they perhaps are judged inattentive; and faithful ministers may sometimes suspect or mourn over them, when if they knew all, they might be rejoicing greatly in the Lord for them. We should, however, confide in God alone; for human friendship is precarious. It is a great and difficult attainment, to "learn in whatever state we "are, therewith to be content." Pride, unbelief, a vain hankering after something unpossessed, a fickle disrelish to present things, and the tedious repetition of the same actions and scenes which no longer give pleasure, render men naturally discontented in the most favourable circumstances; and their continual shiftings, from one thing to another, resemble the tossing to and fro of a man in a fever, who imputes his restlessness to his posture, rather than to his disease. It requires much humility, spirituality, faith, and resignation, to render us contented in our appointed situations. Probably, few Christians, who enjoy liberty and plenty, can sincerely and unreservedly adopt the language of Paul, the indigent prisoner of Jesus Christ. We ought, however, to study this important lesson; we should pray continually for patient submission and hope, when we are abased; for humility and a heavenly mind, when exalted; and to be initiated into the practical mystery of temperate, self-denying, liberal, lowly abundance; or that of cheerful, contented, and honourable indigence, even if called to suffer hunger and extreme want. We can indeed of ourselves do nothing; but we may do all things through Christ, who inwardly strengthens his people, in proportion as they simply depend upon him. He can teach and enable his ministers to live in poverty among the affluent, without grudging, envying, coveting, or repining; even when they have an equitable claim upon them for a portion of their abundance. Indeed, we should peculiarly aim at this, if we would be examples to the flock, and convince the wealthy that we "seek not theirs, "but them." Notwithstanding this, the people should be taught, that they do well in communicating to the wants of their faithful pastors, who are justly entitled to liberal assistance, in proportion as they are willing to endure all things, rather than hinder the Gospel of Christ. And they who distinguish themselves in such services, from pure motives, shall be "had in everlasting remembrance;" for their most secret good works shall be published at the last day, if not before. The affectionate servant of Christ will not "*desire* a gift;" nay, on some occasions, he will firmly refuse it, whatever his straits may be: yet he cannot but long to see his people fruitful in such things as will abound to their own account: and though he be willing to suffer want, yet he must grieve, when they neglect their bounden duty, and so bring their state into question, or prevent their own comfort. We should not be reluctant, on proper occasions, to acknowledge our obligations to those who have ministered to our necessities; and to commend their fruits of faith and love, as "an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-"pleasing unto God." What we cannot repay, we may trust that he will, according to his riches in Christ Jesus, supplying all the wants of those who thus straiten themselves, and bringing them to his heavenly kingdom, that glory may be to him, our God and Father, for evermore. Whether saints reside in palaces, cottages, or dungeons, communion should be maintained among them by mutual prayers, salutations, and kindnesses. The Lord will have some to honour him in every situation; and he can preserve them unhurt in their proper places, however perilous, by the power which protected the three young men in the fiery furnace; for the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ will be with all his people, wherever dispersed, or however distinguished, and prove eventually sufficient for them.

THE
EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO THE
COLOSSIANS.

Colosse was a populous city of Phrygia, in Asia Minor, near to Laodicea and Hierapolis. It is not recorded, that St. Paul had been there; and the general testimony of antiquity favours the opinion, that Epaphras, or some other evangelist, sent by the apostle from Ephesus, founded the church at Colosse. This opinion, however, has of late been much controverted. It does not indeed appear to be a matter of much consequence to us; and I am not disposed to enter on so uninteresting a controversy: yet, I must give my decided opinion, *that the evidence against the apostle's having been at Colosse, is far stronger, than any which has been adduced on the affirmative side of the question. There is a great similarity between this epistle, and that to the Ephesians; and it is generally supposed, that they were written about the same time, and sent by the same messenger, even Tychicus: though Onesimus, being a Colossian, who accompanied Tychicus, is not mentioned in the epistle to the Ephesians. It is probable, that the apostle had heard of some teachers; who, grafting heathen philosophy along with the tradition of the Pharisees, on the ritual law of Moses, had corrupted the Gospel by this heterogeneous mixture; and were attempting to draw aside the Colossians. He therefore particularly warned them against these deceivers, and against all who, either by superstitious observances, or philosophy, attempted to draw them aside from the simplicity of Christ; in whom alone, they were complete, and had every thing which they could possibly want or conceive of. These cautions and exhortations are introduced, and connected with the most exalted views of the personal and mediatorial dignity of Christ; and the fulness and freeness of his salvation, which many suppose to have been directed against some of those heretical sects, that sprang up at an early period in the church, the leaders of which sought to exalt themselves, by derogating from the glory of the divine Saviour. It appears, however, that the church at Colosse was, on the whole, in a very flourishing state: and accordingly the epistle abounds more in thanksgivings to God, commendations, and animating exhortations, than in reproofs and warnings.—Epaphras was, probably, when the apostle wrote, confined as a prisoner at Rome.* (Philem. 23.)

A. D. 64. *A. D. 64.*

CHAP. I.

The apostle salutes the saints at Colosse, 1, 2; thanks God for the good account which he had heard from Epaphras, of their faith and love, 3—8; shows how he prayed for their increasing knowledge, holiness, patience, joy, and gratitude for redeeming love, 9—14; declares in exalted terms the personal and mediatorial glory of Christ, 15—20; by whom they, who were once enemies, were now reconciled, and would be eternally saved, if they continued in the faith of the gospel, of which Paul was made a minister, 21—23; who rejoiced in all his labours and sufferings, for their sakes, as the apostle of the Gentiles, 24–29.

CHAPTER I.

PAUL, [a] an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, and [b] Timotheus *our* brother,

2 To [c] the saints and faithful brethren in Christ, which are at Colosse: [d] Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 We [e] give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, [f] praying always for you,

4 Since [g] we heard of your [h] faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love *which* ye *have* to all the saints;

5 For [i] the hope which is [k] laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in [l] the word of the truth of the gospel;

6 Which [m] is come unto you, as *it is* in all the world; [n] and bringeth forth fruit, as *it doth* also in you, since the day ye heard *of it*, and [o] knew the grace of God in truth:

a *See on*, Rom i 1. 1Cor. i. 1. 2 Cor i. 1
b Phil i 1. 1Thes i 1 2 Thes i. 1. Philem. 1
c *See on*, 1 Cor. i. 2. Gal. iii 9. Eph. i. 1.
d *See on*, Rom. i. 7. 1 Pet. i. 2. 2 Pet i. 2. Jude 2 Rev i 4
e *See on*, Rom. i. 8, 9 Eph i. 15, 16. Phil i. 3—5. 1 Thes i. 2.
f 9—13 Eph. iii. 14—19. Phil i. 9—11. 1 Thes iii. 10—13. 2 Thes. ii. 16, 17. 2 Tim. i. 3.
g 3. 2 Cor. vii. 7. Eph. i. 15 1 Thes iii. 6. 3 John 3, 4.
h Gal. v. 6 1Thes. i. 3 iv. 9, 10 2 Thes. i. 3 Philem. 5 1 Pet i. 21—23 1 John iii 14 23. iv. 16.
i 23. 27. Acts xxiii. 6. xxiv. 15. xxvi 6, 7. 1 Cor. xiii. 13. xv. 19. Gal. v. 5. Eph. i. 18, 19. 2 Thes. ii. 16 Heb vii 19. 1 Pet. iii 15 1 John iii. 3.
k Ps. xxxi. 19. Matt vi. 19, 20. Luke xii. 33. 2 Tim. iv. 8 1 Pet. i. 3, 4.——l iii. 16. Acts x. 36 xiii. 26. Rom. x. 8. 2 Cor. v 19. vi 7 Eph. i. 13 1 Thes. ii 13. 1 Tim. i. 15. 1 Pet. ii. 2.———m 23. Ps. xcviii. 3. Matt. xxiv 14. xxviii 19. Mark xvi. 15 Rom. x 18. xv. 19 xvi. 26 2 Cor. x. 14.———n 10. Mark iv. 8. 26—29. John xv 16 Acts xii. 24 Rom. i. 13. xv 28. Eph. v 9. Phil i. 11. iv. 17.———o Ps. cx. 3. Acts xi. 18. xvi. 14. xxvi. 18 1 Cor. xv. 10, 11. 2 Cor vi. 1. Eph. iv 23, 24. 1 Thes. i. 4 ii. 13. 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14. Tit. ii 11. 1 Pet. i. 2, 3. v. 12.

7 As ye also learned of [p] Epaphras, [q] our dear fellow-servant, who is for you [r] a faithful minister of Christ;

8 Who also declared unto us your [s] love in the Spirit.

9 For this cause we also, [t] since the day we heard *it*, [u] do not cease to pray for you, and to desire [x] that ye might be filled with the knowledge [y] of his will, in all [z] wisdom and spiritual understanding:

10 That [a] ye might walk worthy of the Lord, unto [b] all pleasing, being [c] fruitful in every good work, and [d] increasing in the knowledge of God;

11 [e] Strengthened with all might, according to [f] his glorious power, [g] unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness;

12 [h] Giving thanks unto [i] the Father,

p iv. 12. Philem 23.
q *See on*, Phil. ii. 19—22 25.
r Num xii. 7. Matt xxiv. 45. xxv. 21. 1 Cor. iv. 2, 17. vii. 25. 2 Cor. xi. 23. Eph. vi. 21. 2 Tim ii. 2. Heb. ii. 17. iii. 2.
s 4. Rom. v. 5. xv. 30. Gal. v. 22. 2 Tim. i. 7. 1 Pet. i 22.
t 4. 6. Rom i. 8—10. Eph. i 15, 16.
u 1 Sam xii. 23. Acts xii 5. Phil. i. 4. 1 Thes. i 3. v. 17. 2 Thes. i. 11. 2 Tim i. 3, 4 Philem. 4
x Eph. i. 15—20. iii 14—19. Phil. i 9—11.
y iv. 12. Ps cxliii. 10 John vii. 17. Rom. xii. 2. Eph. v 10 17. vi. 6. Heb. x. 36. xiii 21. 1 Pet. ii. 15. iv. 2. 1 John ii. 17.
z iii. 16. iv. 5. Jam. i. 5 iii. 18
a ii 6. iv 5. Mic. iv. 5. Rom. iv. 12 vi. 4. Eph. iv. 1. v. 2. 15. Phil. i 27. 1 Thes ii 12.——b iii. 20. Prov. xvi 7. Phil iv. 18 1 Thes iv. 1. 2 Tim. ii. 4. Heb. xi 5 xiii. 16. 1 John iii. 22.——c John xv. 8 16. Gal. v 22, 23. Eph ii. 10. Phil. i. 11. Tit. iii. 1, 14. Heb. xiii. 21. 2 Pet. i. 8 ——d i. 5—8. ii. 19. Is. liii. 11. Dan. xii. 4 Hab. ii. 14 John xvii. 3. 2 Cor ii 14 iv. 6. ix 8. Eph. i. 17. iv. 13. 2 Pet. i. 2, 3. iii. 18. 1 John v. 20 21 ———e *See on*, 2 Cor. xii 9. Eph. iii. 16. vi. 10 Phil. iv. 13. f Ex. xv. 6 Ps lxiii 2 Acts i. 8. 2 Cor. iv 7. Jude 25.———g Prov xxiv. 10. Acts v. 41. Rom. ii 7. v. 3—5 2 Cor. vi. 4. 6 xii. 9, 10. 1 Thes. iii 3, 4 2 Tim ii 1—3. Heb. x. 34—38 xi. 34—38 xii 1, 2. Jam i 2—4. v. 7, 8. 2 Pet i. 6. Rev. xiv. 12, 13 ———h iii. 15 17. 1 Chr xxix. 20 Ps lxxix. 13. cvii. 21, 22. cxvi. 7. Dan. ii. 23 Eph. v 4 20. i ii. 2 John iv. 23. xiv. 6. xx 17. 1 Cor. viii. 6. Eph iv. 6. Jam. iii. 9. 1 John i. 3.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Rom.* i. 1—7. 1 *Cor.* i. 1—3.) ‘Colosse was situated in Phrygia, not far from Hierapolis and Laodicea, in that part which borders on Lycia and Pamphylia.’ (*Beza.*) ‘I cannot think they are called holy and faithful brethren, on account of their adhering to the purity of the Christian faith, in opposition to those that urged the necessity of observing the Jewish law. This was indeed one instance of their fidelity; but I think it greatly impoverishes and debases the sense of such an extensive phrase, to reduce it within such narrow bounds. Many scores of criticisms of some modern commentators of reputation are liable to the same exception.’ (*Doddridge.*) The author quotes this passage, as exactly conveying his opinion on several *learned* expositions, both before and since the time of the pious Doddridge. They give you a bucket of water, and speak as if they had emptied the well.

V. 3—8. The apostle began the epistle, as usual, by assuring the Colossians, that he gave thanks "to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus," for his grace bestowed on them, and prayed for the perfection of that good work in them. This he and his friends had done, ever since they heard of their faith and love, (*Eph.* i. 15;) blessing God, who had called them from the delusive pursuit of earthly things, to hope for happiness in himself. The object of this hope was laid up in heaven, the place of perfect purity and joy, out of the reach of the vicissitudes of this lower world. It was treasured up *for them*, and no enemy could deprive them of it. They had heard of it, in the word of truth, even the glad tidings of salvation which had been sent to them. It was intended, that these should be published throughout the world: they had made a very rapid progress among the nations, (*Marg. Ref.*) and, having been attended by a divine power, they had brought forth fruit in every place, in the conversion of multitudes to the holy service and spiritual worship of God, by faith in Christ Jesus. The same blessed fruits had been produced in the hearts and lives of the Colossians since the time when they first had heard the Gospel, and had *truly* and experimentally believed it, and been *really* made partakers of Christ and his salvation. These things they had learned from Epaphras, whom the apostle owned as a dear fellow-servant in the work of Christ, and a faithful minister, appointed specially to labour for the good of the Colossians, as their stated pastor. Moreover, he had assured the apostle of their love to Christ, and to him for Christ's sake, which they exercised "in the Spirit," under his influences, and in a spiritual manner; and this made him so confident in respect of their interest in the heavenly hope before-mentioned. *We give thanks*, &c. (3.) ‘From this note, that the good Shepherd should not only feed his flock, but pray continually for them, and give thanks for the spiritual blessings conferred on them.’ "The God and the Father." "The God of Israel," ‘was the characteristic of the true God to the Jewish nation:—"God, who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," is the characteristic of the same God to Christians, who worship him under that title, as being "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," and in him our Father: we being the sons of God through faith in him, and deriving all our blessings from the Father through him.’ "Love in the Spirit," (8.) ‘Wrought in you by that Spirit, whose fruit is love.’ (*Whitby.*)

which hath [k] made us meet to be [l] partakers of [m] the inheritance of the saints [n] in light:

13 Who hath [o] delivered us from [p] the power of darkness, [q] and hath translated *us* into [r] the kingdom of * his dear Son:

14 [s] In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* [t] the forgiveness of sins:

k 1 Kings vi 7. Prov. xvi. 1. Rom. viii 29, 30. ix. 23. 2 Cor. v 5. Tit. ii. 14. l Rom xi. 17 xv. 27 1 Cor ix. 23. Eph iii 6 Heb. iii 1. 14 1 Pet v. 1. 1 John iii. 1—3. m Matt. xxv. 34 Acts xxvi. 18 Rom. viii. 17. Eph i. 18. 1 Pet. i. 2—5. n Ps. xxxvi. 9. xcvii 11. Prov. iv. 18. Is. lx. 19, 20 Heb xii 23. Rev xxi. 23. xxii. 5.——o Is. xlix. 24, 25 liii. 12. Matt. xii. 29, 30. Acts xxvi. 18. Heb ii 14. 15.——p Luke xxii. 53 John xii 31, 32. 2 Cor iv 4 Eph. iv 18 v. 8 vi 12 1 Pet. ii 9. 1 John ii. 8, 9. iii 8.——q Luke xiii. 25. John v. 24 Rom. vi 17 22 1 Cor vi. 9 11 2 Cor vi. 17, 18 Eph ii 3—10 Tit. iii. 3—6. 1 John iii 14. r Ps. ii. 6, 7. Is ix. 6, 7 Dan. vii 13, 14. Zech ix 9. Matt. xxv 34. Rom. xiv. 17 1 Cor. xv. 23—25.—— * Gr. *the Son of his love* Is. xlii 1. Matt. iii. 17 xvii 5. John iii 35 xvii. 24 Eph i. 6.——s Matt xx 28 Acts xx 28. Rom. iii. 24, 25 Gal. iii. 13. Eph. i 7. v 2. 1 Tim ii 6 Tit. ii. 14. Heb ix. 12 22 x. 12—14 1 Pet i. 19, 20 iii. 18 1 John ii 2. Rev. i. 5. v. 9. xiv. 4——t ii. 13. iii. 13. Ps. xxxii. 1, 2 cxxx. 4. Luke v. 20 vii. 47—50 Acts ii. 38 x. 43 xiii. 38, 39 xxvi. 18. Rom. iv. 6—8. Eph. iv. 32. 1 John i 9. ii. 12.

15 Who is [u] the Image of [x] the invisible God, [y] the First-born [z] of every creature:

16 For [a] by him were all things created that are [b] in heaven, and that are in earth, visible, and invisible, whether *they be* [c] thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created [d] by him, and for him;

17 And [e] he is before all things, [f] and by him all things consist.

u Ex. xxiv. 10. Num. xii 8. Ez. i. 26—28. John i. 8. xiv. 9 xv. 24. 2 Cor. iv. 4. 6 Phil ii. 6. Heb. i 3 x 1 Tim. i. 17. vi. 16. Heb xi 27. y 18. Ps lxxxix. 27. John i 14. iii. 16. Heb. i. 6. z 16, 17. Prov. viii 29—31. Rev iii. 14 a 15 Ps. cii 25—27 Is xl. 9—12. xliv. 24 John i. 3. 1 Cor. viii. 6. Eph. iii. 9. Heb. i 2. 10—12. iii. 3 4 b 20. Deut. iv. 39 1 Chr. xxix. 11. Eph i 10. Phil. ii. 10. Rev. v. 13, 14.——c ii 10. 15 Rom. viii. 38. Eph i 21 iii 10. vi 12. 1 Pet. iii. 22.——d Prov xvi 4. Is. xliii 21. Rom. xi. 36. Heb. ii. 10.——e 15 Prov viii. 22, 23. Is xliii. 11—13. xliv. 6. Mic v, 2. John i. 1, 2. viii. 58. xvii 5 Heb xiii 8 Rev i 8 11. 17. ii. 8.——f 1 Sam. ii. 8 Ps. lxxv. 3. John v. 17, 18. Acts xvii. 28. Heb i. 3.

V. 9—14. Since the time that the apostle had heard concerning the professed Christians at Colosse, that they evidently showed their faith in Christ, and faithfulness to him, (2.) he and his friends had not ceased to pray for them. He especially requested that they might be *filled*, or *completely endued with*, the knowledge of the will of God, both in respect of his method of saving sinners, and their duties to him and to all men, as his redeemed servants; that they might understand the import and spiritual extent of his commandments, and how to obey them in the several relations, situations, and offices, which they sustained in the church and in the community, and in the improvement of their different talents. That they might know how to apply general rules to their own particular cases, and so do the work of Christ assigned to each of them, in the best manner, from the purest motives, and with the happiest effect. Thus they would proceed "in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;" with sagacity and prudent discernment of seasons and opportunities; distinguishing between real excellency and all deceitful appearances; wisely attending to their duties in the most inoffensive and engaging manner, without affording their enemies any advantage, or losing opportunities of usefulness out of timidity, or failing of success through want of caution and discretion. He was desirous of this especially, that they might habitually behave in a manner worthy of that glorious and holy Lord, whose servants and worshippers they were; not dishonouring him or his cause by any inconsistency or impropriety of conduct, but acting as became persons so highly favoured and divinely instructed; and that their conduct might in all respects be well-pleasing to him; while fruitfulness in every kind of good work was connected with a still further increase in the knowledge of God, and of the glory and harmony of his perfections, and a happy experience of his consolations. (*Note, Phil.* i. 9—11.) The apostle and his helpers prayed also that the Colossians might be most abundantly strengthened in all the graces of the new nature, with an energy suited to their utmost need, according to the glorious power of God, by which he converted, upheld, and comforted believers, that so they might be enabled to bear all their tribulations and persecutions with patient submission, persevering constancy, meekness of long-suffering, and joy in the Lord; whilst, amidst all trials, they gave thanks to the Father of our Lord Jesus, whose special grace had made them meet to partake of the inheritance provided for the saints, in the world of perfect light, knowledge, holiness, and happiness; at a distance from all ignorance, error, sin, temptation, fear, and sorrow. As believers, they were even then called "to walk in the light;" and, compared with the condition of unconverted men, their situation might well be thus distinguished: yet, when the state of glory was spoken of, into which the spirits of their departed brethren had already entered, they were still in comparative darkness. They had, however, obtained a *lot* in that blessed inheritance; and their holy desires, spiritual affections, and capacity for delighting in the work and worship of God, especially their love to the Lord Jesus Christ, and his glorious salvation, constituted a meetness for that inheritance, and all its joys and employments, and a sure evidence that God intended to bring them to it. For, in order to effect this change in them, he had rescued them from the "power of darkness," the empire of Satan, the prince of darkness, whose blind and abject slaves they had formerly been; and he had translated them into the kingdom of righteousness, of liberty, of light, and comfort, which he had constituted under his dear Son, or the "Son "of his love;" (*Marg. Ref.*) by faith in whom they enjoyed this redemption, as the purchase of his atoning blood; by which forgiveness of sins, and all other spiritual blessings, were vouchsafed to them. (*Notes, Acts* xxvi. 17, 18. *Eph.* i. 7—11. 13. 15—18.) The apostle joined himself and the Jewish converts along with the Gentiles in these things; and doubtless all are the subjects of the prince of darkness, of whatever nominal religion they are, till inward conversion translates them into the kingdom of Christ. And to restrict the interpretation to the deliverance of the Gentile converts, and to the happy state of the Jewish converts, as "the saints in light," is totally to enervate the passage, which is highly animated, and to make it inconsistent with itself: for how could the apostle speak of himself as one of these benighted idolaters? The "glorious power," here spoken of, is sometimes ascribed to God, absolutely, sometimes to the Holy Spirit, and frequently to Christ. "For these Three are One." (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 15—17. Having mentioned Christ as the well beloved Son of God, the apostle here explained more fully the import of that expression. He declared him to be "the image of the invisible God." (*Marg. Ref. Note,* 18 And [g] he is the Head of the body, the church: who is [h] the Beginning, [i] the First-born from the dead; [k] that * in all *things* he might have the pre-eminence.

g 24. ii. 10—14. 1 Cor. xi. 3. Eph. i. 10. 22. 23. iv. 15, 16. v. 23.
h John i. 1. 1 John i. 1. Rev. i. 8. iii. 14. xxi. 6. xxii. 13.
i John xi. 25, 26. Acts xxvi. 23. 1 Cor. xv. 20—23. Rev. i. 5. 18.——k Ps. xlv. 2—5. lxxxix. 27. Cant. v. 10. Is. lii. 13. Matt. xxiii. 8. xxviii. 19. John i. 16. 27. iii. 29—31. 34, 35. Rom. viii. 29. 1 Cor. xv. 25. Heb. i. 5, 6. Rev. v. 9—13. xi. 15. xxi. 23, 24.
* Or, *among all.*

19 For [l] it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fulness dwell;

20 And, † having [m] made peace through the blood of his cross, by him [n] to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* [o] things in earth, or things in heaven.

l ii. 3. 9. iii. 11. Matt. xi. 25—27. Luke x. 21, 22. John i. 16. iii. 34. Eph. i. 3. 23. iv. 10. 11.
† Or, *making peace.*
m 21, 22. Lev. vi. 30. Ps. lxxxv. 10, 11. Is. ix. 6, 7. Ez. xlv. 17—20. Dan. ix. 24—26. Mic. v. 2. 5. Zech. ix. 9, 10. Luke ii. 14. Acts x. 36. Rom. v. 1. 2. Cor. v. 19—21. Eph. ii. 13—17. Heb. xiii. 20, 21. John iv. 9, 10.——n 2 Cor. v. 18. Heb. ii. 17.——o Eph. i. 10. Phil. ii. 10.

Heb. i. 1—4.) Being possessed of all divine perfections, as One with the Father, he appeared on earth, displaying those perfections, and performing all divine operations, through the medium of the human nature. Thus, he made the invisible God known to mankind, as his express Image: he represented the Father, and manifested his glory. In and through him, as God manifest in the flesh, sinners might know, approach, trust, and worship God with acceptance; which otherwise they could not have done. It seems evident that Christ is not called the *Image of God*, in respect of his *divine nature*, as many, especially the ancient expositors, supposed; and so, by their illustrations, weakened or perplexed the argument for his real Deity: for the divine essence is no more visible in the Person of the Son, than in that of the Father: and therefore the one cannot be the Image, or visible representation, of the other. But the Person of Christ, as God in human nature, is the *visible*, or *sensible*, discovery of the invisible God; and "he that hath seen him hath seen the Father."—The apostle further declared Christ to be "the First-born of the whole creation;" (for so the words may be literally rendered.) Christ is often called the ***First-begotten***, or ***Only begotten***, of the Father; and it hath been shown, that these expressions must be understood of the mysterious union in the sacred Trinity, and the relation of the second Person to the first in the divine subsistence: for the grand display of the love of God to the world consisted in "giving his *own Son*" to become man, in order to die for our sins, rather than in giving him *when incarnate* to death for us. The expression here used seems to be of the same import: he was qualified to be the Image of the invisible God to men, by reason of his original and essential glory. (*Note, John.* i. 14—18.) Existing, as the co-eternal Son of the Father before the creation of the world, he appeared as the First-begotten Son of God, to be the heir of all things when they were called into existence, as the First-born is the heir of the estate or kingdom. The reason or proof, adduced by the apostle, demonstrates, that he meant the words in some such sense; "for," says he, "by him all things were created." He then proceeds to mention all creatures in heaven and earth, and by the figurative terms of "thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers," clearly including the highest created dignity and exaltation, he evidently intended to declare that every creature of God, however distinguished, was created by Christ, as one in Deity and operation with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Nay, he added, that they were all "created *for* him," for the display of his glory, and to do him service, (***Prov.*** xvi. 4:) that "he was before all things;" yea, that "all things by him consist," or are preserved in being and order; so that, without his sustaining power, they must fall into confusion or non-existence. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is perhaps impossible to use stronger language, to express creating and upholding Power, universal Sovereignty, and real Deity, than is here employed. To which the Socinians can only say, that it is all figurative, and means no more than the introduction of the Gospel-dispensation as a kind of new creation; than which nothing can be more absurd. Or they may say, that the apostle was mistaken! And to such obstinate infidelity we oppose the demonstrative evidences of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures. In fact, we find similar language in every epistle, and in almost every part of the New Testament.—It should also be observed, that however we may interpret the expression, "The First-born of every creature," no man can infer from it, that Christ is a sort of supra-angelic creature, (according to the inconsistent opinion of the Arians,) without expressly opposing St. Paul's inference from his own doctrine, or rather the argument by which he confirms it; in which he evidently shows, that he meant that Christ was before, above, and distinct from, all creatures; yea, the Author, Proprietor, and Support, of all ranks and orders of them in the universe.—***First-born.*** (16.)—By using this word, (πρωτοτοκος,) and not First-created, (πρωτοκτιστος;) the apostle marks the distinction between the eternal Son of God, and the most exalted of those creatures which derived their existence from him.

V. 18—20. The same glorious Person, of whose original majesty such sublime language had been employed, was next declared to be the "Head of the body, the Church." This manifestly related to his mediatorial character, which he voluntarily assumed and sustained in human nature. He is also the Beginning, the Author and Source, of spiritual and eternal life to man, the Resurrection and the Life, both of his body and soul: and "the First-born from the dead;" the first who rose to die no more; the First-fruits of his people, who rose to inherit the mediatorial throne, as their Surety, and for their benefit. So that it was evidently intended, that in "all things he should have the pre-eminence," over all worlds, and in all respects; as to creation, providence, redemption, essential dignity, universal sovereignty, assumed and delegated authority, personal excellency, and the display of Omnipotence; as the Conqueror of "death, and of him that had the power of death;" both in the world and in the Church; above all creatures visible and invisible; during time and to eternity. For "it pleased," or seemed good, to the Father, "that all fulness should dwell in him:" that all the plentitude of divine power, authority, wisdom, knowledge, holiness, justice, truth, mercy, grace, even all "the fulness of God," should dwell in the Person of Christ, and be exercised and communicated through his

21 And you, that were [p] sometime alienated, and enemies * in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled,

22 In [q] the body of his flesh through death, [r] to present you holy, and unblameable, and unreproveable [s] in his sight:

23 If [t] ye continue in the faith, [u] grounded and settled, and *be* not [x] moved away from [y] the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, *and* which was preached [z] to every creature which is [a] under heaven; [b] whereof I, Paul, am made a minister;

24 Who now [c] rejoice in my sufferings for you, and [d] fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, in my flesh, [e] for his body's sake, which is the church;

p Rom i 30 v 9, 10 viii 7, 8 1 Cor. vi. 9-11. Eph ii 1, 2 12. 19. iv. 18. Tit. iii. 3-7. Jam. iv 4.

* Or, by your *mind in wicked works.*

q Rom. vii 4. Eph. ii. 15. 16 Heb. x. 10 20.

r 2 Cor xi. 2. Eph. i. 4 v. 27. 1 Thes. iv. 7. Tit. ii. 14 2 Pet. iii. 14 Jude 24.

s Job. xv. 15. xxv. 5 Ps li. 7. Heb xiii. 21.

t Ps. xcii. 13, 14. cxxv. 5 Ez. xviii. 26. Hos vi 3, 4 Zeph. i 6 Matt. xxiv. 13 Luke viii. 13-15. xxii. 32. John viii. 30-32. xv. 9, 10. Acts xi. 23. xiv. 22. Rom. ii. 7. Gal iv 11 v. 7. vi. 9 1 Thes. iii. 5. Heb iii 6 14 iv 14 x. 38. 1 Pet. i. 5. 2 Pet. ii 18-22. 1 John ii. 27. Rev. ii 10 ——u ii. 7. Matt vii. 24, 25. Luke vi. 48 Eph. ii. 21 iii. 17 iv. 16.

x John xv. 6. Acts xx 24. 1 Cor. xv. 58. 1 Thes iii. 3.

y 5 Rom. v. 5. Gal. v. 5 Eph. i. 18. 1 Thes. v. 8. 2 Thes ii. 16. Tit. iii. 7. Heb. vi. 19. 1 Pet i. 3. 1 John iii. 1—3.

z 6. Mark xvi. 15. Rom. x. 18.

a Deut. ii. 25. iv. 19 Lam iii 66. Acts. ii 5 iv. 12.

b 25. Acts i. 25. xxvi. 16. Rom. xv. 16 1 Cor iv. 1-3 2 Cor iii. 6 iv. 1 5. v. 18—20 vi. 1. xi 23 Eph. iii. 7, 8. 1 Tim. i 12. ii. 7. 2 Tim. i 11 12. iv. 5. 6.——c Matt. v. 11, 12. Acts v. 41. Rom v. 3. 2 Cor. vii. 4 Eph iii. 1 13. Phil. ii. 17, 18. Jam. i. 2.——d 2 Cor. i. 6—8. iv. 8-12. xi. 23. 27. Phil. iii. 10. Tim. i. 8. ii. 9, 10 —— e *See on*, 18.

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human nature, by virtue of the union of the Deity and humanity in his mysterious Person; that from his fulness all those might receive, who became One with him by faith. Thus it "pleased all Fulness;" the original, infinite, inexhaustible Fulness of Being and perfection, or the Deity, to dwell in Christ, for the benefit of his Church; that, "having made peace," or laid the foundation of an honorable reconciliation of sinners to himself, "by the blood of his cross," and the satisfaction there made to divine justice, he might effectuate that reconciliation, both in respect of "things in heaven, and "things on earth." The spirits of just men in heaven owed their reconciliation to Christ's undertaking for them; and all on earth, whether Jews or Gentiles, who believed in Christ, were reconciled unto God through their union with him, and their interest in the atonement of his blood. Thus the whole became one Church and one body in him: and they all will at length be translated to heaven, there to continue for ever in a state of perfect reconciliation to God, and friendship with him and each other. This seems to be what is meant by "all things in heaven and "earth:" for though holy angels become one family through Christ with redeemed sinners, yet they cannot be said to be reconciled unto God, as they never were in a state of enmity against him. (*Notes*, &c. *Rom.* v. 9, 10. 2 *Cor.* v. 17—21. *Eph.* ii. 13—17.)—Some commentators would wholly confine the meaning to man's being reconciled to God and his service; others explain it wholly of God's being reconciled to his offending creatures; but why should not both be included? For the atonement of Christ procured for all believers both pardon of sin and new-creating grace, that they might walk with God in a state of mutual peace and reciprocal friendship and love.

V. 21—23. The Colossians, among others, were called to share these blessings. They had been alienated from God and his service, yea, "enemies to him in their "minds," which had been manifested by their wicked works; so that they had justly merited to be treated as enemies; yet, by his rich mercy in Christ Jesus, they were now brought into a state of reconciliation. This had been effected "in the body of his flesh," in the body which he assumed of our nature, that he might be capable of sufferings and death, as a Sacrifice to divine justice for the sins of men. In consequence of this, the Gospel had been preached to them, and they were enabled to believe it: thus they were freely justified, and brought to love and serve God, as at peace with him, by a mutual and cordial reconciliation: the intent of which was, that they should at length be presented before God so perfectly holy, as to be unblameable and unreproveable even in his sight; their sanctification being at length rendered as complete, as their justification had been when they believed. (*Note, Eph.* v. 25—27.) This would certainly be the case with every one, who continued in the profession and exercise of faith, like a building that is grounded and settled on a firm foundation, and so was not, by any carnal fear, delusion, or expectation, or by any temptation, moved away from the hope of eternal life, according to the truth of the Gospel, which they had heard. The Lord had commanded that it should be preached to every creature under heaven, and it had actually been published very widely among Jews and Gentiles, without distinction of nation, or previous character; and of this Gospel St. Paul had been made a minister and an apostle. He uses a general term, commonly employed on similar occasions, the import of which must be learned from other places. (*Marg. Ref.*)—This last verse may be rendered, "Since "ye continue, &c.;" implying a confidence of the sincerity of the Colossians, as evidenced by their steadfastness. But our translation is good sense and sound doctrine; for many promising professors are moved away from the hope of the Gospel, "having no root in themselves;" fear of coming short is one grand means of the true believer's perseverance; and it was frequently the apostle's manner, by such intimations, to caution his readers to beware of deceiving themselves.—*Mind*, &c. (21.) This word denotes the higher faculties of the soul, the intellectual or reasoning powers; yet in these, man is an enemy to God; so vain is the notion, that the opposition of reason to the sensual appetites is the conflict between flesh and spirit, of which the apostle elsewhere discourses.

V. 24. The sufferings of the apostle came upon him, chiefly, by preaching to the Gentiles; but the blessed effects of his ministry among them, and that of those who concurred with him in it, caused him to rejoice in all that he endured for their sakes: for he thus "filled up that which "was behind of the sufferings of Christ." The sufferings of Christ perfectly sufficed for the redemption of his body the Church; nor could those of the apostle in any measure make up the deficiency, if there had been any. But the atonement of Christ must be applied; that application is made by faith; faith comes by hearing; hearing by preaching; and preaching was then inseparable from suffering; so that the apostle's sufferings in his flesh, for the benefit

25 Whereof [f] I am made a minister, [g] according to the dispensation of God, which is given to me for you, [*] to fulfil the word of God;

26 *Even* [h] the mystery which hath been hid from ages, and from generations, but [i] now is made manifest to his saints;

27 To [k] whom God would make known what *is* [l] the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is [m] Christ [†] in you, [n] the hope of glory:

28 [o] Whom we preach, [p] warning every man, and [q] teaching every man, [r] in all wisdom; that [s] we may present every man [t] perfect in Christ Jesus;

29 Whereunto I also [u] labour, [x] striving according to [y] his working, which worketh in me [z] mightily.

f *See on,* b 23.—1 Thes iii. 2 1 Tim. iv 6. g Rom. xv. 15—18. 1 Cor. ix. 17 Gal. ii. 7, 8. Eph. iii. 2. * Or, *fully to preach the word of God.* Rom. xv. 19. 2 Tim. iv. 2—5. h Rom xvi. 25, 26. 1 Cor. ii. 7. Eph. iii. 3—10. i Ps. xxv. 14. Matt xiii. 11. Mark iv. 11. Luke viii. 10. 2 Tim. i. 10. k 1 Cor. ii. 12—14. 2 Cor. ii. 14. iv. 6 Gal. i. 16.——l ii. 3. Rom. ix. 23. xi 33. Eph i. 7. 17, 18. iii. 8—10. 16. Phil iv. 19.

m iii. 11. Luke xvii 21. John vi. 56. xiv 17. 20 23 xv 2-5. xvii. 22 23. 26. Rom. viii. 10. 1 Cor iii. 16. 2 Cor vi 16. Gal. ii. 20. iv. 19. Eph ii 22. iii 17. 1 John iv 4 Rev iii. 20. † Or, *among you.* n 5 Ps. xvi. 9—11. Rom. v. 2. viii. 18. 19 2 Cor. iv. 17. 1 Pet i. 3, 4.——o Acts iii. 20. v 42. viii. 5 35. ix. 20. x 30. xi 20. xiii 38. xvii. 3, 18. Rom xvi 25. 1 Cor. i. 23. xv 12 2 Cor iv. 5 x. 14 Eph iii. 8. Phil. i. 15—18. 1 Tim. iii. 16.——p Jer vi. 10. Ez iii. 17—20. xxxiii. 4—9. Matt iii. 7. Acts xx. 20 27. 31. 1 Cor iv. 14 1 Thes iv. 6. v. 12—14.——q Deut iv. 5. Ezra vii. 10. Ec. xii. 9. Matt. xxviii. 20 Mark vi. 20 Eph. iv. 11. 1 Tim iii 2 2 Tim. ii. 24 ——r Prov. viii. 5. Jer. iii 15. Luke xxi. 15. 1 Cor ii. 6 15. xii. 8. 2 Pet. iii 15.——s *See on,* 22.——t ii. 10. 1 Cor 1. 30 Eph. iv 12, 13. Heb x. 14. xiii 21.——u iv. 12. 1 Cor. xv. 10. 2 Cor. v. 9 vi. 5. xi. 23. Phil. ii 16. 1 Thes ii. 9. 2 Thes iii. 8. 2 Tim. ii. 10. Rev ii, 3.——x ii. 1. Luke xiii. 24 Rom. xv. 20. 30 1 Cor. ix 25 27. Phil. i. 27. 30 Heb. xii. 4.——y 1 Cor. xii. 6. 11. Eph i. 19. iii 7 20. Phil. ii. 13. Heb xiii. 21.——z 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10. xiii 3.

of the Church, were necessary in their place, and could not be dispensed with. By them he filled up what was behind of the afflictions of Christ; as the sufferings of martyrs, confessors, and believers in general, form one aggregate of pain and distress, with those of the Head of the Church, the whole of which is conducive and necessary, in different ways, to the complete salvation of the whole body. But the apostle might with the more propriety say this, as he suffered in the same cause, from the same persons, in the same meek and patient manner, and from the same spirit of zeal and love, with his divine Master; so that his afflictions resembled Christ's in every thing, except that Christ's alone were *expiatory.* Christ is also represented as sympathizing in the sufferings of his disciples; and many think the apostle had in view the words with which the Lord addressed him, in the way to Damascus; "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou "me?" In this sense the sufferings of every part of the Lord's mystical body are *his* sufferings; yet the former sense appears more suitable to the tenour of the passage.

V. 25—27. St. Paul had been made a minister of the Gospel, according to the sovereign appointment of God in his gracious dealings with him, that he might fulfil the prophecies of the Scripture, in preaching to the Gentiles, and bringing them into the Church; thus he was employed to make known that mystery, which had been hidden from men, during all preceding dispensations and ages of the world, but was at length manifestly revealed to the holy followers of Christ. (*Notes, Eph.* iii. 1—9.) For to them it had pleased God to make known the immense abundance of his mercy and grace, as well as the glory of all his perfections, in this mystery among the Gentiles. Not only was Christ, the promised Messiah, preached *among* the Gentiles; not only did he reign *among* them, but he actually dwelt *in* the hearts of true believers, *in* the hearts of multitudes of them, by faith, and the power of his Spirit, implanting his love, renewing his image, and writing his law, which fully sealed and warranted their hope of eternal glory. Indeed, it cannot be made intelligible, how Christ *among* them could give individuals a warrantable hope of glory.

V. 28, 29. This precious Saviour was the great subject of the apostle's preaching, and that of his faithful brethren, who warned every man to flee from the wrath to come, and from every other confidence, to this Refuge, and to beware of delusion in so important a matter; and they instructed every man with all wisdom, and in every thing that could render them wise unto salvation, or wise to serve God in their several places. For they desired and aimed to present every man, who attended on their ministry, complete in Christ, perfectly justified, and at length perfectly sanctified. In this the apostle laboured with unwearied diligence, striving by every means to bring sinners to Christ, and believers to establishment and holiness; yet this assiduity and earnestness were not of himself, but according to the working of a divine power on his soul, which wrought mightily in him, exciting fervent desires after God, and the salvation of souls, communicating vigour to all holy affections, raising him above all low and selfish aims, and supporting him in constancy, patience, and cheerful fortitude, amidst all difficulties and persecutions. Some would explain this power to mean the miracles which the apostle wrought; but every one must perceive, that this wholly destroys the energy, and darkens the meaning of the passage.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

All spiritual blessings, "from God the Father and our "Lord Jesus Christ," belong to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ, wherever they are dispersed; may we be found of that number! We should thank God for those who show their faith in Christ by love to all his saints, and also pray heartily for them, (though they be not personally known to us,) when we hear a good account of them, for in these things 'the communion 'of the saints' principally consists. The hope of real Christians is laid up for them in heaven, out of the reach of enemies and disappointments; they have been called to partake of it by "the word of the truth of the Gospel;" and, blessed be God, the joyful message is come to us in this far distant region! If we have known the grace of God in truth, it bringeth forth fruit in our holy lives and spiritual worship; but if it has in no degree this effect on us, it will only aggravate our condemnation. This may be learned from all the fellow-servants of our common Lord, who faithfully minister in different parts of his Church; for they all declare, that "love in the Spirit," of Christ, of holiness, and of the people, ordinances, and commandments of God, is inseparable from saving faith.

CHAP. II.

The apostle shows how earnestly he prayed for the Colossians, and the churches which had not seen him; that they might be united in love, and so comforted; and that they might attain a clear and satisfactory knowledge of the mysteries of Christ, and not be seduced by deceivers, 1—4. *He rejoices, as if he saw their order, and the steadfastness of their faith; and exhorts them to perseverance and thankfulness,* 5—7; *warning them against vain philosophy and human traditions; and showing that they were complete in Christ,* 8—10; *having in Him the new circumcision, of which baptism was the external sign,* 11—13. *For God had quickened them with Christ, having forgiven their sins, and abolished the law of ordinances, by his cross,* 14; *on which he triumphed over principalities and powers,* 15. *They ought not then to submit to legal impositions, which were shadows of Christ,* 16, 17; *nor be induced, by vain pretences, to worship angels, or to any other observances of voluntary humility, will-worship, and self-imposed austerity,* 18—23.

V. 9—14.

It is not enough, that we know the grand outlines of divine truth, but we should also pray for one another, that we may be "perfected in the knowledge of the "Lord's will, in all wisdom and spiritual unerstanding," in order that we may walk worthy of our vocation, please God in every part of our conduct, and produce every kind of holy fruit in abundance. Thus we shall likewise increase in the knowledge of God; for a humble, upright, teachable, and spiritual mind exceedingly helps the exercise of a sound judgment, in investigating the nature and perfections of God, and experience confirms the knowledge which faith receives from divine revelation. This again tends to increasing simplicity in dependence on God, which brings strength into the soul, that, being invigorated with all might "according to his glorious power," the believer may be able to exercise "patience and long-suffering with "joyfulness," under the severest trials and provocations. Indeed, we may well be thankful to the Father, if we have the witness in ourselves, that "we are made meet "for the inheritance of the saints in light," having acquired a relish for those contemplations, and that holy worship, in which the blessed spirits before the throne are incessantly employed. Alas! the whole world lieth under "the power of darkness," except as divine grace rescues some from this destructive bondage, by "translating them "into the kingdom of the beloved Son of God;" that these could not have been saved, had they not been redeemed from merited wrath by the blood of Christ, through whom their sins are all freely pardoned; the subjects of these two kingdoms, with their respective rulers, will shortly be removed to an eternal and unchangeable state; Christ and his people being collected together in heavenly felicity, Satan and his slaves being cast into outer darkness and despair. Now, when these things are duly considered; we shall deem it so vast a favour, to be delivered from the kingdom of the Devil, and translated into that of Christ; that we shall know ourselves to have unspeakable cause for gratitude, in the deepest scenes of adversity, and the sharpest conflicts of temptation. For these trials will soon terminate, and we shall speedily find ourselves among "those, that are come out of great tribulations," and are singing his praises, "who has washed them from their "sins in his own blood."

V. 15—20.

When admitted into heaven, and not before, we shall have some adequate conceptions of "the great mystery of "godliness;" and shall understand the import of the apostle's energetic language concerning the Lord Jesus; "the "Image of the invisible God," the First-born of the whole creation; the universal Creator, Sustainer, Proprietor, and Lord of heaven and earth, of men and angels, of the visible and invisible world, and of all the hierarchies of cherubim and seraphim before the throne of God; all which "were created by him and for him, and he is be-"fore all things, and by him all things consist." Let us then at present adore these mysteries in humble faith: and, instead of wanting material images of the invisible God, or framing gross notions of him in our creative imagination, or vain speculations; let us contemplate the glory of the Lord in Christ Jesus, the express Image of his essential excellency. Here we may learn humble confidence, reverential fear, and filial love; and be prepared for spiritual worship, joyful communion with God, and growing conformity to his holiness; as dwelling in our nature, reconciling the world unto himself, the Beginning of our life, the First-born from the dead; "that in all things he "might have the pre-eminence." Here we may become acquainted with the character of our God; and may approach him, and have fellowship with him, notwithstanding our exceeding guilt and pollution. For it hath pleased the infinitely glorious God, that all fulness should dwell in Christ, both to relieve our weak apprehensions and our guilty consciences; in our discoveries of his glorious majesty and holiness, through so encouraging a medium, as the Person of Emmanuel; making peace by the blood of his cross; and reconciling all things in heaven and on earth, to himself and to each other, in this most gracious and astonishing manner.

V. 21—29.

If we be convinced, that once we were "alienated from "God, and enemies in our minds by wicked works;" and are now reconciled to him, by the incarnation, sacrifice, and grace of Christ; we shall not attempt to explain away, or presumptuously expect to comprehend these deep mysteries: but we shall see a glory and suitableness in this

FOR I would that ye knew [a] what great [*] conflict I have for you, and *for* them [b] at Laodicea, and *for* as many as have [c] not seen my face in the flesh;

2 That [d] their hearts might be comforted, [e] being knit together in love, and unto [f] all riches [g] of the full assurance of [h] understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and [i] of the Father, and of Christ;

3 [†] In [k] whom are [l] hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

4 And this I say, [m] lest any man should beguile you with [n] enticing words.

5 For though I [o] be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying

a i. 24. 29. iv. 12. Gen. xxx. 8. xxxii. 24—30. Hos xii. 3, 4. Luke xxii. 44 Gal iv 19 Phil i. 30. Heb v. 7

* Or, *fear* or, *care*

b iv 13 15, 16. Rev. i 11. iii. 14—22.

c 5 Acts xx. 25 38. 1 Pet i 8.

d iv. 8 Is. xl. 1. Rom. xv 13, 2 Cor i 4—6 1 Thes. iii. 2. v. 14 2 Thes ii. 16 17.

e iii. 14. Ps cxxxiii. 1 John xvii. 21 Acts iv. 32. Gal iii 28 Phil. ii. 1 1 John iv. 12 15

f *See on*, 1. 27.

g 1 Thes. i. 5. Heb vi. 11. x. 22. 2 Pet i 10 1 John iii. 19.

h John vi 69 xvii 3. Rom. xvi 25. 1 Cor. ii. 12 Eph. i. 17—19. iii. 9, 10. Phil. iii 8 2. Pet. i. 3. iii. 18.

i i. 15—17. Is liii. 11. Jer. ix. 24. Matt. xi. 25 27. Luke x. 21, 22. John i. 1—3. v. 17 23. x 30 38. xiv. 9—11. xvi. 15 xvii. 21—23. 1 Tim iii. 16.

† Or, *Wherein.*

k i. 9. 19. iii. 16. Rom. xi. 33. 1 Cor. i. 24. 30. ii 6—8 Eph. i. 8 iii. 10. 2 Tim. iii. 15—17.

l iii 3 Job. xxviii 21. Prov. ii. 4. Matt. x. 26 Eph iii. 9. Rev. ii 17

m 8. 18. Matt. xxiv 4 24. Acts xx. 30. Rom. xvi. 18. 19. 2 Cor. xi. 3 11—13 Gal ii. 4. Eph. iv 14. v. 6. 2 Thes. ii. 9—11 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2. 2 Tim. ii 16. iii. 13. Tit. i. 10, 11. 2 Pet ii. 1—3. 1 John ii 18 26 iv. 1. 2 John 7. Rev. xii. 9. xiii. 8. xx. 3, 8.

n 1 Cor. ii 4.

o 1. 1 Cor. v 3, 4. 1 Thes. ii. 17.

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plan of redemption, as uniting the honour of the divine law and government with the hope of guilty perishing sinners: though much yet remains far above and out of the reach of our low capacities; and while we long to be "presented holy, unblameable, and unreproveable, in the sight of God," it will be impossible for us to abuse the doctrine of his grace, to encourage ourselves in sin. Many things indeed must try the faith of professed Christians; but every trial which we stand, and every temptation which we resist, without "being moved away from the hope of the Gospel," and every event which shows that we "continue in the faith grounded and settled," tends to assure us that we shall soon "be presented faultless before our God with exceeding joy." May this Gospel then be "successfully preached to every creature that is under heaven." May numbers of ministers, like St. Paul, be raised up and sent forth, who may even rejoice in their sufferings for the cause of Christ, and after his example; and may we all remember that our afflictions, when properly supported, conduce to the glory of God, our own salvation, and the benefit of the body of Christ.—Let us be thankful, that God hath revealed to us those mysteries which were hid from ages and generations, and hath shown the riches of his glory among us Gentiles.—But let it be observed, that these things can yet be known only by his saints. "The secret of the LORD is still with them that fear him;" and we need not wonder to hear learned, ingenious, and able men, betray their ignorance of these mysteries, when we reflect on their pride, carnal mind, and evident contempt of the humbling doctrine of the cross; nay, their enmity against it. As Christ is preached *among us*, let us seriously inquire whether he dwells and reigns *in us*, which alone can warrant our assured hope of his glory. This all ministers should "preach, warning every man, and instructing every man in all wisdom, that they may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." May we then every one of us thus labour with all earnestness, and by every method endeavour to promote the cause of Christ; and be careful to "strive according to that working, which worketh mightily" in those who simply depend on it and pray for it, and who go forth in that strength, to do the work and seek the glory of the Lord.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1—4. The apostle was desirous that the Colossians should know what earnest longings he had experienced, and what vigorous endeavours and fervent prayers he had been engaged in, for them and the Christians of Laodicea, (a neighbouring city,) and all others who had never seen him, in order to promote their spiritual welfare. He especially wrestled most earnestly with God in prayer, (iv. 12,) that their hearts might be encouraged, by divine consolations, in every part of their duty: and that, in order to this, they might be united together in the most perfect love of one another; that so all envies, resentment, suspicions, and competition, might be excluded, which would otherwise certainly burden their consciences, inflame their passions, grieve the Holy Spirit, and interrupt their comfort. In this most cordial union, he prayed that they might attain and possess all those spiritual riches, which were to be found in the distinct and complete understanding of the Gospel of Christ, as connected with the full assurance of faith and hope; that so they might confidently acknowledge, and profess their belief of, the mystery of God, *even* of the Father, and of Christ his beloved Son, as One with him, according to "the great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh;" *in whom*, or *in which mystery*, were treasured up all the riches of wisdom and knowledge. These were indeed hidden from the eyes of proud unbelievers: but the infinite wisdom and knowledge of God were more displayed in the Person and redemption of Christ, than in all his other works: all true wisdom and knowledge consisted in a believing and practical experimental understanding of these mysteries, and such instructions as were deducible from them: yea, from this treasury all true wisdom and knowledge must be derived, by faith and prayer; and all science or philosophy contrary to this were worthless. This the apostle insisted on, lest any man should beguile them into some specious delusion, by enticing words or persuasive reasonings, such as plausible orators often use, to impose on the judgment by addressing the passions; or by assuming as true, what is specious indeed, but false: as if either heathen sages, or Jewish scribes, could teach any wisdom, distinct from and preferable to the mysteries of the Gospel. 'It grieved the apostle, to think how incapable he was rendered of serving them, otherwise than by his letters and prayers. Oh! that such language might inspire every minister, who reads it, with a desire to use his liberty to the best of purposes, and to exert himself, as under such confinement he would wish he had done.' (*Doddridge.*) *All the treasures*, &c. (3.) 'Let this be the firmest argument against cavillers, that without Christ there is no true wisdom.' (*Beza.*) The language of the first verse renders it at least highly probable that the apostle had not been at Colosse: and that construction of it, which consists with the contrary supposition, is not very obvious or natural.

[p] and beholding your order, [q] and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

6 As ye have therefore [r] received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* [s] walk ye in him:

7 [t] Rooted and [u] built up in him, and [x] stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein [y] with thanksgiving.

p 2 Chr xxix. 35 1 Cor xi. 34 xiv 40.
q Ruth i. 18. Ps. lxxviii. 8 37 Acts ii. 42. 1 Cor xv. 58 xvi 13. 1 Thes iii 8. Heb iii. 14. vi. 19. 1 Pet. v 9 2 Pet. iii 17, 18.
r Matt x. 40. John i. 12, 13. xiii 20. 1 Cor. i 30 Heb. iii. 14. 1 John v. 11, 12 20 2John 8 9
s iii. 17 Is ii 5. Mic. iv. 2. John xiv. 6. 2 Cor v 7. Gal ii. 20. Eph iv 1. v 1, 2 Phil. i. 27. 1 Thes iv 1.——t i. 23 Ps. i. 3 xcii 13. Is lxi 3. Jer. xvii. 8. Ez xvii. 23, 24. Rom xi. 17, 18 Eph iii. 17 Jude 12——u Matt vii 24. 25. Luke vi 48 1 Cor. iii 9—15 Eph ii 20 22. 1 Pet ii. 4—6 Jude 20.——x i. 23 Rom xvi 25 1 Cor. xv. 58. 2 Cor. i 21 2 Thes ii 17. 1 Pet. v 10 2 Pet iii. 17, 18 Jude 24.——y i. 12, 13. iii. 17 Eph. v. 20. 1 Thes v. 18. Heb. xiii. 15.

8 [z] Beware, lest any man [a] spoil you through [b] philosophy and vain deceit, [c] after the tradition of men, [d] after the * rudiments of the world, and not [e] after Christ:

9 For [f] in him dwelleth all the fulness of the God-head [g] bodily.

10 And ye are [h] complete in him, which is [i] the Head of all principality and power:

z Deut. vi 12. Matt vii. 15, x. 17. xvi. 6. Phil. iii. 2. 2 Pet. iii. 17
a 18. Cant ii. 15. Jer. xxix. 8. Rom, xvi. 17. Eph. v 6. Heb. xiii. 9. 2 John 8.
b Acts xvii. 18. 32. Rom, i. 21, 22. 1 Cor i. 18—23 iii 18, 19. xv. 35, 36. 2 Cor x 5. *Gr.* 1 Tim vi. 20. 2 Tim ii. 17, 18. iii 13
c 22. Matt xv. 2—9 Mark vii. 3—13 Gal. i 14. 1 Pet. i. 18 ——d 20 Eph. ii. 2 ——* Or *elements* Gal. iv. 3. 6.——e Eph. iv 20 ——f 2, 3. i. 19 Is. vii 14. Matt. i. 23. John x 30. 38. xiv 9, 10 20. xvii 21. 2 Cor. v. 19. 1 Tim iii. 16. Tit. ii. 13. 1 John v 7. 20 ——g Luke iii.22 John i. 14. ii 21.——h iii. 11. John i. 16. 1 Cor i 30, 31. Gal. iii. 26—29 ——i i. 16—18. Eph i. 21—23. iv. 15, 16 Phil ii. 9—11 1 Pet iii. 22 Rev. v. 9—13

V. 5—7. The apostle, when absent in body, was present in spirit with the Colossians; he greatly interested himself in their concerns, and realized to his mind the prosperous state of their church, as made known to him by Epaphras. Some think, that he had an immediate revelation concerning it; as Elisha had of Gehazi's conduct in following Naaman. By that view, however, which he had of their prosperous state, he was filled with joy and complacency; as if he had witnessed the orderly management both of their private concerns, and of those of the church; as to the external regularity and discipline maintained in it; and the constancy of their faith in Christ, notwithstanding the terrors of persecution, and the artifices of false teachers. As therefore they had by faith received Christ Jesus to be their Lord and Saviour, according to the several offices which he sustained for the benefit of his church; let them continue in habitual dependence on him, and obedience to him; let them seek all their wisdom, strength, hope, holiness, and comfort from him, and aim in all things to serve and glorify him. Thus, being rooted in him as trees in a fruitful soil, and builded upon him as a house upon a firm foundation; and being established by living faith in him, according to the doctrine which they had been taught; they would abound more and more in faith, and proceed in their course with fervent thanksgiving to God for all his benefits. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8, 9. It was especially requisite for the Colossians to be upon their guard, that no man might rob them, (as victorious armies plunder the vanquished,) of their hope or comfort, or turn them aside from Christ, by any philosophical subtilties, and vain delusive speculations, which were opposed to the simple belief of the gospel. These were human traditions, which were delivered from the heads of the several sects of philosophers, and so handed down from age to age: and they formed the elements, or first principles, of a supposed wisdom, suited to the proud, curious, and carnal temper of the world; but which was totally incompatible with the doctrine of Christ. The Judaizing teachers seem to have blended their system, with speculations borrowed from the Pagans, and their different sects of philosophers: thus the traditions of the sages, and those of the Pharisees, were incorporated; and the worldly elements of heathen superstition or philosophy, were blended with legal and other external observances. Unless something of this kind be supposed, it will be found difficult to understand the apostle's discourse: for he spoke of philosophical delusions and legal ceremonies at the same time; he argued against both of them at once, but he levelled his reasonings chiefly against the Judaizing teachers. To what he had before advanced, he here added, that "in Christ all the fulness of the God-"head dwelleth bodily." In the temple the Lord discovered his presence by the Shechinah, or visible glory; yet, this was only an *emblem* or *shadow* of his gracious presence: but, in Christ the fulness of the Deity dwells *substantially;* and all the divine perfections are exercised by Christ, as God manifested in the flesh, by virtue of the mysterious Union of the divine and human nature in one Person. When the apostle spoke of believers being "filled "with all the fulness of God;" he evidently meant it of their receiving a rich abundance of all divine communications from God; and his *in-dwelling* in his people refers to his gracious and powerful presence with them. But "all the fulness of the Godhead dwelling bodily" in Christ, is language unspeakably stronger, and evidently refers to his being constituted the repository of all spiritual blessings, from whose fulness all believers receive. (*Note, John,* i. 14—16.) For God dwelling in human nature, as in a temple, exercises all his perfections, performs all divine operations, and communicates all benefits to man, through that medium. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'Christ is not 'here said to be "filled with all the fulness of God:" 'but the whole fulness of the Godhead is said to reside in 'him. Now θειοτης and το θειον never signify the gifts of 'God, or the doctrine of the gospel; but the divine nature 'only; nor can the will, or revelation, of God be said to "dwell bodily" 'in any person.' (*Whitby.*) If the union of Deity and Manhood in one person can be expressed in human language, without doubt this verse does express it.

V. 10. As Christ was completely qualified for his mediatorial work, by "all the fulness of the Godhead "dwelling in him bodily:" so believers are completely supplied with all that they want, by their mystical union with him. Being "in him," as members of his mystical body, and as quickened by his Spirit, he is their "Wisdom, "Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption:" all their instruction, acceptance, holiness, deliverance, liberty, victory, and happiness, are derived from him by faith, in the use of his appointed means. As he is also "the "Head of all principality and power." (*Marg. Ref.;*) all angels being his willing servants, and the whole creation being in one way or another subjected to him: so Christians have no cause to fear any creatures, or reason to seek help

11 In [k] whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made [l] without hands, [m] in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, [n] by the circumcision of Christ:

12 [o] Buried with him in [p] baptism, [q] wherein also ye are risen with *him* through [r] the faith of the operation of God, [s] who hath raised him from the dead.

13 And you, being [t] dead in your sins, and [u] the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath [x] he quickened together with him, [y] having forgiven you all trespasses;

14 [z] Blotting out [a] the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and [b] took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

15 *And* [c] having spoiled [d] principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, [e] triumphing over them * in it.

k Deut. x. 16. xxx. 6. Jer. iv. 4. Rom ii 29. Phil. iii 3. l Mark xiv. 58 Acts vii. 48. xvii 24 2 Cor. v. 1. Eph. ii. 11. Heb ix. 11 24. m iii. 8, 9. Rom vi 6. Eph. iv.22 n Luke ii. 21. 2 Cor. v. 17. Gal ii. 20. iv. 4, 5. Eph. ii. 10–18. o Rom vi. 4, 5. p Rom. vi. 3. 1 Cor. xii. 13. Gal. iii. 27. Eph. iv 5. Tit. iii. 5, 6. Heb. vi. 2. 1 Pet. iii. 21.——q iii. 1, 2. Rom. vi. 8—11. vii. 4. 1 Cor. xv. 20. Eph. i. 20. ii. 4—6. v 14. 1 Pet iv. 1—3.——r Luke xvii. 5. *Gr.* John i. 12, 13. iii. 3—7. Acts xiv. 27. Eph. i. 19. ii. 8 iii 7. 17. Phil. i. 29. Heb. xii 2. Jam i 16, 17.——s Acts ii. 24. Rom. iv. 24, 25. Heb. xiii. 20, 21.——t Ez xxxvii. 1—10. Luke ix. 60 xv. 24. 32. Rom. vi. 13. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. Eph ii. 1. 5. v. 14. 1 Tim. v. 6 Heb. vi. 1. ix. 14. Jam. ii. 17. 20. 26.

u Eph. ii 11. x Ps. lxxi. 20. cxix. 50. John v 21. vi 63. Rom. iv. 17. viii. 11 1 Cor. xv. 36. 45. 2 Cor. iii 6. *Marg.* 1 Tim. vi. 13. y Ps. xxxii 1. Is. i. 18 lv. 7. Jer. xxxi. 34 Acts xiii. 38, 39. 2 Cor. v. 19. Heb. viii. 10—12. 1 John i. 7—9. ii. 12 z Num. v. 23. Neh iv 5. Ps. li. 1 9. Is xliii. 25. xliv. 22 Acts iii. 19——a 20. Esth iii. 12. viii. 8 Dan v 7, 8. Luke i. 6. Gal iv. 1—4. Eph. ii. 14—16. Heb. vii 18. viii. 13. ix 9, 10. x. 8, 9.——b Is. lvii. 14 2 Thes. ii. 7. c Gen iii. 15. Ps. lxviii. 18 Is xlix. 24, 25 liii 12. Matt. xii. 29. Luke x. 18. xi. 22 John xii. 31. xvi. 11. Eph iv. 8. Heb. ii 14. Rev. xii. 9. xx 2, 3. 10.——d i 11 2 Cor. iv. 4 Eph. vi 12.——e Luke xxiii. 40—43. John xii. 32. xix. 30. Acts ii. 23, 24. 32—36.

* Or, *in himself.*

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from them. The Judaizing teachers seem to have imbibed, and new-modelled, the Pagan notions of subordinate deities, and, applying it to the scriptural doctrine of angels, to have introduced the mediatorial worship of them, with which they at an early period attempted to corrupt the Christian church, and not wholly without success. To this the apostle here evidently refers, as well as in what is said afterwards. But Christians could have no occasion to pay homage of any kind to those creatures, who, however exalted, were subjected to Christ, their Lord and Redeemer.

V. 11, 12. The disciples of Jesus did not want the external seal of circumcision, in order to their acceptance or complete salvation; for *in Christ*, and by their union with him, they had the *true circumcision*, which was not performed on their bodies by the hands of men, but on their hearts by the Holy Spirit, in consequence of whose regenerating work, they were daily employed in "putting "off the body of the sins of the flesh." Thus they renounced and watched against all the sins, to which their natural corrupt propensities excited them; and they had crucified the old man, as propagated from Adam, whence all these evil lustings originated. This is the true circumcision, which Christ himself performs on the hearts of his people, by his Holy Spirit; (*Note, Rom.* ii. 28, 29.) For "the circumcision of Christ," seems rather to signify his work in the believer's soul, than his own personal circumcision; though that was a part of his mediatorial humiliation, by which the true circumcision was procured for them, and in which they are rendered conformable to him. Instead of the outward sign of circumcision, baptism had been substituted; (which some suppose to be meant by the circumcision of Christ:) this represented that death and burial with him from former confidences, and sinful and worldly pursuits, which true Christians experience, in order to their being made conformable to him in his resurrection. (*Notes*, &c. *Rom.* vi. 1—11.) The baptism of Jews and Gentiles, when converted to Christianity, implied their 'death unto sin and new birth unto righteousness;' their entrance into the Church and kingdom of Christ; the washing away of the guilt and pollution of their sins; and their dedication to the service of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, in whose name, as the God of their salvation, they were baptized. The same inward change had been signified by circumcision, which was administered to adult proselytes, and then to their infant offspring; so that no argument can hence be deduced against the baptism of infants. (***Notes, Gen.*** xvii. ***Matt.*** xxviii. 19 20.) This conformity to the crucified and risen Saviour was effected, "through the faith of the operation of God, "who raised him from the dead;" or by a believing reliance on the effectual saving power of God, as revealed in the Gospel of Christ. It is, no doubt, an important scriptural truth, that the faith, by which we receive all other blessings, is itself the gift and work of God; and this has induced some expositors, and very many preachers, to explain the clause to mean, "the faith which God has "wrought in the heart." This was the author's view, when he wrote the first edition of this work, and, indeed, till he came to revise it for this edition. But a careful examination of the subject has convinced him, that this is rather imposing a sense on the apostle's words, than inquiring after the true meaning of them. The ablest Grecians are decided, that the idiom of the language will not admit of that construction; and certainly there is no instance in the New Testament, in which a similar mode of expression can fairly be thus interpreted. (***Mark*** xi. 22. ***Acts*** iii. 16. ***Rom.*** iii. 22. 26. ***Gal.*** ii. 16. 20. iii. 22. ***Eph.*** iii. 12. ***Phil.*** i. 27. iii. 9. 2 ***Thes.*** ii. 13. ***Jam.*** ii. 2. ***Rev.*** ii. 13. xiv. 12. ***Gr.***) But it should be observed, that, though the clause does not affirm faith to be the work and gift of God, it neither teaches nor implies any thing to the contrary. Indeed, this is clearly taught in the subsequent verse. (***Marg. Ref.***) ***Buried.*** (***Notes, Rom.*** vi. 1—3.)

V. 13—15. The Colossians, being chiefly converts from idolatry, had been "dead in their sins," and in that carnal state, of which the uncircumcision of their flesh was an outward token; but God had quickened them together with Christ, by virtue of his resurrection, having in his death provided for the forgiveness of all their transgressions, to the full benefit of which he had thus admitted them. (*Notes, Eph.* ii. 1—11.) For Christ had blotted out the hand-writing of ordinances, *the ceremonial law*, which was, as it were, the bond of the ancient church, for payment of the debt of sin contracted by violation of the moral law, but which Christ, the Surety, had paid in behalf of all believers, and so blotted out the debt. This was *against the Jews, and contrary to them*, as well as to the Gentiles; for it is observable that the apostle changed the person, when he came to speak on this subject, saying *us*, instead of *you*. Not only was it a heavy yoke for them to bear, but all its sacrifices and ablutions testified that they were guilty and

16 Let no man therefore [f] judge you * in [g] meat, or in drink, or † in respect [h] of an holy-day, or of [i] the new moon, [k] or of the sabbath *days*:

17 Which are [l] a shadow of things to come: but [m] the body *is* of Christ.

18 Let [n] no man ‡ beguile you of your reward, § in a voluntary humility and [o] worshipping of angels, [p] intruding into those things which he hath not seen, [q] vainly puffed up by his [r] fleshly mind;

19 And [s] not holding the Head, from which [t] all the body, [u] by joints and bands, having [x] nourishment ministered, and [y] knit together, [z] increaseth with the increase of God.

f Rom. xiv. 3 10—13 1 Cor x 28—31. Gal. ii 12, 13. Jam. iv. 11.

* Or, *for eating and drinking.*

g Lev. xi. 2—47. xvii. 10—15 Deut. xiv. 3, &c. Ez iv. 14. Matt xv. 11. Acts xi. 3—18. xv. 20. Rom. xiv. 2. 6. 14—17. 20, 21. 1 Cor. viii. 7—13. 1 Tim. iv. 3—5 Heb ix. 10 xiii 9.——— † Or, *in part.* h Lev xxiii. Num. xxviii. xxix. Deut. xvi 1—17 Neh viii. 9 x 31. Ps. xlii 4 Rom xiv. i Num x. 10. xxviii. 11. 14. 1 Sam xx. 5. 18. 2 Kings iv 23. 1 Chr. xxiii. 31. Neh x. 33. Ps. lxxxi. 3. Is. i. 13. Ez. xlv. 17. xlvi 1—3. Am viii. 5 Gal. iv 10.——— k Lev. xvi. 31. xxiii. 3. 24. 32. 39 ——— l John i. 17. Heb. viii 5 ix 9 x. 1.——— m Matt xi. 28, 29 Heb iv. 1—11.——— n 4 8. Gen. iii. 13. Num. xxv. 18. Matt. xxiv. 24. Rom. xvi. 18 2 Cor. xi 3. Eph v. 6 2 Pet. ii. 14. 1 John ii. 26. iv. 1, 2. 2 John 7—11. Rev. xii. 9. xiii. 8. 14.——— ‡ Or, *judge against you.* 16.

§ Gr. *being a voluntary in humility* 23. Is. lvii 9. o Dan xi 38. *Heb* Rom i 25. 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. 1 Tim. iv. 1. *Gr.* Rev. xix. 10. xxi. 8, 9 p Deut xxix. 29. Ps. cxxxi. 1, 2. Ez. xiii 3 q 8 1 Cor. iv. 18. viii. 1 xiii. 4. r Rom viii. 6—8. 1 Cor. iii. 3. 2 Cor xii 20. Gal. v. 19, 20. Jam. iii 14—16. iv 1—6.——— s 6—9. i. 18. Gal. i. 6—9 v. 2—4. 1 Tim. ii. 4—6.——— t Eph. iv. 15, 16.——— u Job x 9—12 Ps. cxxxix. 15, 16 ——— x John xv. 4—6 Rom. xi. 17. Eph. v. 29.——— y 2. John xvii 21. Acts iv. 32. Rom. xii 4, 5. 1 Cor. i. 10. x. 16. 17 xii. 12—27 Eph. iv. 3. Phil. i. 27. ii. 2—5. 1 Pet. iii. 8.——— z i. 19. 1 Cor. iii 6. Eph. iv. 16. 1 Thes iii. 12. iv 10 2 Thes. i. 3 2 Pet. iii. 18.

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polluted, yet could they not take away sins. So that the bond could never have been discharged, except as Christ came and made payment of it, and unbelievers among the Jews were under condemnation, by the testimony even of the ceremonial law, as well as for the additional sins which the multiplying of precepts necessarily occasioned. At the same time the Gentiles, who had not so much as these typical expiations, were under condemnation as transgressors, and were excluded by them even from the visible Church. But Christ not only blotted out the debt, but removed the bond out of the way, and nailed it as a cancelled deed to his cross, that it might no more appear against his people. The ceremonial law, therefore, and the whole Mosaic dispensation, having received its intended accomplishment in Christ, were of no more force or value than a cancelled bond; and the Gentiles, being admitted into the church by faith in Christ, and his institution of baptism, had no need of circumcision, or of any legal observances, and ought not to pay any regard to them. Moreover, Christ had at the same time virtually deprived the principalities and powers of darkness of their usurped dominion, and made way for the subversion of their kingdom, which was before universally established throughout the Gentile world. For, by satisfying the justice of God for sin, he had removed the cause of fallen man's subjection to Satan, and made way for the preaching of the Gospel to the nations, with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven to make it successful. So that he vanquished those enemies when he hung upon the cross; when he arose and ascended, he led them captive; and he made an open show of his victory, and manifested the triumphs of his cross, when, by the preaching of his Gospel, he proceeded to destroy Satan's strong-holds, and to rescue his captives in the different nations of the earth. (*Eph.* iv. 8—10.) *Against us,* (14.) 'Circumcision publicly testified innate depravity; the purifications, the pollutions 'of sin, and the sacrifices, that its guilt deserved death, 'to which the remarkable saying of Augustine refers; 'in those ceremonies there was rather the *confession*, than 'the *removal*, of sin.' (*Beza.*) The silencing of the heathen oracles, and the gradual, yet rapid, subversion of the Grecian and Roman idolatry, in consequence of the death of Christ, are fixed on, by some commentators, as almost the exclusive meaning of the clause, "triumphing "over them in it;" but these, however important, constituted only a small part of that victory over the powers of darkness, which Christ obtained on the cross, and of his subsequent triumphs; of which the salvation of the dying thief may be considered as an earnest. (*Note, Gen.* iii. 15.)

V. 16, 17. Seeing, therefore, that Christ had cancelled the ceremonial law, let no man venture to judge and condemn the Gentile believers as guilty, or as no part of the Church, because they disregarded it; and let no Christian disquiet himself about such censorious judgments, which related to the distinction between clean and unclean meats, or the use of, or abstinence from, this or the other drink, or the neglect of the Jewish festivals and solemnities, the new-moons and sabbaths. Doubtless, this last related principally to the weekly sabbath, which, as observed on the seventh day, was now become a part of the abrogated Jewish law. For the sabbath under the Mosaic dispensation, was a *ceremonial* and a *judicial*, as well as a *moral*, requirement; the morality of it had no necessary connexion with the seventh day, in preference to all others, save as that was for the time appointed; but the appropriation of a part of our time for the worship and service of God, is of moral and essentially immutable obligation. (*Note, Ex.* xx. 8—10.) The first day of the week, the Lord's day, was the time kept holy by Christians, in remembrance of Christ's resurrection; and the sabbath, in the New Testament, always signifies the seventh day, the observance of which the Judaizing teachers wanted to impose upon the Gentile converts. These things in general were shadows of evangelical blessings; but the truth, reality, and substance of them were found *in Christ*, resulting from his Person, work, and salvation, and consisting in the holiness, peace, communion with God, and heavenly rest, which he vouchsafes to believers. 'In the 'law no kind of drink was forbidden, except to the Nazarites. Now, it is not improbable that the elders, who 'pretended to have received from Moses and the prophets, 'by tradition, many precepts not written in the law, 'might enjoin abstinence from wine and strong drink, to 'such of their disciples as aimed at superior holiness.' (*Macknight.*) (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 18, 19. As Christ was "the Head of all prin"cipalities and powers," the apostle warned the Colossians not to allow any man to rob them of that glorious prize, for which they were candidates, by giving them wrong directions, or turning them out of their course. The original word seems to be taken from the office of those who presided in the Olympic games, and decided to whom the prize belonged. Now, if any man usurped such an authority among Christians, he would mislead all who willingly submitted to him, as well as domineer over their

20 Wherefore, [a] if ye be dead with Christ [b] from the * rudiments of the world, why, as though [c] living in the world, are ye [d] subject to ordinances?

21 ([e] Touch not, taste not, handle not;

22 Which all are [f] to perish with the using;) [g] after the commandments and doctrines of men.

23 Which things have indeed [h] a shew of wisdom in [i] will-worship and humility, and † neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

a iii. 3. Rom. vi. 2—11. vii. 4—6. Gal. ii. 19, 20. vi. 14. 1 Pet. iv. 1—3.
b *See on*, 8.—Eph. ii. 15.
* Or, *elements*.
c John xv. 19. xvii. 14—16. Cor. x. 3. Jam. iv. 4. 1 John v. 19.——d *See on*, 14. 16.—Gal. iv. 9—12. Heb. xiii. 9.——e Gen. iii. 3. Is. lii. 11. 2 Cor. vi. 17. 1 Tim. iv. 3.——f Mark vii. 18, 19. John vi. 27. 1 Cor. vi. 13.
g Is. xxix. 13. Dan. xi. 37. Matt. xv. 3—9. Mark vii. 7—13. Tit. i. 14. Rev. xxii. 18.
h Gen. iii. 5, 6. Matt. xxiii. 27, 28. 2 Cor. xi. 13—15. 1 Tim. iv. 3, 8.
i *See on* 18. 22.
† Or, *punishing*; or, *not sparing*. Eph. v. 29.

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consciences. This would be attempted by certain persons, who were induced, by an uncommanded and self-imposed humility, to worship angels; pretending that it was improper for mean sinful creatures to come to God immediately with their prayers, and that it was therefore expedient to solicit the mediatory good offices of holy angels; and they aimed to persuade others to the practice. Thus, they ascribed divine honours to created beings, as if ever present with men in all places, and acquainted with the sincerity and the desires of their hearts: nay, they seemed to intimate, that they were more compassionate and kind than the Lord himself. This might be called *humility*, and indeed it was a *voluntary degradation*, to which a rational creature ought not to submit: yet, in fact, it originated from *pride*, and a most presumptuous intrusion into the supposed state of the invisible world: it substituted man's arrogant conjectures and speculations in the place of divine revelation; and it was the genuine offspring of that self-wisdom, with which the carnal mind is so prone to be puffed up. By thus exalting angels to the office of mediators, and worshipping them in that capacity, they especially dishonoured Christ, the One Mediator between God and man, to whom, as God manifested in the flesh, such worship ought to be appropriated. They did not therefore adhere to Christ the Head, or hold communion with him; but, in fact, they departed from the grand principles of the Gospel, by choosing and worshipping other mediators: and as no sinner can approach God, or be accepted, but in and by Christ, so this error tended directly to ruin their souls. For all true believers are united to him, and receive all grace from him, they are compacted together into one body by their union with him and with each other, and by thus filling up their proper places, and performing their proper functions in his Church; as the human body is made up of many members compacted together, by joints, tendons, veins, &c. united to one head. Thus Christians, derive spiritual nourishment from Christ, through his ordinances; and being knit together, they increase in knowledge and holiness, by the power of God, and grow up into nearer conformity to him. (*Eph.* iv. 15, 16.)—It hath before been intimated, that the Jews seem to have borrowed some of the Pagan notions, and applied them to the scriptural doctrine of angels; by these means the Judaizing teachers had begun to corrupt Christianity with a new and refined species of idolatry. To what lengths the same principles afterwards carried professed Christians, in the worship of departed saints, real or imaginary, and the worship of images, as well as that of angels, especially in the Church of Rome, is well known. But the whole was done in direct defiance to the apostle's testimony, which sufficiently proves all such practices to be as contrary to the honour of Christ in the Gospel, as more direct or acknowledged idolatry is to the honour of God in the law.—Many expositors bestow great pains, while commenting on this chapter, in showing what heretics, or heretical teachers, the apostle had in view; and what sects of the philosophers had supplied, so to speak, the materials for these corruptions of the Gospel. But it appears to me, that if Cerinthus, or the Gnostics, or any other heretics, had been then known as avowing antichristian tenets, the apostle would no more have scrupled to name them, than he did to name Hymeneus and Philetus; unless he had thought, that by naming some he should be supposed to exculpate others, who, with some shades of difference, were equally corrupting the Gospel. In like manner, the Stoics and Epicureans are named by the sacred historian in the same way as the Pharisees and Sadducees are; and if Christianity had been corrupted, *exclusively*, by the speculations of Pythagoreans or Platonists, it does not appear why the apostle should omit to protest against them. But if all the sects of the philosophers held notions suited to corrupt Christianity, then the reason is evident why he apostle names no one; and it is equally strong against our interpreting his words of any one exclusively. In fact, it is of immensely more importance for us to know *what*, than *whom*, he opposed; for if our attention be engrossed by the danger of ancient Christians, from this or the other sect, either of heretics or philosophers, we shall probably be led to forget our own danger from Papists, Socinians, philosophising infidels, *rational* Christians, (as some call themselves,) and all the varieties of superstitious and enthusiastical deceivers; against all of whom the apostle's words, as explained in an enlarged sense, most solemnly warn us.

V. 20—23. If the Colossians were indeed become dead with Christ to the ceremonial law, which is elsewhere called the rudiments or elements of this world, (*Marg. Ref.*) Christ having discharged and cancelled that bond, why did they act as if they were still living in the world, under a carnal dispensation, and strangers to a more spiritual worship and service? And why did any of them submit to those who *dogmatically* imposed legal observances and human traditions of any kind on them? The Judaizing teachers, having imbibed also the notions of the heathen philosophers, had crept in at Colosse, and with great eagerness inculcated their principles, and seem to have met with countenance from some professed Christians. They called on them, in a dogmatical and authoritative manner, not "to touch," or to eat such food as was legally unclean, and not so much as to taste it, nor yet to handle any thing which might pollute them; probably requiring them also to refrain from marriage. (1 *Cor.* vii. 1.) The next words are differently interpreted.—Some suppose them to be the words of the false

CHAP. III.

The apostle exhorts Christians to seek, and set their affections on things above; and being risen with Christ, and following him to heaven, 1—4: *to mortify carnal lusts, to put away malice, and to seek conformity to Christ in holiness,* 5—11; *especially in love of each other, readiness to forgive injuries, and gratitude to God,* 12—15: *to keep close to the word of truth, to abound in grateful praises, and to do all in the name of Christ,* 16, 17. *The duties of wives and husbands,* 18, 19; *of children and parents,* 20, 21; *and of servants,* 22—25.

teachers, forbidding the use of all food, which caused the destruction of life.—'Whatever things tend to the destruction *of life*, in the using.' (*Macknight.*) But though the words may bear this translation, yet, as there is nothing in the original for *of life*, and as whatever is used as food is destroyed by that use, the interpretation seems inadmissible.—'All which things tend to the corruption 'of that excellent religion, into which you are intitiated.' (*Doddrige.*) This supposes the word φθορα to be used in a moral sense, of which many instances may be given. But the more general, and, as it appears to me, the best founded interpretation, supposes the apostle to refer to our Lord's words concerning the traditions of the Pharisees, (*Matt.* xv. 17.) and implies, that abstaining from such things, when not divinely prohibited, as supported the body by perishing themselves, could do nothing towards the salvation of the soul. (*Notes, Matt.* xv. 1—20. 1 *Cor.* vi. 12—20.) Whereas all such things perish with the using, and could communicate no real defilement. *Typical instructions* had in former ages been conveyed by the ritual law, but its obligation had now ceased, and it was of no more authority than the other doctrines and commandments of human invention, which the false teachers added to it. The worship of angels and the distinctions of meats had a show of wisdom, which might impose on the injudicious. To add voluntarily to the rule of duty, and thus to render it more strict, had a semblance of great devotion and extraordinary sanctity; but it implied that God had given a defective rule, and that he would be pleased with what he had never commanded. It might also *appear* very humble to worship angels, yet this arose from abominable pride and unbelief. The abstaining from meats, with various self-imposed austerities, might have a show of extraordinary spirituality, by which the body was neglected, from a pretended superiority to animal indulgence, and willingness for mortification and suffering; yet all this was not "in any honour" to God, or any thing *valuable* in itself; nay, the whole tended to *satisfy*, in a dishonourable manner, the propensities of the flesh, of the carnal mind, by gratifying his self-will, self-wisdom, self-righteousness, bigotry, and contempt of others.—The word rendered "will-worship," is not elsewhere used in the New Testament, but it may be so naturally formed out of two words found in the eighteenth verse, and rendered "voluntary "worshipping," that its meaning is by no means doubtful. The last clause is differently interpreted,—'Nor are 'they of any value, as they regard those things by which 'the flesh is gratified, (or pampered.)' (*Beza.*) By "the "flesh," he means the carnal mind, which is gratified with every thing that affords fuel for pride, self-preference, and contempt of others. "Not by any provision 'for satisfying the flesh: τιμη, 'sometimes in scripture 'signifies the food and clothing necessary for the body.— 'Thus the provision of the necessaries and conveniences 'of life, made for parents, elders, and widows, is called 'τιμη, (1 *Tim.* v. 17.) The body is as real a part of our 'nature, as the soul, and ought to have such food and 'recreation as are necessary to its health and vigour. 'The wisdom which teaches the "neglecting of the body, "is not wisdom, but folly." (*Macknight.*) 'Not yielding that due respect and care to the body, which were 'meet for the moderate and fit sustentation of it.' (*Bp. Hall.*) 'Forbidding marriage, which "is honourable, "(τιμιος,) in all," 'and allowing no honourable means 'of satisfying those desires, which are implanted by 'nature, brought them all to dishonourable lusts.' (*Hammond.*) If this meaning could be clearly made out and firmly established, it would very well suit the context. For it can hardly be doubted, that the Holy Spirit led the apostle to speak against the corruptions, which certain Judaizing and speculating teachers, grafting the heathen philosopher, so to speak, on the superstitious Pharisee, attempted to corrupt the Church, in language strictly prophetical of the subsequent corruptions of the "man of "sin," the papal antichrist. It may, however, be questioned, whether the words translated "satisfying the flesh," which seems to imply *full gratification, even to repletion and satiety*, would have been used by the apostle in this connexion: so that, on the whole, the first interpretation appears to me the most satisfactory.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

They who know the worth of souls, will seek and pray for the salvation of sinners all over the earth; and such as greatly love their brethren, will earnestly strive for the establishment and progress, even of those whom they have not seen; and when they can do nothing else, they may wrestle with God in prayer for them. The hearts of Christians are commonly comforted and animated, in proportion as they are "knit together in love;" and there are riches, in the full assurance of understanding of the Gospel, with which believers in general are but little acquainted. Indeed, there is an inexhaustible mine of most precious treasure in the word of God; from which men are enriched, in proportion to the simplicity, diligence, and perseverance, with which they seek it. We cannot comprehend the mystery of God; even of the Father and of Christ; but we may believe, acknowledge, contemplate, and adore it. Thus we shall derive, from the treasures laid up in our Emmanuel, supplies of wis-

IF ye then be [a] risen with Christ, [b] seek those things which are above, [c] where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

2 [d] Set your * affection on things above, [e] not on things on the earth.

3 For ye [f] are dead, and [g] your life is [h] hid with Christ in God.

4 When Christ, *who is* [i] our Life, shall [k] appear, then shall [l] ye also appear with him in glory.

a ii. 12, 13. 20. Rom. vi 4, 5 9—11 Gal. ii. 19, 20 Eph i. 19, 20. ii. 5, 6. b 2. Ps xvi. 11. xvii 14, 15. lxxiii. 25, 26. Prov. xv. 24. Matt. vi. 20. 33 Luke xii. 33. Rom. viii. 6. 2 Cor. iv 18 Phil iii. 20, 21. Heb. xi 13—16.——c Ps cx. 2. Matt xxii. 44. xxvi. 64 Mark xii 36. xiv. 62. xvi. 19. Luke xx. 42. xxii 69. Acts ii. 34. vii. 35 Rom. viii. 34. Eph 1. 20 iv. 10. Heb i 3 13. viii. 1 x. 12. xii. 2. 1 Pet. iii. 22.——d *See on*, b 1.—1 Chr. xxii. 19 xxix, 3. Ps. lxii. 10 xci 14. cxix. 36, 37 Prov. xxv 5 Ec. vii. 14. Matt xvi. 23 Rom vii 4—6 Phil. 1 23 1 John ii. 15—17.——* Or, *mind.* e 5. Ps. xlix 11—17. Matt vi. 19 Luke xii. 15. xvi 8, 9. 11. 19—25. Phil. iii. 19

f *See on* a. ii. 20. g 4. John iii. 16. iv 14. v. 21 24. 40. vi. 39. 40. x. 28—30 xiv. 19. Rom. v. 10. 21 viii. 2. 34—39. 1 Cor. xv. 45 Heb. vii. 25. 1 Pet i. 3—5. h ii 3 Matt. xi 25. 1 Cor. ii 14 Phil. iv. 7 1 Pet. iii 4 1 John iii. 3. Rev. ii. 17. i John xi 25. xiv 6. xx. 21 Acts iii 15. Gal. ii. 20 2 Tim. i. 1. 1 John i 1, 2. v. 12. Rev ii 7. xxi. 1. 14.——k 1 Tim. vi 14. 2 Tim. iv 8. Tit. ii. 13 Heb. ix. 28. 1 Pet. v. 4 1 John ii 28. iii. 2——l Ps. xvii. 15 lxxiii 24 Is. xxv. 8, 9. Matt. xiii. 43. John vi. 39, 40. xiv. 3, xvii. 24. 1 Cor xv. 43. 2 Cor iv. 17 Phil iii. 21 1 Thes. iv. 17. 2 Thes. i 10—12. Jude 25.

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dom and knowledge, far more valuable than all man's boasted science and philosophy; but these treasures are hidden from the proud and unbelieving, and can be discovered and appropriated only by faith. We have peculiar need to insist on these things at present, when so many are employed in beguiling men with enticing words; extolling the powers of human reason, and depreciating revelation, deriding theology, and idolizing philosophy; boasting of demonstration and experiment in natural science; rejecting unanswerable evidences of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, and treating all experience of the power of divine grace in the heart with the most sovereign contempt! Whilst multitudes of frivolous and superficial speculators are thus beguiled into infidelity, skepticism, or destructive perversions of Christianity, it must rejoice every established believer and every zealous minister, to know that there is yet a remnant to be found dispersed through the land, who walk orderly accordingly to the obedience and worship of the Gospel, and are steadfast in the faith of Christ; with these he will find his heart united; and, if he hath opportunity, he will exhort them to walk in Christ, even as they have received him to be their Prophet, Priest, and King; that being rooted in, and built upon, him, they may be steadfast in the faith, and fruitful in every good work, "abounding therein with "thanksgiving."

V. 8—17.

Let young persons, and inquirers after the truth, especially beware lest any man spoil them through philosophy. They may depend upon it, that all the boasted knowledge, which is opposed to the mysteries of the Person and redemption of Christ, is a vain deceit, a worldly wisdom, like that of Jewish scribes, who crucified Christ, or that of heathen philosophers, who counted the preaching of the cross to be foolishness. Men cannot follow such vain delusions, and be the disciples of Christ; for "in him "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." All true Christians glory in this "great mystery of godliness," and all who oppose it are strangers to the life of faith and the way to the Father. (*John* xiv. 6.) Without union and communion with Christ, and with the Father through him, by the supply of his Spirit, we can do nothing; but true Christians are complete in him: they derive all they want from his fulness, and they are safe in his keeping, who is the Head of all principality and power. If we enter into the Spirit of genuine Christianity, we do not want either Jewish exploded ceremonies, or newly invented superstitions. The circumcision of the heart, the crucifixion of the flesh, the death and burial to sin and the world, and the resurrection to newness of life implied in baptism, and connected with faith of the operation of God, sufficiently prove that our sins are forgiven, our debt is blotted out and cancelled, and that we are fully delivered from the curse of the law. He who triumphed upon the cross over the principalities and powers of darkness, will also, from his glorious throne, defend us from all their assaults and stratagems, till he hath made us more than conquerors. We want no other wisdom, righteousness, strength, holiness, liberty, or victory, than what Christ bestows. We need not regard those who judge us in respect of meats, and drinks, and holy-days, or other human traditions, which are not so much as a shadow of things to come, as Jewish ceremonies once were; but we enjoy the substance in Christ, and by walking in his ordinances and commandments.

V. 18—23.

Having One all-sufficient Advocate with the Father, we have no occasion for any other mediator, and need not abase ourselves to worship fellow-servants, to the great dishonour of our common Lord. Such voluntary self-degradation is real pride, which refuses submission to the teaching, righteousness, and authority of God; and it is the genuine effect of a carnal mind, puffed up with imagined knowledge, and vainly intruding into those things which are not seen. The Church has long enough been corrupted, and souls deceived, with such gross delusions, with human inventions, will-worship, and self-imposed austerities; men have long enough been misled by those who said, "Touch not, taste not, handle not," concerning such things as perish with the using. But whatever show there may be of wisdom, sanctity, or mortification, in these devices, they certainly are worthless in themselves, they neither honour nor please God; and they gratify the proud self-preference, the domineering bigotry, and the persecuting temper of the carnal heart of man.—Let us then not depart from the simplicity of our dependence on the Lord Jesus, and obedience to him: He is our Head of authortiy and influence, "from whom the "whole body, by joints and bands, having nourishment "ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the in-"crease of God." As dead with him to the world, and its wisdom and maxims, let us willingly bear his yoke, and steadily assert our liberty from human impositions.—What he hath left indifferent, let us regard as such, and leave others to the like freedom; and, remembering the transient nature of earthly things, let us endeavour to glorify God in our use of them.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1—4. If the Colossians were in-

5 [m] Mortify therefore your [n] members which are upon the earth; [o] fornication, uncleanness, [p] inordinate affection, [q] evil concupiscence, and [r] covetousness, which is idolatry:

6 For [s] which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the [t] children of disobedience.

m Rom. vi. 6. viii. 13. Gal. v. 24.
n Rom. vii. 5. 23. Jam. iv. 1.
o Matt. xv. 19. Mark vii. 21, 22. Rom. i. 29. 1 Cor. v. 1. 10, 11. vi. 9. 13. 18. 2 Cor. xii. 21. Gal. v. 19—21. Eph. v. 3. 1 Thes. iv. 3. Heb. xii. 16. xiii. 4. Rev. xxi. 8. xxii. 15.——p Rom. i. 26. 1 Thes. iv. 5. *Gr.*——q Rom. vii. 7, 8. 1 Cor. x. 6—8. Eph. iv. 19. 1 Pet. ii. 11.
r 1 Cor. vi. 10. Gal. v. 19—21. —*See on*, Eph. v. 3. 5.
s *See on*, Eph. v. 6.
t Is. lvii. 4. Ez. xvi. 45, 46. Eph. ii. 2, 3.—1 Pet. i. 14. 2 Pet. ii. 14. *Gr.*

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deed risen with Christ, as their baptism and profession implied, it behooved them to evidence it, by seeking "those "things which are above." (*Marg. Ref.*) Perfect knowledge, holiness, and felicity, in the immediate presence of God, and in his service and love, are evidently intended. The assured hope, and the happy earnests and first-fruits of these, they ought to seek, in preference to all worldly interests or pleasures, and in the diligent use of all appointed means. Thus they should follow Christ their Fore-runner; that, as they were dead to sin and alive to God, in conformity to his death and resurrection, so they might be conformed to him in his ascension into heaven, where, as their Surety, he was exalted on the mediatorial throne, at the right hand of the Father, to appear in his presence, and to prepare a place for them. By faith beholding his glory, and aspiring in hope to this heavenly inheritance, they ought to value, choose, savour, pursue, and delight in, spiritual things, and not earthly. (*Notes, Rom.* viii. 4—9.) For, according to their profession, and the apostle's confidence respecting them, they were already dead to their former hopes, interests, motives, and pursuits, "and their life was hid with Christ." The spring of that eternal life which abode in them, and from which all their present comforts, hopes, and activity, were derived, was in Christ and his fulness; the streams of this living water flowed into their souls, by the influences of the Holy Spirit, through faith; thus they were united to Christ and had communion with him, and wisdom, strength, grace, and comfort, were derived from him; he lived and ruled in them, and they lived in him, by him, and to him. The Fountain of their life, and the nature, supports, and principles of it, were *hidden*, from carnal men, who could not understand what were the secret springs of their active diligence and joyful patience, in opposition to all temporal interests and satisfactions. This life was likewise secured, as a hidden treasure, from wicked men and fallen spirits, who could by no means deprive them of it; nor was it in their own keeping, but in that of Christ, by whom it was sustained, and who was himself the unfailing Source of it. Thus it was "with Christ in God," through the union of the Deity with his human nature; and so the immutable power, faithfulness, wisdom, and love of God secured it for them. When, therefore, Christ their life should appear to raise the dead and judge the world, then would every one of them, who thus lived by him, appear with him in glory, being made completely like him both in body and soul, that they might all be glorified together with him; and their comforts on earth, and the previous felicity of their departed spirits, would be an anticipation of this perfect and eternal glory reserved for them. (*Note, Gal.* ii. 20.)

V. 5, 6. The exhortations here given are similar to those that have been already considered; (*Notes, Eph.* iv. 17—32. v. 1—6.) The "members which are upon earth" signify the various lusts of man's carnal nature, the members of the old man, the body of sin. In the regenerate "the flesh is crucified with its affections and lusts;" yet there is still life in it. It must therefore be daily mortified; a continual opposition must be made to all its corrupt workings; the supplies of its life must be, as it were, cut off; no provision must be made for its indulgence; temptations, and occasions of sin must be avoided; and even lawful inclinations must be habituated to brook denial. Thus the members of the carnal nature, which affects earthly things and disrelishes heavenly, must be continually enfeebled, and put to death by a lingering unrelenting execution. In the detail of particulars here adduced, we may observe, that *inordinate affection*, may relate to inexpedient and excessive desires after even lawful indulgences of any kind: though some understand it of unnatural crimes. *Evil concupiscence*, signifies the sensuality of the heart, and imagination, which must be mortified, or gross crimes will follow. But several expositors explain the word rendered *covetousness*, as denoting rather the excessive desire of sensual gratification, than the love of riches. This appears a very dangerous misconstruction: for by this means, *sensuality* is supposed to be forbidden with a needless redundancy of words, and *covetousness* escapes without the least rebuke: whereas the *love of money* is the root of all kinds of evil, and both the scripture and matter of fact show it to be one of the greatest possible hinderances to man's salvation, and the greatest of all snares to the professors of the gospel; nor can any vice so properly be called *idolatry*, as *avarice*. The original word literally signifies *having more*, or *have more*, implying the hankering after still more and more, which is evidently the disease of the avaricious. It is but seldom used in the Greek writers for any thing but covetousness; though a few instances may be found of its being applied to an insatiable greediness in other respects. The general meaning of the word in the New Testament may be understood, from most of the passages in which it is used, where its import cannot be doubted. (*Marg. Ref. Gr.*) 'There 'being in us naturally "the old man," (9.) 'and the 'body of sin: the inordinate affections and lustings of it 'are styled the members of that body; partly because they 'exert themselves by the members of the natural body; 'and partly, because as the members of the body are 'employed to accomplish the desires of the natural body; 'so these affections are employed to gratify the desires of 'the body of sin. As heathens place confidence in their 'idols, so the avaricious man doth place his confidence in 'gold and silver. The covetous person doth not indeed 'believe his riches to be a god; yet by so loving and 'trusting in them, as God alone ought to be loved and 'trusted, he is as truly guilty of idolatry, as if he so 'believed.' (*Whitby.*) By "the children of disobedience," some understand wicked men in general; and others seem to confine the interpretation to idolaters. But the word rendered *disobedience* often signifies *unbelief*; and 'the

7 In the which [u] ye also walked sometime, when ye lived in them.

8 But now ye also [x] put off all these; [y] anger, wrath, malice, [z] blasphemy, [a] filthy communication out of your mouth.

9 [b] Lie not one to another, seeing that [c] ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

10 And have [d] put on [e] the new *man*, which is [f] renewed in [g] knowledge, [h] after the image of him that created him:

11 Where [i] there is neither Greek nor Jew, [k] circumcision nor uncircumcision, [l] Barbarian, Scythian, [m] bond *nor* free: [n] but Christ *is* all, [o] and in all.

12 [p] Put on, therefore, [q] as the elect of God, [r] holy and [s] beloved, [t] bowels of [u] mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering;

13 [x] Forbearing one another, and [y] forgiving one another, if any man have a [*] quarrel against any: [z] even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye.

14 And above all these things, *put on* [a] charity, which is [b] the bond of perfectness.

15 And let [c] the peace of God rule in your hearts, [d] to the which also ye are called in one body; [e] and be ye thankful.

u ii. 13. Rom vi. 19, 20. vii. 5 1 Cor vi 11. Eph. ii. 2. Tit iii 3. 1 Pet. iv 3, 4.

x 5. 9. Eph iv. 22 Heb. xii. 1 Jam. i 21. 1 Pet ii 1.

y Ps xxxvii 8 Prov. xvii. 14. xix. 19 xxix. 22. Matt. v. 22. Rom xiii 13. 1 Cor. iii 3 2 Cor xii. 20. Gal v 15. 20 26 Eph. iv. 26. 31, 32 2 Tim. ii. 23, 24. Jam i. 20. iii. 14—16.

z Lev. xxiv 11—16. Mark vii 22. 1 Tim. i. 13 20 Jam. ii 7. Jude 8 Rev. xvi. 9.

a Eph. iv 29. v. 4. Jam. iii. 4—6. 2 Pet. ii 7. 18. Jude 8. 13

b Lev. xix. 11. Is. lxiii. 8 Jer. ix 3–5 Zeph. iii 13. Zech. viii. 16 John viii. 44. Eph iv. 25. 1 Tim. i 10 Tit i 12, 13. Rev xxi. 8. 27. xxii. 15 ——c 8. Rom vi. 6. Eph iv. 22.——d 12 14 Job xxix. 14. Is lii. 1. lix. 17. Rom xiii. 12, 13 1 Cor xv 53, 54 Gal iii 27. Eph iv 24.——e Ez. xi. 19. xviii 31. xxxvi. 26 2 Cor. v. 17. Gal. vi 15 Eph ii. 10 15. iv. 24 Rev. xxi. 5.——f Ps. li. 10. Rom. xii 2. Eph iv. 13 Heb vi 6.——g John xvii 3. 2 Cor. iii. 18. iv. 6 1 John ii 3. 5.
h Gen. i 26, 27. Eph. iv 23, 24 1 Pet i 14, 15 ——i Ps cxvii. Is. xix. 23—25. xlix. 6. lii 10 lxvi. 18—22. Jer xvi. 19. Hos. ii. 23 Am ix. 12 Mic. iv. 2. Zech. ii. 11 viii. 20—23 Mal. i. 11 Matt. xii 18—21. Acts x 34, 35 xiii. 46—48 xv. 17, xxvi. 17, 18 Rom. iii 29. iv 10, 11. ix. 24—26 30, 31 x 12. xv 9—13. 1 Cor. xii. 13. Gal. iii. 28. Eph. iii 6.
k 1 Cor. vii. 19. Gal v 6. vi 15.——l Acts xxviii. 2. 4. Rom. i. 14. 1 Cor. xiv. 11.
m 1 Cor. vii. 21, 22 Eph. vi. 8.

n ii. 10. 1 Cor. i. 29, 30. iii. 21—23 Gal. iii. 29. vi 14. Phil. iii. 7—9. 1 John v. 11, 12. 2 John 9.

o John vi. 56, 57. xiv. 23. xv. 5. xvii. 23 Rom. viii. 10, 11. Gal ii 20. Eph. i. 23. iii. 17. 1 John v. 20.

p *See on*, d 10.

q Is. xlii 2. xlv. 4. lxv. 9. 22. Matt. xxiv. 22. 24 31. Mark xiii 20 22. 27. Luke xviii 7. Rom. viii. 29—33. ix. 11 xi. 5—7. 2 Tim. ii 10. Tit i. 1. 1 Pet. i 2. 2 Pet. i. 10. 2 John 1. 13. Rev. xvii. 14

r Rom. viii. 29. Eph. i 4. 1 Thes. i. 4—6 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14.

s Jer xxxi. 3. Ez. xvi 8. Rom i. 7 Eph ii. 4, 5. 2 Tim. i. 9. Tit iii. 4—6. 1 John iv. 19.
t Is. lxiii. 15. Jer. xxxi. 20 Luke i 78. *Marg.* Phil. i. 8 ii. 1 1 John iii 17 ——u Rom. xii. 9, 10 Gal v. 6. 22. 23. Eph iv. 32. Phil. ii 2—4. 1 Thes. v 15 Jam iii 17, 18. 1 Pet. iii 8—11. 2 Pet. i. 5—8 1 John iii 14—20.——x Rom. xv. 1, 2. 2 Cor. vi. 6 Gal. vi. 2. Eph. iv. 2 ——y Matt v 44. vi. 12. 14, 15. xviii 21. 35 Mark xi. 25. Luke vi. 35—37. xi. 4. xvii. 3, 4. xxiii. 34 Jam. ii 13.——* Or, *complaint* Matt. xviii 15—17 1 Cor. vi 7, 8.
z Luke v 20 24. vii. 48—50. 1 Cor. ii 10 Eph iv. 32 v. 2 1 Pet. ii. 21 ——a John xiii. 34 xv. 12 Rom xiii. 8 1 Cor xiii. 1 Thes. iv. 9. 1 Tim i. 5. 1 Pet iv. 8. 2 Pet i 7. 1 John iii. 23. iv 21 ——b Eph i. 4. 1 John iv 7—12.——c Ps xxix 11 Is. xxvi 3 xxvii. 5 lvii. 15 19 John xiv. 27. xvi 33. Rom v. 1 xiv. 17. xv 13. 2 Cor v. 19—31. Eph ii. 12—18 v. 1 Phil iv. 7.——d 1 Cor vii 15. Eph. ii 16 iv. 16.——e 17 i. 12. ii 7 Ps c. 4. cvii. 22. cxvi. 17. Jon. ii. 9 Luke xvii 16—18. Rom. i. 21 2 Cor. iv. 15 ix. 11. Eph. v. 20. Phil. iv. 6. 1 Thes. v. 18. 1 Tim. ii. 1. Heb. xiii. 15 Rev. vii. 12.

"children of disobedience," are doubtless all those, however distinguished, who do not believe and obey the Gospel; while the most profligate and abandoned, believing and obeying the Gospel, become the "children of obedience." (*Marg. Ref.*) The rites of Bacchus and Cybele were peculiarly observed at Colosse, the chief city of Phrygia, and conduced exceedingly to deprave the morals of the inhabitants, in many of the things here spoken of: but, alas! the case of multitudes even in professed Christian countries requires the same warnings and exhortations.

V. 7—11. The Colossians had once habitually practised some or other of the above-mentioned vices; when they lived *among* those who were of the same character, and when they had no experience or expectation of nobler interests or satisfactions. But now they must not only mortify these gross, carnal propensities, which had acquired strength by habit; but they must lay aside, as a cast-off garment, all evil practices, especially those which are next recapitulated. The word translated *blasphemy*, may signify slanders and revilings, as well as profane speeches respecting God and holy things. These, as well as all polluting discourse, and falsehood of every kind, must be renounced: seeing "they had put off the old man with "his deeds," by the mortification of the carnal nature, and by ceasing from the allowed practice of all sin. They ought therefore to avoid whatever was in the least degree inconsistent with their profession. And as they "had put "on the new man," and professed their conformity to Christ; and as this renewal of the soul after the holy image of him who had at first created it, and who had thus new-created it, was *in knowledge*, or by the transforming knowledge of the glory of God in Christ; so they ought to act like men who were of one mind and judgment with the Lord, "hating iniquity and loving righteousness" in their whole conduct. For they were fully admitted to all the privileges of God's people, and should therefore act in character. They were now members of the Christian church, in which all other distinctions were abolished. Greeks and Jews, circumcised and uncircumcised, illiterate persons of the most barbarous nations, the uncivilized Scythians, and the meanest slaves, as well as free men, were all equally made the children and heirs of God by faith in Christ; their relation to him was alone requisite for their acceptance, and admission to these privileges; and he dwelt in them all, by the power of his Spirit transforming them into his own holy image; by which they were distinguished from all other persons.

V. 12—15. As the elect of God, who had been freely beloved and chosen in Christ, and called to be saints, or holy persons, let the Christians at Colosse *put on*, and manifest in their whole conduct, a tender, compassionate, kind, lowly, unambitious, meek, and patient spirit; bearing with each other and forgiving one another, if any dispute or cause of complaint arose among them, after the example of Christ's love to them. Over all these let them put on charity, or active liberal love; this would be as the bond of union to all their other graces, and form their characters consistent. It would compact them into one body, and produce the most perfect state of the church on earth; as indeed it is the very bond which unites God and all holy beings, in the perfect happiness and holiness of heaven. (*Notes*, 1 *Cor.* xiii.) And as the peace of God, in their hearts and consciences, was the source of all their comforts; that peace ought to rule within them, as the umpire of all their differences; that they might be influenced by so endearing an example to live peaceably with all men. Especially this should teach them "to keep the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace:" because they had been called into a state of peace with God, "in one "body," as united in Christ their Head; for which it behooved them to be thankful, and to show their gratitude in this manner, and in every other way which they could, 16 Let [f] the word of Christ [g] dwell in you [h] richly in [i] all wisdom; [k] teaching and admonishing one another, [l] in psalms, and hymns, [m] and spiritual songs, [n] singing with grace in your hearts [o] to the Lord.

17 And [p] whatsoever ye do [q] in word or deed, *do* all [r] in the name of the Lord Jesus, [s] giving thanks to [t] God and the Father by him.

18 Wives, [u] submit yourselves unto your own husbands, [x] as it is fit in the Lord.

19 Husbands, [y] love *your* wives, and be not [z] bitter against them.

20 Children, [a] obey *your* parents [b] in all things: for this is [c] well-pleasing unto the Lord.

21 Fathers, [d] provoke not your children *to anger*, lest they be discouraged.

22 Servants, [e] obey in all things *your* masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as [f] men-pleasers; but [g] in singleness of heart, [h] fearing God:

23 And [i] whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, [k] as to the Lord, and not unto men;

24 Knowing that of the Lord [l] ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for [m] ye serve the Lord Christ.

25 But [n] he that doeth wrong shall [o] receive for the wrong which he hath done: [p] and there is no respect of persons.

[f] John v. 39, 40. 2 Tim. iii. 15. Heb. iv. 12, 13. 1 Pet. i. 11, 12. Rev. xix. 10.
[g] Deut. vi. 6–9. xi. 18–20. Job xxiii. 12. Ps. cxix. 11. Jer. xv. 16. Luke ii. 51. John xv. 7. 1 John ii. 14. 21. 27. 2 John 2.
[h] 1 Tim. vi. 17. Tit. iii. 6. *Marg.*
[i] i. 9. 1 Kings iii. 9–12. 28. Prov. ii. 6, 7. xiv. 8. xvii. 1. Is. xi. 2. Eph. i. 17. v. 17. Jam. i. 5. iii. 17.
[k] i. 28. Rom. xv. 14. 1 Thes. iv. 18. v. 11. 15. 2 Thes. iii. 15. Heb. xii. 12–15.
[l] Matt. xxvi. 30. 1 Cor. xiv. 26. Eph. v. 19. Jam. v. 13.
[m] 1 Chr. xxv. 7. Neh. xii. 46. Ps. xxxii. 7. cxix. 54. Cant. i. 1. Is. v. 1. xxvi. 1. xxx. 29. Rev. v. 9. xiv. 3. xv. 3.——[n] iv. 6. Ps. xxviii. 7. xxx. 11, 12. xlvii. 6, 7. lxiii. 4–6. lxxi. 23. ciii. 1, 2. cxxxviii. 1. 1 Cor. xiv. 15.——[o] 23.——[p] 23. 2 Chr. xxxi. 20, 21. Prov. iii. 6. Rom. xiv. 6–8. 1 Cor. x. 31.——[q] 2 Thes. ii. 17. 1 John iii. 18.
[r] Mic. iv. 5. Matt. xxviii. 19. Acts iv. 30. xix. 17. Phil. i. 11. 1 Thes. iv. 1, 2.——[s] i. 12. ii. 7. Rom. i. 8. Eph. v. 20. 1 Thes. v. 18. Heb. xiii. 15. 1 Pet. ii. 5. 9. iv. 11.
[t] Eph. i. 17. Phil. ii. 11. 1 Thes. i. 1. Heb. i. 5. 1 John ii. 23.——[u] Gen. iii. 16. Esth. i. 20. 1 Cor. xi. 3. xiv. 34. Eph. v. 22–24. 33. 1 Tim. ii. 12. Tit. ii. 5. 1 Pet. iii. 1–6.——[x] Acts v. 29. Eph. v. 3. vi. 1.——[y] Gen. ii. 23, 24. xxiv. 67. Prov. v. 18. 19. Ec. ix. 9. Mal. ii. 14–16. Luke xiv. 26. Eph. v. 25. 28, 29. 33. 1 Pet. iii. 7.
[z] 21. Rom. iii. 14. Eph. iv. 31. Jam. iii. 14.——[a] Gen. xxviii. 7. Ex. xx. 12. Lev. xix. 3. Deut. xxi. 18–21. xxvii. 16. Prov. vi. 20. xx. 20. xxx. 11. 17. Ez. xxii. 7. Mal. i. 6. Matt. xv. 4–6. xix. 19. Eph. vi. 1–3.——[b] 22. Eph. v. 24. Tit. ii. 9.

[c] i. 10. Phil. iv. 18. Heb. xiii. 21.
[d] Ps. ciii. 13. Prov. iii. 12. iv. 1–4. *See on*, Eph. vi. 4. 1 Thes. iii. 11. Heb. xii. 5–11. Ps. cxxiii. 2. Mal.
[e] i. 6. Matt. viii. 9. Luke vi. 46. vii. 8. Eph. vi. 5–7. 1 Tim. vi. 1, 2. Tit. ii. 9, 10. Philem. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 18. 19.
[f] Gal. i. 10. 1 Thes. ii. 4.
[g] Matt. vi. 22. Acts ii. 46. Eph. vi. 5.
[h] Gen. xlii. 18. Neh. v. 9. 15. Ec. v. 7. viii. 12. xii. 13. 2 Cor. vii. 2.
[i] *See on* 17. 2 Chr. xxxi. 21. Ps. xlvii. 6, 7. ciii. 1. cxix. 10. 34. 145. Ec. ix. 10. Jer. iii. 10. 1 Pet. i. 22.
[k] Zech. vii. 5–7. Matt. vi. 16. Rom. xiv. 6. 8. Eph. v. 22. vi. 7. 1 Pet. ii. 13. 15.——[l] ii. 18. Gen. xv. 1. Ruth ii. 12. Prov. xi. 18. Matt. v. 12. 46. vi. 1, 2. 5. 16. x. 41. Luke vi. 35. xiv. 14. Rom. ii. 6, 7. iv. 4, 5. 1 Cor. iii. 8. ix. 17, 18. Heb. ix. 15. x. 35. xi. 6.——[m] John xii. 26. Rom. i. 1. xiv. 18. 1 Cor. vii. 22. Gal. i. 10. Eph. vi. 6. 2 Pet. i. 1. Jude 1.——[n] 1 Cor. vi. 7, 8. 1 Thes. iv. 6. Philem. 18.——[o] 2 Cor. v. 10. Heb. ii. 2.——[p] iv. 1. Lev. xix. 15. Deut. i. 17. 2 Sam. xiv. 14. 2 Chr. xix. 7. Job xxxiv. 19. xxxvii. 24. Luke xx. 21. Acts x. 34. Rom. ii. 11. Eph. vi. 9. 1 Pet. i. 17. Jude 16.

V. 16, 17. (*Note, Eph.* v. 18—20.) By *the word of Christ*, the whole of the sacred scripture seems to be meant; which was all from him, as "the Light of the "world," and the personal Word of God; and which, in one way or another, all related to him. It was very important, that the Colossians should, by diligent study and meditation, store their memories and understandings with the instructions of scripture; that it might thus abundantly dwell within them; and that so their judgments might be formed upon it, their hearts cast into the mould of it, and their consciences directed by it. Thus they would be enriched in all spiritual wisdom and knowledge; (ii. 2, 3;) and would learn to act wisely in their whole conduct; or they would be influenced to use their knowledge in all wisdom, by reducing it to practice. This would enable them, with readiness and pertinency, to teach, caution, exhort, reprove, or encourage one another: while those psalms and sacred poems, which they sang together with holy affections, under the influence of divine grace in their hearts, to the glory of the Lord, would furnish them with words suited to such mutual admonitions. Their idolatrous neighbours had laid up in their memories songs in praise of their base deities and corrupt practices, which they used on every festive occasion, and when they met together for social intercourse, nay, for amusement and recreation when alone. This, in fact, has always been the case in every country; and the popular songs have an immense, but, generally, a most pernicious effect on the people. They are learned in early life, and not soon forgotten, and often are considered as proverbial or oracular. Let then Christians, excluding those polluting vanities, labour to get their memories and minds richly replenished with hymns and songs of praise to God, and of every kind which are suited to prepare them for the worship of heaven, and to anticipate its joys; and let them use these hymns and songs constantly, not on public occasions alone, but in social meetings also; and even when alone, in their houses, or journeying, and indeed in any other situation. This will also render them edifying and animating companions to their fellow-christians. In general, whatever they are employed about, whether in conversation, in social worship, in their secular or domestic concerns, or in any work of piety, or charity, let them "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus;" in a believing dependence on his merits and grace, out of love to him, in obedience to his precepts, and for the honour of his name, giving thanks to God, *even* the Father, by him; for such services can be accepted from sinners only through his intercession.

V. 18, 19. (*Notes, Eph.* v. 22—33. 1 *Pet.* iii. 1—7.) "Fit in the Lord;" or agreeable to his commandment, honourable to his Gospel, and not contrary to the rule of obeying God rather than man. Christian wives would, at that time, in many cases, be required to obey idolatrous husbands; and Christian husbands to love heathen wives. *Be not bitter.* 'Thou art not a lord, but a husband; thou 'hast not got a maid-servant, but a wife; God would have 'thee the ruler of the inferior sex, not the tyrant.' (*Ambrose.*) 'In this precept, fidelity to the marriage-covenant 'is enjoined, as well as care to provide for the wife such 'conveniences, as may be necessary to her happiness, agree'ably to the husband's station.' (*Macknight.*)

V. 20, 21. (*Note, Eph.* vi. 1—4.) *Discouraged.* When parents are continually finding fault with their children, and confounding the distinction between wilful offences, or obstinate disobedience, or immoral conduct, and the heedlessness or inadvertencies of youth; and when they sharply reprove even the defects of their endeavours to obey, without commending what is right; children imbibe the notion that it is impossible to please their parents, and so discouragement renders them careless. They then count their parents harsh and unfriendly, they shun their company; and in consequence are exposed to numberless temptations.

CHAP. IV.

Exhortations to masters to behave properly to their servants, 1: *to perseverance in prayer,* 2—4; *to prudence and edifying speech,* 5, 6. *The apostle commends Tychicus and Onesimus, by whom he sent the epistle,* 7—9; *and concludes with salutations, admonitions, and directions,* 10—18.

V. 22—25. (*Notes, Eph.* v. 8. *Marg. Ref.*) *Singleness,* &c. That is, singly aiming to obey and honour God in all they do; doing it to the best of their ability, as serving a good, merciful, and bountiful God, even in doing the work of a tyrannical, iniquitous, and idolatrous master. This would render the meanest employment a service acceptable, well-pleasing unto God: and, however they might fail of pleasing their unreasonable masters, they would certainly receive an abundant, though gracious, reward from God, especially in the heavenly inheritance. —*Serve the Lord Christ.* 'We are,' (says Schlictlingius, a Socinian,) 'to serve Christ as our heavenly Lord, which, 'saith he, comprehends faith in him, obedience to him, 'and worship and adoration of him.' (*Whitby.*) *He that doeth wrong,* &c. (25.) The misconduct of the servant would not excuse the cruelty and injustice of the master; and the idolatry, wickedness, or severity of the master, would not exempt the slothful, dishonest, or disobedient servant from punishment. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

The sincerity of our professed faith and love must be evidenced by a consistent temper and conduct: and we should prove that we are spiritually alive through our risen Saviour, by seeking and delighting in those things which are above, where he sitteth at the right hand of God. Thus we shall know our interest in his atonement, by the life which we have derived from him; and may be assured that "When Christ, who is our Life, shall appear, then "shall we also appear with him in glory;" though this life of faith, and experienced communion with an unseen Saviour, must be hid from ungodly men, and frequently derided by them. Having such hopes and comforts, we should daily employ ourselves in mortifying every carnal affection, and in seeking a more entire deliverance, not only from hankering after forbidden gratifications, but from all inordinate affection, and every desire of sensual indulgence, and from that idolatrous "covetousness, which "God abhorreth:" for "because of these things cometh "the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." In such practices and pursuits we might have been left to perish: for whether we once walked in them or not, we were by nature prone to them, and should have lived and died among the children of disobedience, if we had been left to ourselves. Let us then also put off anger, malice, slander, revilings, irreverent words concerning God, polluting discourse, and all kinds and degrees of insincerity: for a Christian should no more allow himself in any of these, than a courtier should dishonour his prince, and bemean himself, by wearing squalid and ragged garments. Having therefore put off the old man and his deeds, and put on Christ, and being renewed in knowledge after his image: let us study to copy his example, and to act consistently with our rank and character.

V. 12—25.

As to all other distinctions, we may well be indifferent about them, seeing "Christ is all, and in all:" but we should be earnestly desirous of evidencing ourselves to be the elect of God, holy and beloved, by cultivating every benign, friendly, humble, and gentle temper; by copying the forgiveness through which we are saved; and by putting on that love which is the bond of perfectness, that it may above all appear in every part of our conduct, whilst we follow peace with all men, and are of one mind with those who belong to the Lord's body. We should also seek to be enriched in divine knowledge and wisdom, by a comprehensive acquaintance with the word of Christ; that, being familiarly versed in the Holy Scriptures, we may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work. From this sacred treasury we may deduce instructions for mutual admonition, while we unite in the worship of God, and in praising him with grace in our hearts: and so we shall be habitually led to do every "thing in the name of the "Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God, even the Father, by "him." By these means, our ordinary employments and relative conduct will be sanctified, and made a spiritual sacrifice. Thus the disobedient and disobliging behaviour of wives, and the bitter words and harsh conduct of husbands, will alike be precluded; because such things are not *meet* for those who are devoted to the Lord. Children will thus learn obedience to their parents, because this is well-pleasing to the Lord: and from the same motives, parents will learn to exercise their authority with prudence and gentleness; not exasperating their children by violent anger or durable resentment, nor discouraging them by disapproving of their endeavours to please. Thus servants will learn to be faithful, diligent, and conscientious in obeying their masters, from fear of God: and regard to his authority and all-seeing eye upon them. In short, true religion will teach every man to do the work of his station *heartily,* to the best of his ability, and with cheerful diligence, "as unto the Lord, and not to men:" expecting from him the gracious reward of the heavenly inheritance, as the servant of Christ, in obedient faith; and fearing, (when tempted,) to do wrong, lest he should come short of that inheritance, or expose himself to the displeasure of God, who is no Respecter of persons. These principles, and these alone, will render men universally conscientious, in all places and circumstances, from love to Christ, zeal for his glory, a desire of recommending his Gospel, and of possessing the assurance that they are interested in its blessings. But that evangelical profession, which leaves men regardless of relative duties, and gives those, with whom they are connected, *just* cause for complaint, is very suspicious: and the misconduct in the

MASTERS, [a] give unto *your* servants that which is just and equal; knowing that [b] ye also have a Master in heaven.

2 ¶ [c] Continue in prayer, and [d] watch in the same with [e] thanksgiving;

3 Withal, [f] praying also for us, [g] that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak [h] the mystery of Christ, [i] for which I am also in bonds:

4 That [k] I may make it manifest, [l] as I ought to speak.

5 [m] Walk in wisdom towards [n] them that are without, [o] redeeming the time.

6 Let [p] your speech *be* alway with grace, [q] seasoned with salt, that ye may know [r] how ye ought to answer every man.

7 All [s] my state shall [t] Tychicus declare unto you, *who is* [u] a beloved brother, and [x] a faithful minister, and fellow-servant in the Lord:

8 Whom [y] I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, [z] and comfort your hearts;

9 With [a] Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is *one* of you: They shall make known unto you all things which *are done* here.

10 [b] Aristarchus, my fellow-prisoner, [c] saluteth you, [d] and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, [e] receive him;)

11 And Jesus, which is called Justus, [f] who are of the circumcision. These only *are my* [g] fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, which have been [h] a comfort unto me.

12 [i] Epaphras, who is *one* of you, [k] a

a Lev xix 13 xxv. 39—43. Deut. xv. 12—15 xxiv. 14, 15 Neh v 5—13. Job xxiv. 11, 12. xxxi. 13—15 Is lviii 3. 5 9 Jer xxxiv. 9—17 Mal iii 5 Jam ii 13, v 4
b Ec v. 8 Matt. xxiii. 8 9. xxiv. 48—51 Luke xvi 1—13. xix. 15. Eph vi. 8, 9. Rev. xvii. 14 xix. 16.
c 12. i. 9. 1 Sam. xii. 23 Job xv 4 xxvii 8—10. Ps lv. 17, 18. cix 4. *See on*, Luke xviii 1. Rom. xii 12. Eph. iv. 18. Phil iv. 6 1 Thes v 17, 18
d Matt. xxvi. 41. Mark xiii. 33. Luke xxi 36. 1 Pet iv 7
e iii 15 17
f Rom xv. 30—32 Eph. vi. 19. Phil. i. 19 1 Thes. v 25. Philem. 22. Heb xiii 18, 19.——g 1 Cor. xvi. 9. 2 Cor ii 12. 2 Thes. iii. 1. 2. Rev. iii 7, 8.——h *See on*, i. 26. ii 2, 3 ——i Eph. iii. 1. iv 1. Phil. i. 14, 15. 2 Tim i. 16 ii. 9.
k Matt. x 26, 27. Acts iv. 29 2 Cor iii. 12. iv 1—4 ——l 6 Acts v 29 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5. 2 Cor ii 14 Eph. vi. 20 ——m iii 16. Matt. x 16 Rom xvi 19. 1 Cor xiv 19—25 Eph. v. 15. 17. Jam. i 5 iii. 17.——n 1 Cor v 12, 13 1 Thes. iv 12. 1 Tim. iii. 7. 1 Pet. iii. 1
o *See on*, Eph v. 16.——p iii 16 Deut. vi. 6, 7. xi. 19. 1 Chr xvi 24 Ps. xxxvii. 30, 31. xl 9, 10. xlv. 2 lxvi 16. lxxi. 15—19. 23, 24. lxxviii. 3. 4. cv 2. cxix. 13 46. Prov. x. 21. xv 4. 7. xv. 21—24. xxii. 17, 18 xxv. 11, 12. Ec x. 12. Mal ii. 16—18. Matt xii. 34, 35. Luke iv 22. Eph. iv 29.————q Lev. ii. 13. 2 Kings ii 20, 21. Matt. v. 13. Mark ix. 50.———r Prov. xxvi. 4, 5. Luke xx. 20—40. 1 Pet. iii. 15.

s Eph. vi. 21—23.
t Acts xx. 4. 2 Tim. iv. 12. Tit iii 12
u 12. *See on*, Eph. vi. 21 Phil ii. 25.
x 1 Cor. iv. 1—4.
y 1 Cor iv 17. 2 Cor. xii. 18. Eph. vi 22 Phil. ii. 28. 1 Thes iii. 5.
z ii 2. Is. xl 1. lxi 2. 2 Cor. i. 4 ii 7. 1 Thes. ii. 11 iii. 2. iv. 18. v. 11. 14. 2 Thes. ii. 17
a 7 Philem. 10—19.
b Acts xix. 29. xx. 4 xxvii. 2. Philem 24
c *See on*, Rom. xvi 21—23.
d Acts xii 12 xiii. 5. 13 xv. 37—39. 2 Tim. iv.
e 11. 1 Pet v 13. Rom. xvi. 2
f 3 John 8, 9. Acts x 45. xi. 2. Rom iv. 12. Gal. ii. 7, 8. Eph. ii. 11. Tit. i. 10.
g 7. 1 Cor. iii. 5—9. 2 Cor. vi. 1. Phil iv. 3. 1 Thes. iii 2. Philem. i. 24.
h 2 Cor. vii. 6, 7. 1 Thes. iii. 7.
i i 7. Philem 23.
k John xii. 26. Gal. i. 10. 2 Pet. i. 1.

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several relations of life, of some who are zealous for the Gospel, is so evidently and habitually wrong, that there can be no doubt but they deceive themselves, as well as disgrace the cause. Let us then earnestly pray for grace, to enable us to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, in these and in all other things; that the sincerity of our love may be evidenced beyond all reasonable ground of suspicion.

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. (*Note, Eph.* vi. 9.) The concluding admonition of the preceding chapter related to masters, as well as to servants. The former were here exhorted to give their servants that support, and recompense for their labours, which were just and equitable, implying care of them in sickness, provision in old age, and proportionable rewards for extraordinary fidelity and exertions. Thus they should in all things act towards them in a considerate and reasonable manner; not abusing their authority, but remembering their accountableness to their Master in heaven. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2—4. (*Notes, Eph.* vi. 18—20. *Phil.* iv. 4—7.) In order to the suitable performance of all the before-mentioned duties, the apostle exhorted the Colossians to *persist* steadily in prayer; watching against all indisposition and impediments; persevering notwithstanding delays and discouragements; and joining thanksgivings for mercies continually received. He also desired them to pray for him and his brethren in the ministry; that God would give them opportunity and boldness to speak the mystery of Christ; (i. 27;) for which the apostle was then a prisoner; that, both when thus circumstanced, and when set at liberty he might fully manifest the counsel of God, concerning the way of salvation, and the calling of the Gentiles, as he ought to do; without fearing what man could do unto him.

V. 5, 6. (*Note, Eph.* iv. 29. v. 15—17.) "Wisdom "towards them that were without," *might include* a prudent caution not to expose themselves needlessly to their persecutors, to which some expositors in a great measure restrict it. But the words contain a general rule of vast extent and importance: implying such habitual propriety, circumspection, and discretion in the whole conduct, as may preserve Christians from being ensnared or drawn into sin by their unconverted neighbours, and from giving them any unfavourable impressions of the Gospel; and such an evident excellency of character, as may silence calumny, soften prejudice, and win upon the beholders to examine into those religious principles, which produce such happy effects. Thus the Colossians ought to "redeem their "time," in acquiring and exercising this heavenly wisdom, to the honour of God and the good of mankind: in order that their conversation might not only be inoffensive, but "always with grace," the genuine language of piety, purity, wisdom, and love; savouring of heavenly things, as meat is preserved and made relishing by being seasoned with salt. (*Matt.* v. 13.) By attention to these rules, they would know how they ought to answer every man, whether he asked a reason of their hope, and seriously inquired into the nature of Christianity; or whether he desired a solution of some doubt or difficulty; or whether he were disposed to object, cavil, dispute, or revile: for the meekness of heavenly wisdom would dictate a pertinent answer on every occasion, and preserve them from disgraceful contentions. *Salt.* The wit, smartness, and ingenuity, often accompanied with polluting or profane illusions, which were customary and admired, among the Greeks, was called *Attic salt.* Probably, the apostle refers to this, but shows his readers a far more excellent way.

V. 7, 8. (*Note, Eph.* vi. 21, 22. *Marg. Ref.*)

servant of Christ, saluteth you, [l] always * labouring fervently for you in prayers, [m] that ye may stand perfect and † complete in all the will of God.

13 For [n] I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and them *that are* in [o] Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.

14 [p] Luke, the beloved physician, and [q] Demas, greet you.

15 Salute the brethren which are [r] in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and [s] the church which is in his house.

16 And when [t] this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the *epistle* from Laodicea.

17 And say to [u] Archippus, [x] Take heed to [y] the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou [z] fulfil it.

18 The salutation [a] by the hand of me, Paul. [b] Remember my bonds. [c] Grace *be* with you. Amen.

l See on, 2. Luke xxii 44 Gal. iv. 19 Heb. v. 7. Jam. v 16.
* Or, *striving*. ii. 1. Rom xv 30
m *See on* i. 9 22 28. Matt. v. 48 1 Cor. i 6. xiv. 20. 2 Cor xiii. 11 Phil iii. 12—15. 1 Thes. v. 23. Heb v. 14. Jude 24.
† Or, *filled* Rom. xv. 14
n Rom. x. 2. 2 Cor. viii 3
o 15. 16. ii. 1. Rev. i. 11 iii. 14—17.
p 2 Tim. iv. 11. Philem. 24
q 2 Tim. iv. 10 Philem. 24.——r *See on*, o. 13.——s Rom. xvi. 5. 1 Cor. xvi. 19. Philem. 2.

t 1 Thes v. 27.
u Philem 2
x Lev. x 3. Num. xvii. 5. 2 Chr xxix. 11. Ez. xliv. 23, 24. Acts xx. 28. 1 Tim iv. 16. vi 11—14 20. 2 Tim iv. 1—5.
y Acts i. 17 xiv. 23 1 Cor iv. 1, 2. Eph iv. 11. 1 Tim. iv. 14. 2 Tim i 6 ii. 2
z 2 Tim iv. 5
a 1 Cor xvi 21. 2 Thes. iii. 17
b 2 Tim i 8. Heb. xiii. 3.
c *See on*, Rom xvi 20. 24. 2 Cor. xiii. 14. 1 Tim. vi. 21. 2 Tim iv. 22. Heb. xiii. 25.

V. 9—14. Onesimus, of whom we shall read hereafter, (*Philem.*) and whom the apostle sent with Tychicus, was formerly an inhabitant of Colosse: the language used concerning him shows how high he now stood in the apostle's estimation. Aristarchus continued with Paul during his imprisonment; (*Marg. Ref.*) but whether this was voluntary, or whether he was confined with him for the sake of the Gospel, is not certain; the latter, however, is probable. Marcus, or John Mark, nephew to Barnabas, (*Marg. Ref*) was before this fully reconciled to the apostle; and Paul's unfavourable opinion of him was completely erased, by his subsequent good conduct. Probably, the Colossians had formerly received some injunction from the apostle not to countenance Mark as a minister: but he now reversed it; for he and Aristarchus, with one called Jesus, (a common name among the Jews, and surnamed *Justus* because of his integrity,) were the only ministers of the circumcision, who had cordially united with him in preaching the kingdom of God among the Gentiles, and who had been a comfort to him. This is generally and justly urged, as absolutely conclusive against the tradition of the papists, that the apostle Peter was at this time bishop of Rome, where he resided twenty-five years. It also renders it highly probable, that Luke was not a Jew, or a circumcised proselyte. Epaphras, a Colossian, a pastor of the Church, and probably its founder, sent his salutations to them. He could not then attend his labours among them, being confined as a prisoner; (*Philemon*, 23;) but he continually prayed for them so fervently, that he even *laboured*, or *agonized*, or *wrestled*, with God for them; that they might be established in the faith, be steadfast and upright disciples of Christ, and complete in the knowledge and practice of the whole will of God. For the apostle could testify to the greatness of his zeal for the spiritual welfare of the Colossians, and of those other neighbouring churches with which he had been connected. Luke had long been Paul's beloved companion, in travel and in sufferings; he had been educated a physician, but he seems to have been an *evangelist*, or preacher of the Gospel in the various cities to which he went. With him Demas sent his salutations, of whom we afterwards read an unfavourable account. (2 *Tim.* iv. 10.)

V. 15, 16. Nymphas seems to have been an eminent Christian at Laodicea, whose well ordered family might properly be called a Christian Church, or a society by whom the Lord was statedly worshipped. The apostle directed this epistle to be read in the neighbouring Church of Laodicea, as it was suited for general instruction; and that an epistle, which they would receive from Laodicea, should be publicly read among them. This direction hath given rise to various conjectures; but probably the apostle had written to the Laodiceans, though the epistle was not preserved. 'For all the epistles which the apostles ever 'wrote are not preserved, any more than all the words 'and actions of our blessed Lord.' (*Doddridge.*) Some think, that the epistle to the Ephesians was intended to be a kind of circular letter; and that, by private direction, a copy of it was sent to Laodicea, to be thence forwarded to Colosse. Indeed, that epistle contains so little peculiar to the Church at Ephesus, and so much important instruction of general concernment, that this opinion is not improbable.

V. 17. Some suppose Archippus to have been the bishop of Colosse. 'That he should have been then 'bishop of Colosse, and that St. Paul should not write 'one word, or send one salutation, to him, but send to the 'people of Colosse to admonish him of his duty, is not 'very credible.' (*Whitby.*) 'Archippus being old and 'infirm, received this encouragement from the apostle 'to strengthen him.' (*Bengelius.*) It is far more probable, that he had been newly appointed to the ministry; and showed some symptoms of timidity or negligence: the apostle therefore sent a message to him in particular, charging him to take heed to his sacred ministry; and to perform fully the several duties of it, with diligence, faithfulness boldness, and zealous affection; for the edification of believers and the conversion of sinners, by sound doctrine, a holy example, fervent prayers, unwearied labours, and every means in his power. For he had "received it "from the Lord," being accountable to him for his conduct in it, entitled to his assistance in his endeavours to act by his authority, and bound to seek his glory, in a decided preference to his own ease, security, interest, reputation, or accommodation.

V. 18. The apostle wrote the salutation with his own hand, as usual: and he called on the Colossians to "remember his bonds," and long-continued suffering for their sake, as Gentile converts: this would confirm them in the faith, render them constant in enduring persecutions for the same cause, and induce them to pay the more entire regard to his admonitions: and he concluded with praying that the grace of God might be with them. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

There is no respect of persons with the Lord; and his ministers must act with similar impartiality, and exhort masters as well as servants, the rich as well as the poor, to the duties of their several stations; and to render to their inferiors "what is just and equal, knowing that they "also have a master in heaven." None of these duties can be performed aright, except we persevere in fervent "prayer, and watch unto it with thanksgiving;" and it is just and equal that masters, professing godliness, should pray for and with their servants, and give them suitable instructions for their souls, as well as a comfortable provision for their temporal life. They who love the Gospel, should always remember faithful ministers in their prayers, beseeching the Lord to assist and prosper all their labours, and to enable them, with suitable plainness and boldness, to declare the mystery of Christ: and they who are exposed to peculiar dangers or sufferings, in the cause of the Gospel, should be especially remembered in the supplications of their brethren. Great wisdom and circumspection are required in all our conduct towards "those that are with-"out;" with whom we are often connected in relative life, and engaged in secular concerns. They will certainly watch and scrutinize our whole behaviour: they will sometimes artfully endeavour to persuade, entice, or provoke us into sin, that they may charge the blame on our religious principles: they will make little allowance for our faults; and even our indiscretions may produce an abiding prejudice against the truth. On the other hand, a sober, discreet, upright, faithful, and friendly conduct, will frequently win upon them, and be greatly instrumental to their good. We ought then to *redeem time*, that we may employ it in seeking wisdom from the word and Spirit of God, as well as in employing it for the benefit of mankind. We should indeed store our hearts with good treasure, and season them with wisdom and grace, that our speech may always be instructive, and suited to the persons with whom we converse; and that we may know how we ought to answer every man.

V. 7—18.

Christians should desire to know one another's state; and mutual visits or friendly correspondence among faithful ministers and fellow-servants of Christ, may help forward this 'communion of the saints,' excite their prayers for each other, and tend to the comfort of their hearts. What amazing changes doth divine grace make in men's characters! *Faithless servants* thus become *faithful and beloved brethren.* Often "the first becomes last, and the "last first," in the visible church: our fears of some who have misbehaved are removed, and they become *fellow-workers* that are a comfort to us; while our hopes of others are grievously disappointed. But "the Lord knoweth them "that are his:" and we should always "labour fervently "in prayer" for those connected with us, "that they may "stand perfect and complete in the whole will of God;" in this manner testifying our zeal for them, when unable to render them other help. Ministers, especially when they first enter upon their office, or when they seem wavering in it, should be seriously and affectionately exhorted, "to take heed to their ministry, which they have "received of the Lord, that they fulfil it." For the smiles, flatteries, or frowns of the world; the spirit of error, and the various workings of self-love, turn many aside, or lead them into such a style of preaching and living, as comes far short of *fulfilling their ministry.* Thus their own souls are endangered; their flocks are soothed into a formal profession, or deluded into error; and the promising hopes, that had been entertained of their usefulness, are lamentably disappointed. Let such persons then take heed to themselves and to their doctrine, as those who serve the Lord Jesus; let them remember the counsel of Paul, his bonds for Christ, and his laborious, self-denying faithfulness even unto death: for in preaching his doctrine, imbibing his spirit, and copying his example, we may expect that the favour and blessing of God will be with our souls, and prosper all the labours of our hands.

THE

FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

THESSALONIANS.

In the notes on the concise narrative of the apostle's labours at Thessalonica, it has been shown to be, at least, highly probable, that he continued there a considerable time, preaching to the Gentiles, beyond the three sabbath-days, on which he reasoned with the Jews in the synagogue; and that he was peculiarly successful. (Notes, Acts xvii. 1—15.) *He was, however, at length constrained by the persecution of the zealots for the Mosaic law, and the zealots for idolatry, who had formed a most unnatural coalition against him, to leave the newly planted church, under heavy trials, and destitute of many advantages: for, though it seems clear, that pastors had been appointed over them; yet, the pastors themselves must have been new and inexperienced converts.* (Note, v. 12—15.) *The apostle was, on this account, peculiarly solicitous about them; and Timothy having come to him at Athens, according to his appointment, he chose to be left alone in that city, that he might send this his faithful coadjutor to Thessalonica. But Timothy, returning to him at Corinth, brought him so good an account of them, that he was filled by it with joy and gratitude. He indeed exceedingly longed to visit them: but, having been repeatedly disappointed in his plans for that purpose, he at length wrote this epistle; which breathes a peculiar spirit of paternal love and affection, and shows that he considered the Christians at Thessalonica as equal, or superior, in faith and holiness, to those of any church to which he wrote. It is clear from these particulars, that this epistle was written from Corinth, and not from Athens, according to the spurious postscript; but, probably, soon after the apostle arrived at that city. This is supposed by some expositors to have been as early as A. D. 51; and by others A. D. 54: but, for reasons before given, a rather later date is here assigned to it.* (Notes, Acts xv. 1—5. Preface to 1 Corinthians, Gal. ii. 1—5.) *It is, however, generally agreed, that it was written before any other of the apostolical epistles; and some think, probably without sufficient reason, before any other part of the New Testament. It was evidently, the leading design of the apostle, in writing to the Thessalonians, to confirm them in the faith, and to animate them to a courageous profession of the Gospel, and the practice of all the duties of Christianity, notwithstanding the persecutions and trials to which they were exposed. In pursuance of his grand object, he was led to mention, with high approbation, the manner in which they had received the Gospel from him; and this almost unavoidably led him to speak of his ministry and conduct among them, in a way peculiarly instructive to the ministers of the Gospel in every age and place. 'It is remarkable, with how much address he improves all the influence, 'which his zeal and fidelity in their service must naturally give him, to inculcate upon them the precepts of the 'Gospel, and persuade them to act agreeably to their sacred character. This was the grand point he always 'kept in view, and to which every thing else was made subservient. Nothing appears, in any part of his 'writings, like a design to establish his own reputation, or to make use of his ascendency over his Christian 'friends, to answer any secular purposes of his own. On the contrary, he discovers a most generous disinterested 'regard for their welfare. The discovery of so excellent a temper, must be allowed to carry with it a strong 'presumptive argument in favour of the doctrines he taught And indeed, whoever reads St Paul's epistles 'with attention, and enters into the spirit with which they were written, will discern such intrinsic characters of 'their genuineness, and the divine authority of the doctrines they contain, as will perhaps produce in him a 'stronger conviction, than all the external evidence with which they are attended.'* (Doddridge.) *These remarks are well grounded and important; but to suppose, with Dr. Macknight, that the apostle intended, as his main object, to prove the divine authority of Christianity, by a chain of regular arguments, in which he* *answered the several objections that the heathen philosopers are supposed to have advanced against him, seems quite foreign to the nature of the epistle; and also to be grounded on a mistaken notion, that the philosophers designed at so early a period to enter into a regular disputation with the Christians; when, in fact, they derided them as enthusiasts, and their doctrine as* foolishness. *It is remarkable, that the apostle, in writing this first epistle, found very much to commend, which he does unreservedly, and scarcely any thing to blame; though he saw it needful to intermix cautions and warnings with his exhortations. The exact, though manifestly undesigned, coincidence of this epistle, with the history contained in the Acts of the apostles, which it tends to elucidate and confirm, is worthy of notice, and may be clearly seen by consulting the marginal references. It appears, that afterward the apostle visited Thessalonica;* (Note, Acts xx. 1—5:) *but nothing further is found in scripture concerning this flourishing church, except the second epistle which the apostle wrote to it. Thessalonica is now called Salonica or Salonici, and is under the dominion of the Turks, and the inhabitants are generally Mahometans. 'Our epistle concludes with a direction, that it should be publicly 'read in the church to which it was addressed. The existence of this clause, is an evidence of its authenticity: 'because to produce a letter, purporting to have been publicly read in the church at Thessalonica, when no such 'letter had been read or heard of in that church, would be to produce an imposture destructive of itself. Either 'the epistle was publicly read in the church of Thessalonica, during St. Paul's life-time, or it was not. If it 'was, no publication could be more authentic, no species of notoriety more unquestionable, no method of preserv'ing the integrity of the copy more secure. If it was not, the clause—would remain a standing condemnation 'of the forgery, and one would suppose, an invincible impediment to its success.'* (Paley.) *It may also be added, that the circumstance of this injunction being given, in the first epistle which the apostle wrote, implied a strong and avowed claim to the character of an inspired writer; as, in fact, it placed his writings on the same ground with those of Moses and the ancient prophets.*

* * *

A. D. 55. CHAP. I. *A. D. 55.*

The apostle salutes the Christians at Thessalonica, 1; and shows how he thanked God on their behalf, and prayed for them; remembering the fruits of their faith, love, and hope, as evidences of their election. 2—4. He speaks more particularly concerning the happy effects of his success among them; for "receiving the word in much affliction," copying the example of their teachers, and setting good examples to others; their conversion from idols to the service of the true God, and their patient waiting for Jesus, the Deliverer from the wrath to come, soon become known in every place, 6—10.

PAUL, and [a] Silvanus, and [b] Timotheus, [c] unto the church of the [d] Thessalonians, *which is* [e] in God the Father, and *in* the Lord Jesus Christ: [f] grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 We [g] give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;

3 [h] Remembering without ceasing [i] your work of faith, [k] and labour of love, [l] and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, [m] in the sight of God and our Father,

4 [n] Knowing, brethren * beloved, your election of God.

[a] Acts xv. 27. 32 34. 40. xvi. 19. 25. 29 xvii. 4. 15. xviii. 5. *Silas.* 2 Cor 1. 19. 2 Thes i 1. 1 Pet v 12.

[b] Acts xvi 1—3. xvii 14, 15. xviii. 5. xix. 22 xx. 4. 2 Cor. i. 1. Phil. i. 1 Col. i. 1. 1 Tim. i. 2 2 Tim i. 2. Heb. xiii 23.

[c] *See on,* 1 Cor. i. 2. Gal. i. 2.

[d] Acts xvii. 1—9. 11. 13.

[e] Gal. i 22 2 Thes. i. 1. 1 John i. 3. Jude 1.

[f] *See on,* Rom. i. 7 Eph i 2.

[g] *See on.* Rom i. 8 9. vi. 17. 1 Cor. i. 4. Eph i. 15, 16 Phil. i. 3, 4. Col. i. 3.

[h] iii. 6. 2 Tim. i. 3—5.

[i] ii. 13, 14. John vi 27—29. Rom. xvi. 26 1 Cor. xv 58 Gal v 6. Heb iv. 11. xi. 7, 8. 17. 24—34. Jam. ii. 17—26. Rev. ii. 19.

[k] Gen. xxix. 20. Cant. viii. 7. John xiv. 15 21—23 xv. 10. xxi 15—17. Rom. xvi 6. 1 Cor. xiii. 4—7. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. viii 7—9. Gal. v. 13. Philem. 5—7. Heb. vi. 10, 11 1 John iii 18. Rev ii. 2—4.

[l] Rom. ii. 7 v. 3—5. viii. 24, 25. xii 12. xv. 13. 1 Cor xiii. 13. Gal vi 9 Heb. vi. 15 x. 36 Jam. 1. 3, 4. v. 7. 1 John iii. 3. Rev. iii. 10.

[m] Ec. ii. 26. Acts iii. 19. x 31 2 Cor ii 17. 1 Tim. ii. 3 Heb xiii. 21. 1 Pet iii 4. 1 John iii. 21.

[n] 3. Rom viii 28—30 xi. 5—7. Eph. i. 4. Phil i. 6, 7. 1 Pet i. 2 2 Pet. i. 10.

* Or, *beloved of God, your election.* Rom. i. 7. ix. 25. Col. iii. 12. 2 Thes. ii. 13. 2 Tim. i. 9, 10. Tit. iii. 4, 5.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1—4. Silas, or Silvanus, did not come to the apostle, when driven from Thessalonica and Berea, till after his arrival at Corinth, nor did Timothy return to him; so that the epistle could not be written from Athens. (*Acts* xvii. 14, 15. xviii. 5) St. Paul joined these two faithful fellow-labourers with himself in this address, to express his affection for the Thessalonians, to whom they were well known. After his usual salutation and introduction, he observed, that he constantly remembered, and mentioned before God in his prayers, their "work "of faith." They professed to believe in Christ, and

5 For [o] our gospel came not unto you [p] in word only, [q] but also in power, and [r] in the Holy Ghost, and [s] in much assurance; as ye know [t] what manner of men we were among you [u] for your sake.

6 And [x] ye became followers of us, [y] and of the Lord, having [z] received the word in much affliction, [a] with joy of the Holy Ghost:

7 So that ye were [b] ensamples to all that believe, [c] in Macedonia and Achaia

o Rom. ii 16. 2 Cor iv 3 Gal ii. 2. 2 Thes ii 14. 2 Tim. ii 8 p ii. 13. 1 Cor iv. 20 2 Cor iii 6 q Ps. cx. 2, 3. Mark xvi 20. Acts xi. 21. xvi 14 Rom. i. 16. xv 18. 19. 1 Cor. i. 24. ii. 4, 5. iii. 6. 2 Cor x. 4, 5 Eph i 17—20. ii. 4, 5 10. iii. 20 Phil. ii. 13 Jam. i. 16—18. 1 Pet i 3 r John xvi. 7—15. Acts ii. 33 x. 44—46. xi. 15—18 1 Cor iii. 16 xii. 7—12 2 Cor. vi 6 Gal iii. 2—5 v. 5. 22, 23. Tit. iii. 5, 6 Heb. ii. 3. 1 Pet. i. 12.——s Col. ii 2 Heb. vi. 11 18, 19 x. 22 2 Pet. i. 10 19 t ii. 1—11. Acts xx 18, 19. 33—35 1 Cor ii. 2—5. iv. 9—13. x. 33 2 Cor iv. 1, 2. v. 3—10. Phil. iv. 9. 2 Thes. iii. 7—9. 1 Tim. iv. 12—16 1 Pet v. 3——u 1 Cor. ix. 19—23. 2 Tim. ii. 10.——x ii. 14 1 Cor. iv. 16. xi 1 Phil iii 17 2 Thes. iii. 9 y Matt. xvi. 24. John viii. 12. xiii. 15 Eph v. 1. 1 Pet. iii. 13. 3 John 11.——z ii 13, 14 iii. 2—4. Hos ii 14. Mark x. 29, 30. Acts xvii. 5. 2 Cor. viii 1, 2. 2 Thes. i. 4 a John xiv. 16—18. Acts v 41. ix. 31. Rom. v 3—5. viii. 16—18. xv. 13. Gal v. 22. Heb x 34 1 Pet i. 6 8.——b iv. 10 1 Tim. iv. 12. Tit. ii. 7. 1 Pet. v. 3.——c 8 Acts xvi. 12. xvii. 13 xviii. 1. 2 Cor. i. 1. ix 2. xi 8, 9.

8 For [d] from you sounded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also [e] in every place your faith to [f] God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.

9 For they themselves shew of us [g] what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how [h] ye turned to God from idols, to serve [i] the living and true God;

10 And to [k] wait for his Son from heaven, [l] whom he raised from the dead, *even* [m] Jesus, which delivered us from [n] the wrath to come.

d Is. ii. 3. lii. 7. lxvi. 19. Rom x. 14—18 1 Cor. xiv 36 2 Thes iii 1. Rev. xiv 6 xvii. 17 e Rom i. 8 3 John 12. f Ex xviii. 19. 2 Cor. iii. 4 g 5 6 ii 1. 13 h Is ii 17—21 Jer. xvi. 19. Zeph. ii. 11 Zech viii. 20—23. Mal i. 11. Acts xiv. 15. xxvi. 17. 18. 1 Cor xii 2. Gal. iv. 8, 9. i Deut. v 26. 1 Sam. xvii 26. 36. Ps. xlii. 2. lxxxiv. 2. Is. xxxvii. 4 17. Jer. x. 10. Dan. vi 26. Hos. i. 10. Rom ix. 26. 2 Cor. vi 16. 17. 1 Tim. iv 10. Heb xii 22. Rev. vii. 2——k iv. 16, 17. Gen. xlix. 18. Job xix. 25—27. Is. xxv 8, 9 Luke ii 25. Acts i 11. iii. 21. Rom viii. 23—25 1 Cor. i. 7. Phil. iii 20. 2 Thes. i 7 2 Tim. iv 8 Tit. ii 13. Heb ix. 28. 2 Pet iii. 12. 14. Rev i. 7.——l Acts ii. 24 iii 15 iv 10. v. 30, 31 x 40, 41. xvii. 31. Rom i. 4 iv. 25. viii. 34 1 Cor. xv 4—21. Col. i. 18. 1 Pet i 3. 21 iii 18. Rev. i. 18——m v. 9 Matt i. 21. Rom v. 9, 10. Gal. iii. 13. 1 Pet ii. 24.——n Matt. iii. 7. Luke iii. 7. Heb. x. 27.

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their active obedience showed that their faith was living, "wrought by love" of Christ and his ministers, truth, and cause; and that this powerful affection induced them to *labour* strenuously, in all things connected with the honour of Christ, and the benefit and comfort of their brethren. They professed to *hope* in the promises of God, and to expect eternal life, as his gift in Christ Jesus; and this living hope rendered them *patient*, and constant in their adherence to him, amidst tribulations and persecutions. These graces and duties they attended to, as "in the sight "of God," even their reconciled Father; and the apostle was satisfied, from what he had witnessed, that they were his brethren *beloved*, and the elect of God in Jesus Christ. This he did not speak as a matter of immediate revelation; but his favourable conclusion respecting them was drawn, by tracing back the effects of divine grace, in their conversion, to the source of them in their election. The purpose of God, in calling the Gentiles collectively, could not be known in this manner, and indeed some of the Thessalonians were Jewish converts. And in what sense a remnant of Thessalonians, (that is, of the inhabitants of one city,) could prove the national election of the Macedonians, they who adopt this opinion would do well to inform us. Some explain the words to mean election to external privileges, as Israel had been chosen: but an external profession of Christianity was sufficient to prove this; whereas the apostle grounds his confidence respecting the Thessalonians on "their work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope," "things which," no doubt, "accompany "salvation." He had once indeed had his fears of them; but subsequent tidings from them had fully satisfied him; (iii. 5—7:) yet, if any individuals did not show the same 'active faith, laborious love, and patient hope,' as the rest did, they were exceptions also to the apostle's general confidence, respecting the professed Christians at Thessalonica.

V. 5—8. The Gospel, which the apostle and his associates preached, had come to the Thessalonians "not in "word only:" it had not been left to its natural efficacy, or the power of arguments and persuasion on their minds. Numbers had thus heard it in many places, who nevertheless continued to live in idolatry and iniquity; but it had come "with power and with the Holy Ghost," that is, with the power of the Holy Spirit. This cannot relate to miracles exclusively; for many saw miracles, and yet remained unbelievers; but the new-creating power of the Holy Spirit, accompanying the word of God, had produced such a full conviction of its nature and importance, and such an assurance of faith and hope, as had induced the Thessalonians at all events to embrace and profess the Gospel; even as a ship is carried, by a full tide and a fair wind, over every obstacle, into the haven. For they knew and observed what manner of men the preachers of Christianity were among them for their sakes; while they witnessed their patience, self-denial, diligence, holiness, and love; and that they laboured with their own hands for a maintenance, that they might not be burdensome to the converts: and this induced them to attend to their doctrine, so that they joined themselves to these despised servants of a crucified Saviour; they associated themselves with them in divine worship; they copied their examples; and, in doing so, became imitators of the Lord himself. Thus they received the word into their hearts, amidst great afflictions in their circumstances, and from their persecutors: yet had they such joy from the Holy Spirit, as made them ample amends. (*Marg. Ref.*) In this manner they became examples, not only to their idolatrous neighbours, but even to believers in other parts of Macedonia, and in Achaia: for the Gospel was soon spread from Thessalonica into those regions, by persons who went out for that purpose. In all places whither the apostle travelled, the report of the conversion and good conduct of the Thessalonians had arrived before him: and they who came to him from other parts declared the same.

V. 9, 10. In every city the apostle met with those, who joyfully mentioned his prosperous entrance with the Gospel among the Thessalonians; and how they had been converted from the worship of idols, either dead men, or imaginary beings, or evil spirits, to serve and worship "the one living and true God," by faith in Christ; and to wait for the Saviour's coming from heaven to raise the dead and judge the world, in believing and patient hope, diligent preparation, and universal conscientiousness. For they were fully assured, that God the Father had raised him from the dead, and advanced him to the mediatorial throne, to reign at his right hand, till all enemies should be put

CHAP. II.

The apostle reminds the Thessalonians of his affectionate faithful labours and holy manner of life among them, 1—12. He expresses his satisfaction, as to the manner in which they had received the gospel; and their constancy amid persecution, 13, 14: and speaks of the guilt and ruin of the unbelieving Jews, 15, 16. He shows his joy on their account, his desire of seeing them again, and his hope of a joyful meeting at the coming of Christ, 17—20.

FOR yourselves, brethren, know [a] our entrance in unto you, that it was not [b] in vain:

2 But even after that we had suffered before, and were [c] shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were [d] bold

a 13. i. 3—10. 2 Thes. iii 1.
b iii 5 Job xxxix. 16 Ps. lxxiii. 13. cxxvii 1. Is. xlix 4. lxv. 23. Hab. ii 13. 1 Cor. xv. 2 10. 58. Gal. ii. 2. iv. 11. Phil. ii. 16
c Acts v. 41. xvi. 22—24. 37. 2 Tim. i. 12. Heb. xi 36 37. xii. 2, 3. 1 Pet. iv. 14—16
d Acts iv. 13. 29. 31. xiv. 3. Eph. vi. 19, 20

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under his feet. Him therefore they looked and waited for, as their great Deliverer from "the wrath to come." To this wrath, both Jews and Gentiles had been justly exposed for their sins; and under this they must all have finally perished, if the Son of God had not become incarnate, performed his suretyship obedience to the law, laid down his life as a vicarious Sacrifice, risen as the First-fruits of the resurrection, ascended into heaven to be the Advocate of sinners, sent forth his Gospel to call men to partake of this salvation, and accompanied it by the power of his Spirit, to overcome the proud and carnal opposition of their hearts. Thus he had delivered them from the merited wrath of God, which is coming, and will for ever be coming, upon all impenitent and unbelieving sinners: of this deliverance their conversion was the sure evidence, and, having this earnest and pledge of final salvation, they waited in joyful hope for that solemn season, which will complete the felicity of believers, and the destruction of the wicked.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It gives cordial joy and fervent gratitude to faithful ministers, when they witness "the work of faith, and "labour of love, and patience of hope in the Lord Jesus," of those among whom they have preached the Gospel. This puts vigour into their prayers and praises for them; as evidencing, that they are "in God the Father and our Lord Jesus "Christ;" partakers of "mercy, grace, and peace;" "beloved brethren," and "the elect of God." But faith which worketh not obedience, professed love that declines self-denying labour, and hope which is separated from "patient continuance in well-doing," can never prove a man's "election." All other ways of proving it than that here prescribed are vain and delusory; and this scriptural medium is not capable of being abused. Alas! even the Gospel which the apostle preached often comes in word only; and thus men continue impenitent, and slaves to sin, or at most, become only notional formalists and mere professors. This should excite all who preach, and all who love the Gospel, to pray without ceasing, that it may every where, and at all times, be attended by the divine power of the Holy Spirit; producing in the minds and hearts of men that full assurance of its truth and importance, which alone will prevail with them to break through all hinderances, and make all sacrifices, that they may follow Christ, and be partakers of his salvation. This is the work of God; but he works by means: and when ministers evidently set before the people an edifying example, so that by imitating them they follow Christ also, it is very conducive to their conviction and conversion. When this happy change is effected, and sinners join themselves to those who walk as Christ walked: they are often enabled to receive the word, amidst poverty, contempt, and manifold afflictions, with abundant joy in the Holy Ghost. Thus they become good examples to their families and neighbours, and even to their fellow-christians; the word of God sounds forth from them to others; and they zealously embrace every opportunity of diffusing this heavenly light. And when great numbers of careless, ignorant, and immoral persons are turned from their idols and iniquities, their worldly pursuits and connexions, to serve the living and true God; to believe in and obey the Lord Jesus; to "deny ungodliness and "worldly lusts; to live soberly, righteously, and godly in "this present world;" and to "wait for the Lord Jesus from heaven," as "believing that he will come to be their "Judge," and hoping 'to be numbered with his saints in 'glory everlasting;' the fact speaks for itself: there needs little pains to spread the report, for it is a work of God, that will be sure to be known, and rendered conspicuous by its own light. May he then send forth ministers into all parts of the world, attended by his power, and thus made abundantly successful, in the conversion of the nations to the worship of the living God, and the obedience of faith in his Son! But let us remember, "that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all "ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." All temporal miseries, terminating in death, are the effects of that wrath: Jesus did not come to deliver us from these sufferings, but from "the wrath to come," the everlasting misery of hell. None but Jesus can deliver any man from this merited condemnation: all, who believe in him with an obedient faith, are delivered from it, and all others are exposed to it, "for the wrath of God abideth on them:" for if all true Christians once were exposed to this wrath, all they whom Jesus has not delivered must be still exposed to it. Let us then examine this most important matter with proportionable seriousness; let us give diligence to make our calling and election sure; if we have obtained this assurance, let us remember the price which our deliverance cost the great Redeemer, that humble love may constrain us devotedly to obey him, and cheerfully to suffer for him. But, if any are conscious that they have not experienced this deliverance, let them take warning, without delay "to flee from the wrath to come," and to seek refuge in Christ and his salvation.

in our God to speak unto you the Gospel of God with [e] much contention.

3 For [f] our exhortation *was* not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile:

4 But as [g] we were allowed of God [h] to be put in trust with the Gospel, even so we speak; [i] not as pleasing men, [k] but God, which trieth our hearts.

5 For neither at any time [l] used we flattering words, as ye know, nor [m] a cloak of covetousness; [n] God *is* witness:

6 Nor [o] of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor *yet* of others, [p] when we might have * been [q] burdensome, [r] as the apostles of Christ.

7 But [s] we were gentle among you, even [t] as a nurse cherisheth her children;

8 So, being [u] affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the Gospel of God only, [x] but also our own souls, because ye were [y] dear unto us.

9 For ye remember, brethren, [z] our labour and travail; for labouring [a] night and day, because we would not be [b] chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you [c] the Gospel of God.

10 Ye *are* [d] witnesses, and God *also*, [e] how holily and justly, and unblameably, we behaved ourselves among you that believe:

11 As ye know, [f] how we exhorted, and comforted, and [g] charged every one of you, [h] as a father *doth* his children;

12 That ye would [i] walk worthy of God, [k] who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

e Acts vi. 9, 10 xv. 1, 2 xvii 2—9. 17 xix. 8 Phil. i. 27—30 Col ii 1. Jude 3 f 5, 6 11. iv. 1, 2. Num. xvi. 15 1 Sam. xi 3 Acts xx 33, 34 2 Cor. ii. 17. iv 2. 5. vii. 2 xi 13 xii. 16—18. 2 Pet i. 16. g 1 Cor vii 25 Eph. iii. 8 1 Tim i. 12, 13. h Luke xii 42 xvi 11 1 Cor. iv 1 2 ix. 17 Gal. ii 7 1 Tim. i 11 vi. 20. 2 Tim i. 14. ii. 2 Tit i. 3 i 1 Cor ii. 4, 5 2 Cor iv 2. v 11. 16 Gal i. 10 Eph vi. 6. Col. iii 22 k Num xxvii. 16 1 Kings viii 39 1 Chr. xxix. 17. Ps. xvii 3 xliv. 21. cxxxix 1 2. Prov. xvii 3 Jer xvii. 10. xxxii. 19 John ii. 24, 25 xxi 17 Rom viii 17. Heb iv. 13. Rev. ii. 23.——l Job xvii. 5 xxxii. 21, 22 Ps. xii. 2 3. Prov xx 19. xxvi. 28. xxviii. 23 xxix 5. Is xxx. 10. Matt. xxii. 16 2 Pet. ii. 18 ——m Is lvi 11. Jer vi. 12. viii. 10 Mic. iii. 5 Mal. i. 10. Matt xxiii. 14 Acts xx. 33 Rom xvi 18. 2 Cor. iv. 2. vii 2. xii 17. 1 Tim iii. 3. 8 Tit i. 7 1 Pet. v 2. 2 Pet. ii 3. 14, 15. Jude 11. Rev. xviii. 13.——n *See on*, Rom i 9 ix. 1. Gal i 20 ——o Esth i 4 v. 11 Prov xxv 27 Dan. iv. 30. John v. 41. 44. vii. 18. xii 43 Gal. v 26 vi 13 1 Tim. v 17.——p 9 1 Cor. ix. 12—18. 2 Cor. x. 1, 2 10, 11. xiii. 10.——* Or, *used authority* ——q 2 Cor. xi 9. xii. 12, 13, 14. 2 Thes iii. 8, 9 ——r 1 Cor ix. 4—6 ——s Gen. xxxiii 13, 14 Is xl 11 Ez. xxxiv. 14—16. Matt. xi 29, 30. John xxi. 15—17. 1 Cor. ii 3. ix 22. 2 Cor x 1. xiii. 4. Gal v. 22, 23. 2 Tim. ii 24, 25. Jam iii. 17 ——t 11. Num xi. 12 Is. xlix. 23 lxvi. 13. Acts xiii. 18. *Marg.*——u Jer. xiii. 15—17. Rom. i 11, 12. ix. 1—3 x 1. 2 Cor. vi. 11—13. Gal. iv. 19. Phil. i 8. ii. 25, 26. Col i. 28 iv. 12. Heb. xiii. 17.

x Acts xx. 24, 25 2 Cor xii. 15. Phil. ii. 17. 1 John iii. 16. y Luke vii. 2. Phil. ii. 20. *Marg.* iv. 1. Col. 4 7. Philem 1 z i. 3. Acts xviii. 3. xx. 34, 35. 1 Cor. iv. 12. ix 6. 15. 2 Cor. vi. 5. 2 Thes. iii. 8, 9. 1 Tim. iv 10. a iii. 10. Ps xxxii. 4 lxxxviii. 1. Jer. ix. 1. Luke ii. 37. xviii. 7. Acts xx 31. 1 Tim. v. 5. 2 Tim. i. 3 b 6. Neh. v. 15. 18. 1 Cor. ix. 7. 18 2 Cor. xi. 9. xii. 13, 14. c 2 Acts xx. 24. Rom. i. 1. xv. 16. 19. 1 Tim. i. 11. d i. 5. 1 Sam. xii. 3—5 Acts xx. 18 26. 33, 34. 2 Cor iv. 2. v. 11. xi. 11. 31. e Num. xvi. 15 Job xxix. 11—17. xxxi. 1—39. Ps. vii. 3—5. xviii. 20—24. Jer. xviii. 20. Acts xxiv. 16 2 Cor i. 12 vi. 3—10 vii 2 2 Thes. iii. 7. 1 Tim iv. 12 2 Tim iii. 10. Tit. ii. 7, 8 1 Pet. v. 3.——f iv. 1. v. 11. Acts xx 2. 2 Thes. iii. 12. 1 Tim. vi 2 2 Tim. iv 2. Tit. ii. 6. 9. 15 Heb xiii 22.——g Num. xxvii. 19. Deut. iii. 28. xxxi. 14. Eph. iv. 17. 1 Tim. v. 7. 21. vi 13. 17 2 Tim. iv. 1.——h Gen. l. 16, 17 1 Chr. xxii. 11—13. xxviii 9. 20. Ps. xxxiv. 11. Prov. i. 10 15. ii. 1. iii. 1. iv. 1—12 v. 1, 2. vi. 1. vii. 1. 24. xxxi. 1—9. 1 Cor. iv. 14, 15 ——i iv 12. Gal. v. 16. Eph. iv. 1. v 2. 8 Phil. i. 27. Col. i. 10. ii. 6 1 Pet i. 15, 16 1 John i. 6, 7. ii 6.——k v. 24. Rom. viii. 30. ix. 23, 24. 1 Cor. i 9. 2 Thes. i. 11, 12 ii. 13, 14. 2 Tim. i. 9. 1 Pet. i. 14. ii. 9. iii 9. v. 10.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1—8. The Thessalonians well knew, that the apostle and his fellow-labourers did not come among them with empty speculations, or in an inefficacious manner: but they were sensible, that it was a well-grounded testimony, and not a vague report, which had been spread abroad concerning them. (i. 9.) Having been, by immediate revelation, directed to go into Macedonia, they had not yielded to discouraging fears, when they suffered the most severe, ignominious, and iniquitous usage at Philippi; (*Notes*, *Acts* xvi:) but, as soon as they were set at liberty, they came to Thessalonica; and there boldly, in dependence on God and from zeal for his glory, they preached that Gospel of which he was the Author. This they did with great earnestness of spirit, and strong desires of their conversion; and with the most constant perseverance, notwithstanding the opposition of the Jews, the disputings which they were constrained to maintain with them, and the persecutions which awaited them. For their exhortations were not suited to beguile men, either into false notions, or licentious practices; nor had they any sinister or selfish motives. On the contrary, they were most fully assured of the divine authority and excellency of the doctrine which they taught, and conscious of the utmost integrity, purity, and sincerity, in their endeavours to propagate it. For as they had been approved by God himself, and marked out to be "stewards of his mysteries," and intrusted with the Gospel: so they had spoken with the most simple and sincere desire of approving themselves faithful to him, and meeting with his acceptance; knowing that he would scrutinize and prove the secret intentions of every heart. They had not indeed at all sought to please men, for the sake of their own ease, interest, reputation, or accommodation; or in any way, except as conducive to their edification. (*Note*, 1 *Cor.* iv. 1—5. *Gal.* i. 10.) They had never, on any occasion, employed flattering words, to soothe their hearers into a delusive opinion of their good estate or character, to palliate their sins, or to compliment their endowments or virtues. This the Thessalonians knew; being sensible that they addressed them in the plainest and most convincing language; and God himself was witness, that they had never made religion, or their ministry, a cloak to cover any avaricious designs. Nor had they courted applause, or aspired at authority, or honour, among them, or any other Christians; on the contrary, they even receded from their due, and would not burden them by requiring a maintenance. This was a mark of respect, which the other apostles generally received from the churches, and Paul had as just a claim to it as they: but he did not insist upon it, either for himself or his companions; because he was aware that it would have been burdensome to the people, as they were in low circumstances. In this, and in all other respects, they had imitated the gentleness of a nursing mother to her beloved infant, whom she deems it a pleasure to suckle and attend on, and has the desired recompense of her disinterested assiduity, when it thrives and is in health. Thus, being affectionately desirous of their spiritual growth and prosperity, they were not only willing to impart the Gospel to them; but the tenderest feelings of their hearts accompanied their labours. They readily spent their strength, employed all their knowledge and ability, exhausted their spirits, and even ventured their lives for them, because they were dear to them; and they desired no other recompense, than the "furtherance, and joy of faith" of their beloved people.

13 ¶ For this cause also [l] thank we God without ceasing, [m] because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not *as* the word of men, but (as it is in truth,) [n] the word of God, which [o] effectually worketh also in you that believe.

14 For ye, brethren, [p] became followers of [q] the churches of God, which in Judea [r] are in Christ Jesus: for [s] ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, [t] even as they *have* of the Jews;

15 Who both [u] killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have * persecuted us; and they [x] please not God, and are [y] contrary to all men:

16 [z] Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles, [a] that they might be saved, [b] to fill up their sins alway: [c] for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

l See on, i. 2, 3. Rom. i. 8, 9.
m Jer. xliv. 16. Matt. x. 13, 14. 40 Acts ii. 41. x. 33 xiii. 45. 48. xvi 14. 30—34. xvii 11. 18—20 32. Gal. iv 14. 2 Pet iii. 2, 3
n Jer xxiii 28, 29. Luke v 1. viii. 11. 21 xi. 28. Acts viii. 14. xiii 44 46. Rom. x 17. Heb. iv. 12 1 Pet i. 25. 2 Pet i. 16—21.
o i. 5—10. John xv. 3. xvii. 17. 19. Rom. vi 17, 18. 2 Cor iii 18. Col. i 6 Heb iv 12. Jam. i. 18. 1 Pet. i. 23 ii 2. 1 John iii 3. v. 4. 5 ——p i. 6.——q Acts ix. 31. Gal. i. 22.——r i. 1. 2 Thes. ii 1
s iii 4. Acts xvii. 1—8. 2 Cor. viii. 1, 2.
t Acts viii. 1. 3. ix. 1 13 xi. 19. xii 1—3 Heb. x. 33, 34.
u Matt. v. 12. xxi. 35—39. xxiii. 31—35 xxvii. 25. Luke xi 48—51. xiii. 33, 34 Acts ii. 23. iii. 15 iv. 10. vii 52
* Or, *chased us out* Am. vii. 12. Acts xxii. 18—21.
x Acts xii. 3. 1 Cor. x. 5
y Esth. iii 8. Luke xi. 52, 53.
z Acts xi. 2, 3. 17, 18. xiii 50. xiv. 5. 19. xvii. 5, 6. 13. xviii. 12, 13 xix. 9. xxi. 27—31 xxii. 21. 22. Gal v 11 Eph. iii 8. 13.
a Is. xlv 22. Mark xvi. 16. Acts iv 12. Rom. x. 13—15. 2 Thes. ii. 10. 1 Tim. ii 4.
b Gen. xv 16. Zech. v. 6—8. Matt. xxiii. 32.——c Joel ii. 30, 31. Mal iv. 1. 5 Matt. iii. 7—10. 12. xii 45. xxi. 41—44. xxii. 6, 7. xxiv. 21, 22. Luke xi 50, 51. xix 42—44. xxi. 20—24. Heb. vi 8. x. 27—30. Jam. v. 1—6.

V. 9—12. The Thessalonians could well remember the disinterested labour and fatiguing toil of the apostle and his associates: for they not only employed the day in the various parts of their ministerial duty, or in working hard for a subsistence, but they bereaved themselves of rest, spending the whole, or a considerable part of the night, in the same manner: lest, by being chargeable to any of their hearers, they should prevent their own success. Thus they faithfully preached to them the Gospel of God: and the Thessalonians could witness, (as the Lord himself also would,) in what a holy, upright, and blameless manner they behaved themselves; not only in those things which unbelievers might have noticed, but also in their most retired and intimate behaviour, among such as believed the Gospel; so that none of them had seen any thing, but what evinced the greatest purity, probity, sincerity, and holy love. They had also exhorted and animated them with every consolatory topic, and charged them with authority, as testifying the will of God concerning them, to copy their example. And as a wise and affectionate father uses arguments, persuasions, encouragements, and commands, in directing the conduct of his children: so they had used the same means, of inducing them to walk worthy of the holy perfections of that God whom they worshipped, and who had so graciously called them from the power of darkness into the kingdom of his Son, that they might be trained up on earth, for the eternal glory and holy felicity of heaven. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13—16. The apostle and his friends thanked God continually, because the Thessalonians had not treated "the word of hearing of God;" or the word of God, which they had heard from them, as "the word of man:" which may be disputed against, rejected, or even derided, without material criminality or detriment, however plausible or ingenious it may be. On the contrary, they had received it "as the word of God," (which it certainly was;) and had accordingly reverenced it, believed it, and obeyed it. Thus it had effectually wrought in their hearts, repentance of sin, hatred of idolatry, faith in Christ, love to him and his cause, delight in the worship and service of God, a supreme valuation of his favour, and a realizing view of eternal things. In this manner, they became *imitators* of the Christian churches in Judea, in doctrine, worship, and holy obedience: and they adhered to the truth and will of Christ, patiently and cheerfully, amidst the persecutions which they endured from their neighbours, who were instigated by the unbelieving Jews; even as the Christians in Judea were hated and persecuted by those of their own nation. Nor should this excite any astonishment; seeing the Jews, though professed worshippers of God, had murdered the promised Messiah, (as their ancestors had done the prophets;) and they persecuted the apostles and disciples of Christ, from a proud and blind zeal for the law, and the glosses and traditions of the elders. In this they were far from pleasing God, nay, they exceedingly provoked him: and they were contrary to all men, and opposed as much as possible the salvation both of Jews and Gentiles. Especially, as they prohibited, and did all in their power to hinder, the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles; as if they could not endure that they should be saved. Thus, with ceaseless efforts, they filled up the measure of their personal and national iniquities, for which the wrath of God was, even then, about to come upon them to the uttermost; in the destruction of their city and temple; the slaughter of immense multitudes of their nation; the scattering, enslaving, and abject miseries of the survivors; and the most unheard of calamities of every kind, pursuing them into every region of the earth, throughout numerous successive generations. (*Notes, Matt.* xxiii. 34—39. xxiv. *Marg. Ref.*) The morose and unsocial bigotry of the Jews, respecting all Gentiles, from the time when they ceased to copy their idolatries, is largely insisted on by commentators in general; and the testimony of Gentiles is adduced in proof of it. This evidence, however, is not much to be regarded: for if the Jews had shown the most compassionate, liberal, and friendly attention to idolaters in temporal things, while they steadily adhered to the divine law, by separating from them in all things relating to religion, the clamour of the Gentiles against their bigotry would not have been silenced, if it had been even abated. The steady refusal, of what some have called *an intercommunity* of deities and religious rites, would have sufficed to keep up the prejudice against Jews, and the disdain of them, among the proud Greeks and Romans; for the same reasons, that no philanthropy or liberality can exempt those from contempt and reproach, even among professed Christians, who unreservedly avow their attachment to the doctrines of the Gospel, as their rule of faith, and the precepts of Christ, as their rule of conduct. The Jews were, however, in this respect, very faulty; and so are many Christians: but the grand point which here demands considera-

17 But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time, [d] in presence, not in heart, [e] endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.

18 Wherefore we would have come unto you, [f] even I, Paul, [g] once and again; but [h] Satan hindered us.

d 2 Kings v. 26. Acts xvii. 10. 1 Cor. v. 3. Col ii. 5.
e iii. 6. 10, 11 Gen. xxxi. 30. xlv. 28 xlviii. 11. 2 Sam. xiii. 39 Ps lxiii 1. Luke xxii. 15. Rom. i. 13. xv. 23. Phil. i. 22—26.
f 1 Cor. xvi. 21. Col. iv. 18. 2 Thes. iii. 17. Philem. 9.——g Job xxxiii. 14. Phil. iv. 16 ——h Zech. iii. 1, 2. Rom xv. 22. 2 Cor. xi. 12—14 Rev. ii. 10. xii. 9—12.

19 For what *is* [i] our hope, or joy, or [k] crown of * rejoicing? *Are* not even ye [l] in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

20 For ye are [m] our glory and joy.

i 2 Cor. i 14. Phil. ii. 16. iv. 1.
k Prov. iv. 9 xii. 4 xvi. 31. xvii. 6 Is. lxii. 3. 1 Pet. v. 4. Rev. iv 10, 11
* Or, *glorying.* 20 Rom. xv. 16—19.
l iii 13. v. 23. 1 Cor. iv. 5. xv. 23. Phil. ii. 16. 2 Thes. i. 7— 12. ii. 1 1 Tim. vi. 14, 15. 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2. Tit. ii. 13. 1 John. ii. 28.———m Prov. xvii. 6 1 Cor. xi. 7.

tion, is this; that the determined opposition of the Jewish nation to the preaching of the Gospel among the Gentiles was the immediate cause of wrath coming on them to the uttermost. Let Britain, let every Briton, tremble at the thought of opposing the cause of missions among the heathen, as too many are disposed to do, lest wrath come upon us also to the uttermost. 'They who obstruct the 'progress of the Gospel, and persecute the promoters of 'it, are the ministers of Satan, and therefore bear his 'name.' (18.) (*Whitby.*)

V. 17—20. The apostle had been forced from the Thessalonians, but his affections were still with them. The separation (for he had left them with as much reluctance as a parent parts with his children, whom he leaves as orphans in this evil world,) was only for a short season, or for *the space of one hour*, 'for the apostle's mind was 'full of the ideas of eternity, which did, as it were, an'nihilate any period of mortal life.' (*Doddridge.*) He had, however, been exceedingly desirous of returning to them, which he had attempted with abundant earnestness: (for in this he spake of himself, as Timothy had visited them again, and perhaps Silvanus also;) but Satan, by exciting disturbances and opposition to him at Berea, and in other places, had hindered him from effecting his purpose, as he could not have come with propriety. Otherwise, they might be sure, that he gladly would have come, and that he would embrace the first opportunity of so doing. For what, did they suppose, was the object of his hope in the work of the ministry, but such success as he had met with among them? Or, what was his *joy and crown of exultation in that respect*, but to see numbers of such affectionate converts to Christ as they were; whom he could look upon, as those in whom he should rejoice before the Lord Jesus, when he would come to judge the world? For indeed he and his brethren did not glory, or rejoice, in their gifts, popularity, or excellency of speech; but in being prospered by God, as his instruments in the conversion of sinners, and in encouraging believers to a holy walk and conversation.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

Confidence in God, zeal for his glory, love to the souls of men, and conscious integrity, will support faithful ministers amidst manifold hardships and sufferings: and when they have been shamefully used in one place, they will not decline further labours and perils, but will be courageous in speaking the Gospel of God in another situation. Even when their ministry excites the opposition of unbelievers, and constrains them to engage in argument, and to contend earnestly for the truth, though they love peace, and hate disputatious contests, they must persevere in their testimony, for they cannot but speak the things which they have heard and known. All ministers should be careful, that their preaching be free from fallacy, deceit, and a licentious tendency; and that their *motives* be equally pure from all artful designs of advancing, enriching, and indulging themselves, by means of their ministry. For such discoveries have been made, respecting priests of different religions, that men are very apt to suspect some fraud, or corrupt intention, to be lurking under a great appearance of zeal and devotion. It is in vain to oppose *arguments* to this deep-rooted suspicion, except they are corroborated by *manifest facts.* We should consider ourselves, as "allowed of God to be put in trust "with the Gospel;" and recollect that this is of all others the most important stewardship: our faithfulness in it will produce the happiest consequences; but unfaithfulness will constitute the most aggravated guilt, and ensure the deepest condemnation. We should therefore by no means seek to please men; but simply study to approve ourselves to God, who trieth the hearts. Even the approbation of godly men may be fallacious, and may interfere with our simplicity, in aiming to please the Lord by faithfulness to our trust. A man may indeed, by harshness and severity in his manner of stating the truth, prevent his own usefulness; but selfish principles will far more generally lead men to temporize, to palliate, and to speak smooth things. This puts hearers into a good humour with themselves, and that makes them friendly to the preacher; which may be very conducive to his secular advantage, and for a time even add to his reputation. It is therefore a very great thing indeed, for a minister to be able on good grounds to say, "Neither at any time used we flattering words, as "ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness, God is witness; "nor of men sought we glory:" and to be able to appeal both to the Lord and to men, that he hath constantly receded even from his equitable claims, out of love to the souls of his hearers, and lest he should be burdensome to them. But when this decided faithfulness, this unambitious, disinterested, and self-denying plainness of speech, on all occasions, unites with equal tenderness and affection, so that the same persons can say, "We were gentle "among you, even as a nursing mother cherisheth her "children: so, being affectionately desirous of you, we "were willing to have imparted unto you, not the Gospel "of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were "dear unto us:" then the servants of Christ come as near to the mind of their Lord, as can be conceived attainable by mortal men. There are, however, but few, who are not warped one way or the other, by constitution, habit, or circumstances: it behooves us therefore to search out our spirits, to be open to conviction, and to guard against our

CHAP. III.

The apostle shows, that his care for the Thessalonians had induced him to send Timothy, to establish, and encourage them, 1—5; *whose good report concerning them had been a great comfort to him in his distresses,* 6—8. *He thanks God in their behalf, and shows how earnestly he desires to see them,* 9, 10; *and prays, that he may be enabled to visit them; and for their growth in holiness and love, and perseverance to the end,* 11—13.

WHEREFORE, [a] when we could no longer forbear, [b] we thought it good to be left at Athens alone;

a 5. ii. 17 Jer. xx. 9. xliv. 22. 2 Cor. ii. 13. xi. 29, 30
b Acts xvii. 15.

2 And send [c] Timotheus, [d] our brother, and minister of God, and our fellow-labourer in the Gospel of Christ, [e] to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:

3 That no man should be [f] moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that [g] we are appointed thereunto.

4 For, verily, when we were with you, [h] we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; [i] even as it came to pass and ye know.

5 For this cause, [k] when I could no longer forbear, [l] I sent to know your faith, [m] lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, [n] and our labour be in vain.

Actsxvi 1. xvii. 14. xviii 5.
d Rom. xvi 21. 1 Cor xvi. 10, 11. 2 Cor. ii. 13. viii. 23 Eph. vi. 21. Phil ii. 19—25 Col. i 7. iv. 9. 12
e 13. Acts xiv. 22, 23. xvi. 5. Eph. vi. 22. Phil. i. 25.
f Ps. cxii. 6. Acts ii. 25. xx. 24. xxi. 13. Rom v. 3. 1 Cor. xv. 58. Eph. iii. 13. Phil. i. 28 Col. i. 23 2 Thes. i. 4. 2 Tim. i. 8. 1 Pet. iv. 12—14. Rev. ii. 10. 13.
g v 9 Matt. x. 16—18. xxiv. 9, 10 Luke xxi 12. John xv. 19—21. xvi. 33 Acts ix. 16 xiv. 22 xxi. 13. Rom. vii. 35—37. 1 Cor iv. 9. 2 Tim. iii 11, 12. 1 Pet ii. 21. iv. 12.

h John xvi. 1—3 ——i ii. 2. 14. Acts. xvii. 1. 5—9. 13. 2 Cor. viii. 1, 2. 2 Thes. i. 4—6.
k See on 1.——l 2. 6. Acts. xv. 36 Cor. vii. 5—7——m Matt. iv. 3. 1 Cor. vii. 5.
Cor. ii. 11. xi. 3 13—15. Gal. i. 6—9. Eph. iv. 14. Jam. i. 13, 14.——n See on, ii. 1.—
Is. xlix 4 Gal. ii. 2. iv. 11. Phil. ii. 16.

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own peculiar weakness. If we are desirous of the character of able, faithful, and affectionate ministers of Christ, we should not shrink from labour and toil, day or night; we should cheerfully endure hardship, both in preaching the Gospel, and also in diligent endeavours to avoid being chargeable to those who are *unable*, or *unwilling*, to assist us: and we should have a noble ambition of being able to appeal to men, as well as unto God, that we have behaved ourselves with purity and equity, and in a blameless manner, among them, with whom we were most conversant. This will give energy to our words, whilst we exhort, encourage, and charge our people, "to walk worthy of "God, who hath called them to his kingdom and glory." Indeed, we ought always to have their welfare at heart, as a father hath that of his children; and to seek it with the same affectionate and assiduous earnestness, from the most disinterested motives.

V. 13—20.

We should give thanks to God without ceasing, in behalf of those who receive the Gospel from us, not as the opinion of fallible men, but as the "sure testimony of the "Lord, which giveth wisdom to the simple." This it certainly is, as far as any man preaches according to the scriptures, however unlearned, obscure, or frail, the preacher may be. When thus received with reverent faith and obedient attention, it works effectually an entire change in the judgment, disposition, and characters of men: they become *followers*, not of this or the other leader of a sect, but of the primitive Christians; and may expect to be reviled and persecuted by their neighbours, (as far as outward circumstances will admit,) even as they were of the Jews. For the same nature is in men of every age and clime, which was in those who killed the Lord Jesus and the holy prophets, and who persecuted the apostles and disciples of the Saviour; and Satan, who "worketh in the "children of disobedience," hates the pure Gospel of Christ, and the faithful preaching of it to sinners of all descriptions, as much as he did of old. But they who would forbid us thus to preach to the chief of sinners, and to those who are dead in sin, and to evangelize the heathen, that they may be saved, do not in this please God, and they are contrary to all men. The object and motives of those in general, who would hinder the preaching of the Gospel, in any part of the world, are manifest; but it is grievous to think, that some apparently pious men, misled by an undue attachment to system, should countenance the conduct of those who, in every age, are actuated by the same proud and bigoted selfish spirit, which influenced the Jews of old, when filling up the measure of their sins, till wrath came upon them to the uttermost. The affectionate and faithful ministers of Christ, may be forced from those with whom their hearts are most united; and they may be frustrated, through the devices of Satan, in their most earnest desires and endeavours of coming to them again; yet their separation will be only for a short space. Their hope and joy are intimately connected with the spiritual growth and fruitfulness of those who have profited by their labours. They are now "their crown of rejoicing," far more than all possible commendation from other men. And they will meet them, in the presence of the Lord Jesus, at his coming, as their glory and joy; and then all the pangs of their partings and separations will be richly and eternally compensated.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1—5. (*Notes, Acts* xvii. 15. xviii. 1—6.) Timothy came from Berea to Athens, whilst Paul was there, but it seems that Silas did not. The apostle, being anxious about the new converts at Thessalonica, could not endure to remain any longer in suspense, or to act as if he were unconcerned for their welfare: he therefore chose to be left alone at Athens, though that must have been very inconvenient to him: and he sent back Timothy to Thessalonica, to establish the Christians of that city in the faith by suitable instructions, which he was eminently qualified to give them; and to exhort and encourage them to hold fast

6 But now, [o] when Timotheus came from you unto us, [p] and brought us good tidings of your [q] faith and charity, [r] and that ye have good remembrance of us always, [s] desiring greatly to see us, as we also *to see* you:

7 Therefore, brethren, [t] we were comforted over you [u] in all our affliction and distress, by your faith:

8 For now [x] we live, [y] if ye stand fast in the Lord.

9 For [z] what thanks can we render to God again for you, [a] for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes [b] before our God;

10 [c] Night and day [d] praying exceedingly, that we might see your face, and [e] might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

11 Now [f] God himself and our Father, [g] and our Lord Jesus Christ, * direct [h] our way unto you.

12 And [i] the Lord make you to increase and [k] abound in [l] love one towards another, and towards all *men*, [m] even as we *do* towards you:

13 To the end [n] he may establish your hearts [o] unblameable in holiness [p] before God, even our Father, [q] at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, [r] with all his saints.

o Acts xviii. 5.
p Prov. xxv. 25. Is lii 7. 2 Cor. vii. 5—7.
q 1 Cor xiii. 13 Gal. v. 6. Col. i. 4 2 Thes. i 3 1 Tim. i. 5. Philem 5. 1 John iii 23.
r i 3 ii 9. 1 Cor. xi. 2 Col iv. 18. 2 Tim. i 3. Heb. xiii 3. 7.
s 9, 10 *See on*, ii. 17 Phil. i. 8.
t 8, 9. 2 Cor. i. 4 vii. 6, 7. 13. 2 John 4
u Acts xvii. 4—10 1 Cor iv. 9—13. 2 Cor. xi. 23—28. 2 Tim. iii. 10—12.
x 1 Sam xxv. 6. *Heb* Ps. xxx. 5. Phil. i. 21.
y John viii. 31. xv. 4. 7. Acts xi. 23. 1 Cor. xv 58. xvi. 13. Gal. v. 1. Eph. iii. 17. iv 15, 16. Phil. i. 27. iv. 1. Col. i. 23. Heb. iii. 14. iv. 14 x. 23. 1 Pet v. 10. 2 Pet. iii. 17. Rev. iii 3. 11.——z i. 2, 3. 2 Sam. vii. 18—20 Neh. ix. 5. Ps. lxxi. 14, 15. 2 Cor. ii. 14. ix. 15.——a 7, 8. *See on*, ii. 19.——b Deut xii 12 18. xvi. 11. 2 Sam vi. 21. Ps. lxviii. 3 xcvi. 12, 13. xcviii. 8, 9.

c Luke ii. 37. Acts xxvi. 7. 2 Tim i 3. Rev. iv. 8. vii. 15.
d 11. ii. 17, 18. Rom. i. 10. xv. 30—32. Philem. 22.
e Rom. i. 11, 12. 2 Cor i 15. 24. Phil. i. 25. Col. i. 28. iv. 12. 2 Thes i 11.
f 13. Is. lxiii. 16. Jer xxxi 9. Mal. i 6. Matt. vi 4. 6. 8, 9 14. 18. 26. 32. Luke xii. 30. 32 John xx. 17. 2 Cor. vi. 18. Col. i. 2. 1 John iii. 1.
g *See on*, Rom. i. 7. 2 Thes. ii. 16.
* Or *guide*.
h Ezra vii. 21—23. Prov. iii 5.6.
i iv. 10. Ps cxv. 14. Luke xvii. 5. 2 Cor. ix 10 Jam. i 17 2 Pet. iii. 18.——k iv. 9, 10 Phil i. 9. 2 Thes. i. 3.——l v. 15. Matt vii. 12. xxii. 39 Rom. xiii. 8. 1 Cor xiii. Gal. v 6. 13, 14 22. 2 Pet. i. 7. 1 John iii. 11—19. iv. 7—16. m ii. 8 ——n v. 23. Rom. xiv 4. xvi. 25. 1 Cor. i. 8. 2 Thes. ii 16, 17. 1 Pet. v. 10. o Eph. v. 27. Col. i 22. Jude 24.——p *See on*, 11.——q ii 19. iv. 15 v. 23 1 Cor i. 7. xv. 23. 2 Thes. ii. 1.——r Deut. xxxiii. 2. Zech. xiv. 5. 2 Thes. i. 10. Jude 14.

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their profession, whatever opposition they met with, by assuring them of peculiar protection, consolation, and reward. This was intended to prevent any of them from being moved to renounce or disguise their faith, by means of the afflictions to which it exposed them; for they could not but know, if they understood the nature of their profession, that the disciples of Christ were appointed to have fellowship with him in his sufferings. Their situation amidst the enemies of God, and their doctrine and character, would render contempt and enmity unavoidable: Satan would certainly stir up persecutions as far as he could: and it pleased the Lord to appoint them a certain measure of suffering, for the trial of their faith, the progress of their sanctification, and the honour of the powerful and excellent effects of his grace in them. This the apostle had plainly and confidently predicted, and warned them to expect, when he was with them, even before the persecution had begun: he had never allowed them to be deluded by any expectation of peace or prosperity; but had taught them to look for tribulations from without, and for inward consolations. Accordingly it had come to pass; he and his associates had been driven from them by furious persecutions; and as he had left them in the midst of this fiery trial, he had sent to see how they had stood it, and whether their faith had thus been proved genuine; for he could not wholly divest himself of solicitude, lest the tempter, even Satan, should have prevailed against them, by his manifold artifices, to renounce the faith, and comply with the idolatry of their neighbours; and lest thus his unwearied labours for their good should prove in vain.—(*Note* i. 1—4.) Some would explain what the apostle here speaks of persecution, exclusively of himself and the other apostles and evangelists; as if the enemies of Christianity used this circumstance for an argument against its divine original; and as if the danger of the Thessalonians arose, not from any persecutions to which they themselves were exposed, but from the vain reasonings of their heathen neighbours, respecting those which the apostle endured, and his leaving Thessalonica on account of them. But the Thessalonians were themselves exposed to persecution; as all must expect to be, "who live godly in "Christ Jesus;" and what they suffered or dreaded would be, at least, as likely to "move them," as any reasonings of their enemies. The apostle continued to speak in the plural number, though the context evinces that he meant it only of himself. This he seems to have done in some other places; but it was from modesty, as only one of many ministers who were of the same mind, and not from any affectation of dignity.

V. 6—10. During Timothy's absence, Paul departed from Athens to Corinth; whither Timothy returned to him, and Silas also. The tidings which he received from Thessalonica, concerning the faith and love of the brethren in that city, and their affectionate remembrance of him, and earnest reciprocal desire to see him, were so satisfactory, that they not only relieved his mind from anxiety, but abundantly compensated for all his other trials and distresses, and filled his benevolent heart with consolation. For indeed he seemed to enjoy life with great relish, and to live to some purpose, when his spiritual children stood fast in the faith, hope, love, and obedience of the Gospel. Nor could he find language to express the gratitude he owed to God, and the thanks which he now *again* was excited to render him, on their account, and for that overflowing joy, with which this inspired his heart before God; whilst night and day he poured out his unremitted prayers, that he might have the satisfaction of once again seeing them, and of perfecting what was wanting in their faith, whether in respect of knowledge in the truths and promises of God, or the vigour of their believing dependence on them. 'The apostle here gives an excellent 'pattern to all the bishops and pastors of the church, to 'be continually solicitous to know of the welfare of their flock; incessantly praying for it, blessing God daily for it; and looking upon it as the very felicity of their own lives.' (*Whitby.*) (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11—13. The apostle closed the expressions of his affectionate and pious fervour of holy exultation, by writing down the requests of his heart for the Christians at Thessalonica. He earnestly besought "God, *even* our "Father, and our Lord Jesus," as the incarnate Son, the Head over all things to his church, to direct, and make

CHAP. IV.

The apostle earnestly exhorts his brethren, to increasing diligence in obedience to Christ, 1, 2 : *and to chastity and integrity in all things ; as God had called them to holiness : and they who despised such admonitions, would despise God himself,* 3—8. *He calls on them to abound more and more in love of one another,* 9, 10 ; *to be industrious in their respective callings,* 11, 12 ; *and to moderate their sorrow for deceased believers ; from assured expectation of the coming of Christ, to raise the dead, to change the living, and to receive all his people to himself,* 13—18.

FURTHERMORE, then,[a] we * beseech you, brethren, and † exhort *you* [b] by the Lord Jesus, that as [c] ye have received of us how [d] ye ought to walk, and [e] to please God, [f] *so* ye would abound more and more.

2 For ye know [g] what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.

a ii 11. Rom x. 1. 2 Cor. vi. 1. x 1. Eph. iv. 1. Philem. 9, 10. Heb. xiii. 22.
* Or, *request.*
† Or *beseech.*
b 2. Eph. iv. 17. 2 Thes. ii. 1. 1 Tim. iv. 21. vi 13, 14 2 Tim iv. 1.
c 11, 12. Acts xx. 27. 1 Cor. xi. 23 xv. 1. Phil. i. 27. Col. ii. 6. 2 Thes. iii. 10—12.
d *See on*, ii. 12.
e Rom. viii. 8. xii 2. Eph. v. 17. Col. i. 10. Heb xi. 6. xiii. 16. 1 John iii. 22 ——f 10. Job xvii 9. Ps. xcii 14. Prov. iv. 18. John xv. 2. Phil. i. 9. iii. 14. 2 Thes. i 3. 2 Pet. i. 5—10. iii. 18.——g Ez. iii. 17. Matt. xxviii. 20. 1 Cor. ix. 21. 2 Thes. iii. 6. 10.

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plain his way unto them, by removing all those providential hinderances which had hitherto prevented him ; and he entreated the Lord Jesus, (for as the former clause is an undeniable act of divine worship rendered to Christ as One with the Father, so this also seems to have been addressed to him ;) that by further communications from his fulness, he would cause them to increase in love of one another, and of all men, not excepting their persecutors ; according to the various exercises of that holy affection required by the commandments of God ; and to abound in every one of them, according to the nature and measure of the apostle's fervent, spiritual, and enlarged love of them.—This he desired, in order to the establishment of their hearts in holiness ; and that their affections, tempers, and conduct, might be unblameable, in every part of their various duties to God, towards each other, and towards all men, in the several relations of life ; and that it might be manifested that they were so, as in the presence of their holy and heart-searching God and Father, in that decisive day, when the Lord Jesus should come with all his holy ones, whether angels or redeemed sinners, to judge the quick and dead. (*Col.* i. 22.) For the souls of the redeemed, who died in the Lord, will descend with him from heaven, to be reunited to their glorified bodies ; and the saints on earth will be changed, and meet the Lord in the air. 'This invocation of Christ must suppose him omniscient, 'omnipresent, and the Searcher of all hearts ; and these 'are the properties of God alone.' (*Whitby.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The love which the zealous ministers of Christ bear to their people, and the longing desires after their salvation which they feel, cannot wholly be separated from painful solicitude on their account. This often disposes them to renounce their own conveniency, and to endure fatigue, in order to obtain satisfaction concerning them, and to promote their spiritual benefit. And it is a great advantage for such as are engaged at a distance from those, of whom they are thus affectionately desirous to have faithful fellow-labourers, whom they may employ in establishing and comforting them concerning their faith. In the most peaceful times, every Christian should count his cost, and remember that the followers of Christ are appointed to suffer affliction ; and ministers should not shun to forewarn their hearers, that they may be prepared for the cross, and meet every trial with watchfulness, and prayer ; as in this manner they will best be preserved constant and steadfast in the faith. For the tempter hath many artful devices : he knows how to suit his suggestions to men's dispositions, and to avail himself of their circumstances ; and he will be sure to work on their hopes, fears, desires, or aversions, by the most subtle methods imaginable. So many, who have for a time made a creditable profession of the Gospel, have been overcome in the day of trial, that the experienced minister will generally feel a degree of anxiety ; and he will not fail to caution the people to be on their guard, lest by some means "the tempter should tempt "them, and his labour should be in vain." But in proportion to these solicitudes will be his rejoicing, when he finds that his beloved children stand fast in the faith, and walk in love ; and that their remembrance of him, and affection to him, correspond with his feelings towards them. In proportion as he has the mind of St. Paul, he will be "comforted over them in all his affliction and distress by "their faith :" the pleasure of his life will greatly consist in seeing them stand fast in the Lord, walking in his ordinances and commandments blameless, and in no degree moved by the reproaches of their enemies. He will feel, that he can never sufficiently thank God, for all the joy which de derives from them, and the testimony of the acceptance of his labours, which their conversion implies ; and if he be absent from them, such good tidings of them will draw out his soul in more fervent prayers to God continually ; that he may again enjoy the comfort of their beloved society, and perfect what is lacking in their faith, to whatever hardships or perils this may expose him. Thus will he beseech God, even our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, to direct his way unto them ; that he may again on earth meet with those whom he so tenderly loves ; and that especially, the Lord would make them to "increase, "and abound in love one towards another, and towards all "men ;" and *thus*, (for love is the fulfilling of the law,) "establish their hearts unblameable in holiness, before "God our Father, at the coming of the Lord Jesus, with "all his saints ;" when all such desires and prayers will fully be accomplished. May the Lord make all, who are called the ministers of Christ, partakers of this faithful, loving, diligent, and disinterested spirit ; and may he prosper all their labonrs, and comfort their hearts, with numbers of converts like these Thessalonians !

3 For [h] this is the will of God, *even*
[i] your sanctification, [k] that ye should abstain from fornication:
4 That every one of you [l] should know
how to possess [m] his vessel in sanctification
and [n] honour;
5 Not [o] in the lust of concupiscence,
even [p] as the Gentiles which [q] know not
God:
6 That no *man* [r] go beyond and * defraud his brother † in *any* matter; because
that [s] the Lord *is* the Avenger of all

h v 18. Ps. xl. 8. cxliii. 10. Matt. vii 21. xii. 50. Mark iii. 35. John iv. 34. vi. 17 Rom. xii. 2. Eph. v. 17 vi 6. Col i. 9. iv 12 Heb. x 36. xiii. 21 1 Pet. iv. 2. 1 John ii. 17
i 4. v 23 John xvii. 17—19. Acts xx. 32 xxvi. 18 Rom. vi. 22. *Gr.* 1 Cor i. 30 vi. 11 Eph. v. 27 2 Thes. ii. 13 Tit. ii 14. 1 Pet. i. 2.
k Matt. xv 19 Acts xv. 20 29 Rom. i. 29. 1 Cor v. 9—11. vi. 9, 10. 15—18. vii 2. 2 Cor xii 21. Gal v. 19. Eph. v. 3-5 Col. iii 5. Rev. xxi. 8. xxii. 15 ——l Rom vi 19 xii 1. 1 Cor vi 18—20——m 1 Sam. xxi 5. Acts ix. 15. Rom. ix. 21—23 2 Tim. ii. 20, 21 1 Pet iii. 7.——n Phil. iv. 8. Heb xiii 4——o Rom. i. 24 26. Col. iii. 5 p Matt vi 32 Luke xii 30. Eph. iv. 17—19 1 Pet iv 3.——q Acts xvii. 23. 30. 31. Rom i 28 1 Cor. i. 21 xv 34. Gal. iv. 8 Eph ii. 12. 2 Thes. i. 8.——r Ex. xx. 15. 17 Lev xix. 11. 13. Deut xxiv. 7 xxv. 13-16 Prov. xi. 1. xvi. 11. xx 14. 23 xxviii. 24. Is v. 7. lix. 4—7 Jer ix. 4. Ex. xxii. 13. xlv. 9—14. Am. viii 5, 6 Zeph. iii. 5. Mal. iii 5. Mark x. 19 1 Cor vi. 7—9. Eph. iv. 28 Jam v. 4 ——* Or, *oppress.* or, *over reach.* Lev. xxv 14. 17 1 Sam. xii. 3. 4. Prov xxii 22. Jer. vii. 6. Mic. ii. 2 Zeph iii 1 Jam iii. 6.——† Or, *in the matter.*——s Deut xxxii. 35 Job xxxi. 13, 14. Ps. xciv. 1. cxl. 12. Prov. xxii. 22, 23 Ec v 8. Is i. 23. 24 Rom i. 18. xii 19 Eph. v. 6. 2 Thes. i. 8.

such, [t] as we also have forewarned you,
and testified.
7 For [u] God hath not called us unto
[x] uncleanness, but unto holiness.
8 He therefore that ‡ despiseth, [y] despiseth not man, but God, [z] who hath also
given unto us his Holy Spirit.
9 ¶ But as [a] touching brotherly love,
[b] ye need not that I write unto you; [c] for
ye yourselves are taught of God to love
one another.
10 And indeed ye do it towards [d] all
the brethren which are in all Macedonia:
but we beseech you, brethren, that [e] ye
increase more and more;

t Luke xii 5. Gal. v. 21 Eph iv. 17.
u Lev. xi 44. xix. 2 Rom i 7. viii. 29, 30. 1 Cor. i. 2 Eph. i. 4. ii. 10 iv 1. 2 Thes ii. 13 14 2 Tim i. 9. Heb. xii 14. 1 Pet. i 14, 15 ii. 9—12. 21, 22.
x ii. 3. Gal. v. 19. Eph. iv. 19. 2 Pet ii. 10.
‡ Or, *rejecteth.* 1 Sam. viii 7. x. 19. John xii. 48.
y Prov. i. 7 xxiii. 9 Is. xlix. 7. liii. 3 Luke x. 16 Acts xiii. 41. Jude 8.
z Neh ix. 30. Acts v. 3, 4. 1 Cor. ii. 10. vii. 40. 1 Pet. i. 12. 2 Pet i. 21. 1 John iii. 24.
a Lev xix. 18. Ps. cxxxiii 1. John xiii. 34. 35. xv. 12—17. Acts iv. 32. Rom. xii. 10. Eph v. 1, 2. Heb. xiii 1 1 Pet. iii 8. 2 Pet i. 7 1 John ii. 10 iii 11. 14-19. 23. iv 7—16.——b v 1 Jer xxxi. 34. Heb. viii. 10, 11. 1 John ii 20 27 ——c. Is. liv. 13. John vi 44 45 Heb. x. 16. 1 John v. 1.——d i. 7. 2 Cor. viii. 1, 2 8—10 Eph. i. 15 Col. i. 4. 2 Thes. i. 3. Philem. 5—7.——e 1 iii. 12. Phil. i 9. iii. 14, 15. 2 Pet iii. 18.

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1—5. It only *remained* for the apostle to entreat the Thessalonians, with the most affectionate persuasions, and to exhort them, with earnestness and authority, to abound more and more in the practice of all those duties, concerning which he had before instructed them. They had received these instructions in an obedient and teachable manner; and thus had learned how they ought to order their whole conduct, that they might please God in all their actions; and he now called upon them to be still more zealous in every good work, and assiduous in cultivating every holy disposition. It was indeed unnecessary for him to enter into an exact detail of particulars, as they knew what commandments he had given them in the name, and by the authority, of the Lord Jesus, for their sanctification, or entire separation from all evil, and consecration to God; the complete mortification of the old corrupt nature, and the renewal of their souls to the divine image, by the influences of the Holy Spirit, through faith, constituted the will of God respecting them. It was especially incumbent upon them to abstain from fornication, (as well as from adultery and other vile abominations, which were generally practised among the Gentiles,) that so every one of them might understand in what manner to possess his body, the receptacle of his rational soul, in a sanctified and honourable use of all its members. as instruments of righteousness unto God, and in an exact government of every sense and appetite, according to the divine law, and the ends intended by the all-wise Creator. Thus every man would act honourably, as a rational creature, and a worshipper of God; whereas all the defilements of the imagination and affections, and every kind of inordinate or forbidden indulgence, according to "the lust of concupiscence," would be exceedingly disgraceful to a Christian, being an imitation of the vile practices of the Gentiles, the worshippers of impure deities, and strangers to the holy character, law, and truth of God.

V. 6—8. In like manner the apostle warned the Thessalonians not to over-reach, or defraud, their brethren or neighbours, in any transaction, either by taking advantage of their ignorance, necessity, or credulity, by exacting immoderate profits, or by any of those tricks and subterfuges, which selfishness devises to impose upon the unwary, without blasting men's credit, or incurring punishment by human laws. Such persons might not be detected, or could not be called to account by men: but the Lord would not suffer their hypocrisy and injustice to escape with impunity, being himself the Avenger of all such clandestine frauds and impositions. Of this the apostle had before warned them, when he was with them, and he had testified that these practices should not escape the vengeance of God. For the Lord had not called them into his family, in order to give them a license to live in an unholy manner, either by gratifying their sensual appetites, or their avarice, but that they might be taught, inclined, and enabled to walk before him in holiness. The word "uncleanness," here used, has led many learned expositors to explain the sixth verse of clandestine adultery. But, if fornication were forbidden, adultery must be of course; for even the Gentiles condemned the latter, whilst they connived at the former; nay, in fact publicly sanctioned it, when committed only with slaves and courtezans, as it is evident from the writings of Demosthenes, Cicero, and others. This interpretation is far from the most obvious meaning of the passage; dishonesty is as inconsistent with Christianity as lewdness; and, in this *over-reaching*, *fraudulent* manner, perhaps even more common; and the word *uncleanness* may either be referred to what went before, or be understood as a general word for wickedness, all which is filthiness in the sight of God. (*Marg. Ref.*) Notwithstanding the excellent state of the Thessalonian Church, there might some creep in among them, who would speak of the doctrines and comforts of Christianity, and yet affect to despise these practical exhortations, as inconsistent with the grace and liberty of the Gospel; but the apostle reminded them. that, in so doing, they did not despise him, Silvanus, or Timothy, but God himself, who had given them his Holy Spirit, by whose inspiration these exhortations had been written. 'In 'this passage St. Paul asserts his own inspiration, in the 'strongest terms, and with the greatest solemnity.' (*Macknight.*)

11 And [f] that ye [g] study to be quiet, [h] and to do your own business, and [i] to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

12 That [k] ye may walk honestly towards [l] them that are without, and *that* ye may have lack of * nothing.

13 ¶ But [m] I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them [n] which are asleep, that [o] ye sorrow not even as others [p] which have no hope.

14 For [q] if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which [r] sleep in Jesus will [s] God bring with him.

f Prov. xvii. 1. Ec. iv. 6. Lam. iii 26. 2 Thes. iii 12. 1 Tim. ii. 2. 1 Pet iii. 4.
g Rom. xv. 20. 2 Cor. v 9. *Gr.*
h Mark xiii 34 Luke xii. 42, 43 Rom xii. 4—8. Col iii. 22—24. 1 Tim. v. 13. Tit. ii. 4—10. 1 Pet. iv 10, 11. 15
i Acts xx. 35. Rom. xii. 11. 1 Cor. iv. 12. Eph. iv. 28. 2 Thes. iii. 7—12. Tit. iii 14. *Marg*
k v. 22. Rom. xii. 17. xiii. 13 2 Cor viii. 20, 21. Phil iv. 8 Tit. ii. 8—10 1 Pet ii. 12 iii 16, 17.
l Mark iv. 11. 1 Cor. v 12, 13. Col. iv. 5. 1 Tim iii. 7. 1 Pet. iii 1. ——* Or, *no man.* 2 Cor xi 6—8.——m Rom. i 13 1 Cor x. 1. xii 1. 2 Cor. i. 2. 2 Pet. iii. 8 ——n 15. v 10. 1 Kings i 21 ii. 10. Dan xii. 2. Matt. xxvii. 52. Luke viii. 52, 53 John xi 11—13. Acts vii. 60. xiii 36 1 Cor. xv. 6. 18. 2 Pet iii. 4 ——o Gen. xxxvii. 35. Lev xix. 28. Deut xiv. 1. 2 Sam xii. 19, 20. xviii. 33 Job i. 21. Ez. xxiv. 16—18. John xi. 24 Acts viii. 2 ——p *See on*, Eph. ii. 12 Job xix. 25—27. Prov. xiv 32 Ez. xxxvii. 11 1 Cor xv. 19.——q Is. xxvi. 19. Rom. viii. 11. 1 Cor. xv. 12—23. 2 Cor iv. 13, 14 Rev. i. 18.——r 13. 1 Cor. xv. 18 Rev xiv. 13 ——s 17. Gen xlix. 10. Zech. xiv. 5. Matt xxiv. 31. 1 Cor. xv. 23. Phil iii. 20, 21. 2 Thes. ii. 1. Jude 14, 15

15 For this we say unto you [t] by the word of the Lord, that we, [u] which are alive, *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not [x] prevent them which are [y] asleep.

16 For [z] the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, [a] with a shout, with the voice of [b] the arch-angel, and [c] with the trump of God: [d] and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then [e] we which are alive *and* remain, shall be [f] caught up together with them [g] in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: [h] and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

18 [i] Wherefore, † comfort one another with these words.

t 1 Kings xiii 1, 9. 17. 18. 32. xx. 35 xxii 14
u 1 Cor xv 51—53 2 Cor. iv. 14.
x Job xli 11. Ps. lxxxviii. 13. cxix. 147, 148. Matt xvii. 25.
y *See on*, n 13
z Is. xxv. 8, 9. Matt. xvi. 27. xxiv 30, 31. xxv 31. xxvi. 64. Acts i 11. 2 Thes. i. 7. 2 Pet iii. 10. Rv. i. 7.
a Num xxiii. 21. Ps xlvii. 1. 5. Zech. iv. 7. ix. 9.
b Jude 9.
c Ex xix 16. xx. 18. Is. xxvii. 13. Zech ix. 14 1 Cor. xv. 52. Rev. i 10 viii 13.
d 1 Cor. xv. 23, 51, 52.
e 15. 1 Cor xv. 52.
f 1 Kings xvii. 12. 2 Kings ii. 11, 16. Acts viii. 39. 2 Cor. xii. 2. 4. Rev xi. 12. xii. 5.——g Matt. xxvi. 64. Mark xiv. 62. Acts i 9 Rev. i. 7.——h Ps xvi. 11. xvii. 15. xlix. 15. lxxiii. 24. Is. xxxv 10 lx 19, 20. John xii. 26. xiv 3. xvii. 24 2 Cor. v. 8. Phil 1 23. 2 Pet iii 13. Rev vii. 14—17. xxi. 3—7 22. 23, xxii 3—5 ——i v. 11. 14. Is. xl. 1, 2. Luke xxi. 28. Heb. xii. ——† Or, *Exhort.* Heb. x 24, 25.

V. 9—12. As to the new commandment, which Christ had given his disciples, of loving one another, the apostle need not write to them concerning the reasons, nature, exercises, fruits, and blessed effects of it; for they were inwardly taught of God, by the illumination of the Holy Spirit, thus to do; it was an essential disposition of the new man, which counteracted and overpowered the selfishness of their old nature. (*Marg. Ref.*) Indeed, they did exercise that holy affection, not only among one another, but towards all the Christians of the several churches in Macedonia; yet he would exhort them to increase more and more in the fervency of their love, and in all the fruits of it. And while men in general aspired to eminence, reputation, or authority, by an intermeddling and turbulent conduct, it should be their *ambition*, (so the original literally signifies,) to behave quietly, peaceably, and contentedly, in their own situations, however low and obscure; and to attend diligently to their proper work, in the community, in the Church, and in relative life. And as most of them were poor, they ought to be industrious in their manual labour, as the apostle had commanded them, at the same time that he laboured for his bread among them. Thus they would be enabled to act honestly and creditably among their unbelieving neighbours; paying all their dues, maintaining their families decently, and being preserved from seeking relief by any dishonourable services or compliances, as not having any want of things suited to their station, or requisite in order to relieve one another in their distresses.

V. 13—18. (*Notes*, 1 *Cor.* xv. 23. 50—54.) Perhaps the apostle heard, that some of the Thessalonian believers had lately died: and that their relatives and brethren were greatly dejected about them, as not duly attending to the consolations suggested by the Gospel. He therefore would not have them to be ignorant concerning those who were fallen asleep in Christ, that they were in a safe and happy estate; as it was not proper for them to sorrow on such occasions in so disconsolate a manner, or with such outward expressions of violent grief, as they who had no hope respecting their deceased friends, or expectation of meeting them again, were used to do. For *since* they believed that Jesus died for their sins, and "rose again for their justification," they might thence assuredly infer, that God would raise again incorruptible the bodies of those who slept in Jesus, that they might be produced with him, and presented by him, at the last day. Death was become only a sleep *through* Jesus, as the body felt no pain, and the soul was present with the Lord in holiness and felicity. He must therefore inform them, by immediate revelation from the Lord, that such of the whole multitude of believers, as should be found alive at his coming, would not enter into the full enjoyment of heavenly felicity, in body and soul, before their brethren who had previously died, and been buried. For at that solemn period, the Lord Jesus will be seen to descend from heaven, with the acclamations of attending angels, and the voice of an arch-angel, who will be appointed to lead the hierarchies of heaven on this illustrious occasion, and with the trumpet of God, sounding in a manner similar to what it did from mount Sinai, but far more loud and tremendous. Then, all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and shall come forth, but the dead in Christ shall rise first, and be rendered incorruptible, even before their brethren who never died shall be changed. Immediately after, these will be changed, and their bodies become immortal and spiritual; and thus will they be suddenly taken up together into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; that, being approved as heirs of the kingdom, the whole company may be his assessors in judgment, and then re-enter heaven with him triumphantly; and so will they be for ever with the Lord. Wherefore the apostle exhorted the Thessalonians to comfort and encourage themselves and each other with these animating topics, under the loss of their brethren, the prospect of death, and all their trials and sorrows. Some suppose that the apostle expected to

CHAP. V.

As the coming of Christ will be sudden, and bring inevitable destruction on the wicked, "the children of light" should prepare for it, in vigilance and sobriety, with faith, and love, and hope, 1—10. *Various exhortations, admonitions, and encouragements,* 11—25. *Concluding prayers and salutations,* 26—28.

live till the day of judgment, because he spoke in the first person plural of those that should be alive at that time; but he elsewhere spoke of being absent from the body, and of being raised up with Jesus. (*Marg. Ref.*) He was one who remained alive after others had been removed, his faith and hope annihilated, as it were, the intervening space, his love made him consider the cause of the whole multitude as his own, and it is evident that he did not speak it personally of himself; for when the Thessalonians imagined that the day of judgment was at hand, he diligently set himself to rectify that mistake; (2 *Thes.* ii.) And, as the apostle expressly declares that he spake "by "the word of the Lord," or by divine inspiration, the consequences of allowing him to be mistaken in what he said, should very seriously be considered. Similar expressions may be found in other parts of Scripture. (*Ps.* lxvi. 6. lxxxi. 5. *Hos.* xii. 4.) Some suppose that Christ himself was meant, by the arch-angel being the ruler of all angels; but as we must understand the words, "The Lord," of him; so it seems not natural to explain another term in the same sentence of him likewise; and many intimations are given of different ranks and orders among the holy angels. The resurrection of believers is exclusively meant, as every attentive reader must perceive, and therefore all speculations concerning the bodies with which the wicked shall arise, (a subject on which the Scripture observes a profound silence,) must be wholly foreign to the subject. The notions which prevailed among the Gentiles left them totally destitute of a firm, well-grounded, and animating hope of again meeting their deceased friends in a state of happiness; and so do the notions on these subjects of merely nominal Christians. Some expositors have said, that the expression, "so shall "ye be for ever with the Lord," implies, that the souls of believers are not previously, at least not permanently, with him; but has not the apostle expressly assured us of the contrary? (2 *Cor.* v. 8. *Phil.* i. 23, 24.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

The ministers of the Gospel must not only instruct their hearers in the great doctrines and promises of the Gospel, but also in every part of their duty, that they may "know "how they ought to walk and please God;" and Christians should as readily receive these instructions, as they do the most encouraging declarations of free grace and everlasting love. They should also take in good part the earnest, repeated, affectionate, and authoritative exhortations of their pastors; when they "beseech and charge" them to abound more and more in every good work, according to the commandments given them in the name of the Lord Jesus. For as all men come short of perfection, so zealous ministers cannot be fully satisfied with the present measure of the people's fruitfulness, any more than humble Christians are with their own attainments. The will of God, as revealed in his holy law and in his precious promises, implies his purpose of their complete sanctification; we should therefore diligently follow after perfect holiness; and it may encourage those who long for more entire sanctification, to reflect, that in this respect, their will and that of God are now coincident. In aspiring after this renewal of the soul unto holiness, the strictest restraints must be imposed upon the appetites and senses of the body, and upon all those thoughts and inclinations of the mind which are connected with them; that not only fornication and gross transgressions may be abstained from, but that every one may learn to "possess "his vessel in sanctification and honour," at a distance from the lust of concupiscence, which so degrades numbers of those who know not God. It is a disgrace to a rational creature to be a slave to his animal inclinations, and to act contrary to his better judgment, his true interest, or the welfare of his neighbour, for the sake of gratifications, of which the beasts are equally capable; but it is far more dishonourable for a spiritual man, a child of God, a member of Christ, a temple of the Holy Spirit, and an heir of heaven, to have his mind and body polluted, or unfitted for communion with God, by unlawful or inexpedient gratifications, or even by improper thoughts and desires. Yet in many cases this will not be avoided, without watchfulness and prayer, without diligence in every means of grace, and a constant care to shun all temptations, or occasions of evil. It is equally inconsistent with the character of a Christian to go beyond or defraud his brother in any matter, or to injure him in his property, reputation, or connexions. This too calls for the most diligent care, and the most impartial scrutiny into every part of our conduct; for self-love, habit, and the customs of the world, will otherwise lead us, without reflection, in some measure to violate the golden rule of "doing to "others as we would they should do unto us." If a believer be led to commit offences of this kind, the Lord will surely chastise him, and thus bring him to repent and forsake them; but if any cloak such allowed dishonesty with specious appearances of piety, or zeal for doctrines, they will dreadfully find, that the Lord is the Avenger of all such, and their present impunity will only tend to their heavier condemnation at last. Of this the great champion for the doctrines of grace forewarned his new converts, his beloved Thessalonians, testifying that nothing could induce the Lord to connive at the want of strict honesty in the dealings of men with each other. For God hath not called us into a state of peace with him, that we may go on in the polluting practice of worldly lusts; but that, depending on his promises, "we may cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting "holiness in the fear of his name." And let it be remembered, that he, who despiseth such admonitions, doth not so much despise him that enforces them from the

BUT of [a] the times and the seasons, brethren, [b] ye have no need that I write unto you.

2 For yourselves [c] know perfectly, that [d] the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

3 For when they shall say, [e] Peace and safety; [f] then sudden destruction cometh upon them, [g] as travail upon a woman with child; [h] and they shall not escape.

4 But ye, brethren, [i] are not in darkness, that that day should [k] overtake you as a thief.

a Matt. xxiv. 3. 36 Mark xiii 30—32. Acts i 7.
b iv. 9 2 Cor. ix. 1. Jude 3.
c Jer xxiii. 20.
d Matt. xxiv 42—44. xxv 13. Mark xiii. 34,35 Luke xii. 39, 40. 2 Pet. iii. 10 Rev. iii. 3. xvi. 15
e Deut. xxix. 19. Judg. xviii 27, 28 Ps x. 11—14. Is. xxi. 4 lvi. 12. Dan. v. 3—6. Nah i. 10. Matt. xxiv. 37—39. Luke xvii. 26—30. xxi. 34, 35.
f Ex xv. 9,10. Josh viii 20—22. Judg xx. 41, 42. 2 Chr. xxxii. 19—21. Ps lxxiii. 18—20. Prov. xxix. 1 Is. xxx. 13. Acts xii. 22, 23 xiii. 41. 2 Thes. i 9. 2 Pet ii. 4. Rev. xviii 7, 8.
g Ps xlviii. 6. Is. xiii 8. xxi. 3. Jer. iv. 13 vi. 24. xxii 23. Hos. xiii 13. Mic. iv. 9, 10.
h Matt. xxiii. 33. Heb. ii. 3. xii. 25.
i Rom. xiii. 11, 12. Col. i 13. 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10. 1 John ii 8.
k Deut. xix. 6. xxviii. 15. 45. Jer. xlii. 16 Hos. x. 9. Zech i. 6.

pulpit or the press, as that God, by whose Spirit they were originally dictated; yea, he as much despises God, as that man does who contemns the message of free salvation.

V. 9—18.

All true believers are taught of God to love one another for his sake; they remember the instructions, which they have received on that subject, which is so congenial to their new nature: by practice they acquire habits of kindness, compassion, forbearance, and forgiveness; they love their brethren, wheresoever they meet with them, and they feel an expansive benevolence to all mankind; yet they too, may properly be exhorted to increase in these things more and more. It should also be the height of their ambition, to behave quietly and peaceably, avoiding all interference in other men's matters, diligently attending to their own duty; being willing to labour, working with their own hands in any honest calling, and to be active in every service, which their station in the Church or the community requires of them. When Christians are thus industrious, and contented in obscure situations, submitting to many difficulties in order to pay every one his due, decently maintaining their families, devising by every means to live within the bounds of their income, having no need to raise contributions, in order to supply deficiencies occasioned by improvidence or extravagance, and being ready to spare a little for the relief of their more indigent brethren and neighbours, they will be respectable themselves, and an honour to the profession of the Gospel. And should disappointments and afflictions, at any time, render them incapable of acting according to their plan, they may expect candid allowance and cheerful assistance, as they will have a testimony in every one's conscience, that it is a real and unavoidable necessity. Christianity does not forbid, nor does grace extinguish, our natural affections, but we are thereby taught to regulate and moderate them. It therefore behooves believers to mourn with resignation even for such relatives, as they cannot think of without discouragement, in respect of their eternal state; but it is peculiarly improper for them to indulge grief and sorrow, as men without hope, for those who sleep in Jesus, whose souls are at rest with him, and whose bodies also shall be raised again, to attend the triumph of their once crucified and risen Redeemer. Our own loss, on such occasions, we must feel and mourn for, with submission to the will of God; but the separation will be short, the re-union rapturous, and the subsequent felicity uninterrupted, unalloyed, and eternal. Nor shall such of us, as endure the stroke of death, be eventually less favoured and happy than those, who shall be found alive at the coming of the Lord, that great event to which we should continually look forward. For when the incarnate Lord of all worlds shall appear, in "his own glory, "and in that of the Father, with all his holy angels," at his summons, attended with the voice of the arch-angel, and the trump of God, the dead in Christ shall rise first; and, being joined by their brethren, then living on the earth, they shall meet their Lord in the air with unutterable joy, and be for ever with him in the regions of perfect felicity. May we, by realizing faith and hope, continually anticipate that solemn joyful period, and comfort ourselves and each other with these words of truth and love!

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1—3. The apostle did not think it needful to write any thing to the Thessalonians, concerning the precise time of Christ's coming, or the seasons appointed by God for the accomplishment of his promises and predictions. This was not a matter of revelation, and it did not belong to him, or them, to inquire into it, from an unavailing presumptuous curiosity. (*Marg. Ref.*) In general, they perfectly knew, from his former instructions, that "the day of the Lord was coming as a thief in the "night." (*Luke* xii. 39, 40.) The thief breaks into the house, while the family is asleep, and unprepared for resistance, and thus excites great terror, and plunders or murders, as he pleases: thus the day of the Lord is coming on the ignorant, the careless, the secure, and unbelieving, when they do not expect it; it will excite the most distressing consternation, and will plunge them into the most tremendous destruction. As the hour of death is the same to each person, that judgment will be to mankind in general, so the same remarks and illustrations equally answer to both cases; and when sinners are flattering themselves with the hope of peace and safety, then sudden destruction will come upon them. This is further illustrated by another most striking similitude; as the woman with child, (often when she is thinking of something else,) is suddenly seized with her travailing pangs, which will unavoidably increase upon her, so ungodly men have abundant reason to look forward with terror to death and judgment; yet they are employed and amused by so many other matters, that they are suddenly surprised with those solemn events, when they least expect them; and this first astonishment will be followed with increasing misery, from which it will be impossible for them ever to escape. The former chapter ends with a special revelation, concerning the Lord's coming to judgment; and to explain the beginning of this, as if it related to other events of a widely different nature, (which some do,) is palpably absurd.

5 Ye are all [l] the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

6 Therefore [m] let us not sleep, as *do* others; but let us [n] watch and be [o] sober.

7 For [p] they that sleep, sleep in the night; and [q] they that be drunken, are drunken in the night.

8 But let us, [r] who are of the day, be sober, putting on [s] the breast-plate of faith and love; and for an helmet, [t] the hope of salvation:

9 For God hath [u] not appointed us to wrath, but to [x] obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

10 Who [y] died for us, that, [z] whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

11 [a] Wherefore, * comfort yourselves together, [b] and edify one another, [c] even as also ye do.

12 ¶ And we beseech you, brethren, [d] to know them which [e] labour among you, [f] and are over you in the Lord, [g] and admonish you;

13 And to [h] esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. [i] *And* be at peace among yourselves.

14 Now we † exhort [k] you, brethren, [l] warn them [m] that are ‡ unruly, [n] comfort the feeble-minded, [o] support the weak, [p] be patient toward all *men.*

15 [q] See that [r] none render evil for evil unto any *man;* but [s] ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, [t] and to all *men.*

l Luke xvi. 8. John xii. 36. Acts xxvi. 18 Eph. v. 8.
m Prov xix. 15. Is. lvi 10 Jon i. 6. Matt. xiii. 25. xxv. 5. Mark xiv 37. Luke xxii. 46. Rom. xiii. 11—14 1 Cor. xv. 34 Eph. v 14.
n Matt. xxiv. 42. xxv. 13 xxvi 38 40, 41. Mark xiii 34, 35 37. xiv. 38. Luke xii. 37. 39. xxi. 36. xxii 46 Acts xx. 31. 1 Cor. xvi. 13. Eph vi. 18. Col. iv 2 2 Tim iv. 5. 1 Pet iv. 7. Rev. iii. 2. xvi. 15
o 8. Phil. iv. 5. 1 Tim ii. 9. 15 iii. 2. 11. Tit ii. 6. 12 1 Pet. i 13. v. 8.
p Job iv. 13. xxxiii 15.
q 1 Sam. xxv. 36, 37. Prov. xxiii. 29—35. Is. xxi. 4, 5. Dan. v. 4, 5. Acts ii. 15. 2 Pet. ii. 13.
r 5. Rom. xiii. 13 Eph. v. 8 9. 1 Pet ii. 9. 1. John i. 7——s Is lix. 17. Rom. xiii 12 2 Cor. vi 7. Eph vi. 11 13—18 ——t Job xix. 23—27. Ps. xlii. 5. 11. xliii 5 Lam. iii 26. Rom v. 2—5. viii. 24, 25 1 Cor xiii 13 Gal v. 5. 2 Thes. ii 16 Heb. vi. 19 x. 35. 36. 1 Pet. i. 3—5. 13 1 John iii 1—3——u iii. 4. Ex ix. 16. Prov. xvi. 4. Ez. xxxviii. 10—17 Matt. xxvi. 24. Acts i. 20. 25. xiii. 48. Rom. ix. 11—23. 2 Tim. ii. 19, 20 1 Pet. ii 8. 2. Pet. ii. 3 Jude 4.——x Rom xi. 7. 30. 2 Thes. ii 3, 14. 1 Tim. i 13 16. 2 Tim ii 10. 1 Pet. ii 10. 2 Pet. i. 1.——y Matt. xx. 28. John x. 11. 15. 17. xv. 13 Rom v. 6—8. viii. 34 xiv 8, 9 1 Cor. xv 3 2 Cor v. 15. 21. Eph. v 2. 1 Tim ii. 6. Tit. ii. 14 1 Pet. ii. 24. iii. 18.——z *See on,* iv. 13 17.——a *See on,* iv. 18.
* Or, *exhort* Heb iii. 13 x. 25.

b Rom. xiv 19 xv. 2. 1 Cor x. 23. xiv 5 12. 26 2 Cor. xii. 19. Eph. iv 12. 16 29 1 Tim. i 4 Jude 20
c iv 10. Rom. xv. 14, 15 2 Pet. i 12.
d 1 Cor xvi 18. Phil ii. 29
e ii 9. Matt. ix 37. 38. Luke x 1, 2. 7. John iv 38. Acts xx. 35. 1 Cor. iii. 9. xv. 10. xvi. 16 2 Cor. v. 9. vi. 1. xi 23. Gal iv 11. Phil. ii. 16. Col. i 29. 1 Tim. v. 17, 18. 2 Tim. ii. 6. Rev ii 3.
f Acts xx. 28. 1 Cor. xii. 28. Tit. i. 5. Heb. xiii. 7 17. 1 Pet. v. 2, 3. Rev. i. 20. ii 1. 8. 12. 18. iii. 1. 7. 14.
g 14. 1 Tim v. 1. 20. Tit i. 13. ii 15.
h Matt x. 40. 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2. ix. 7—11. Gal. iv 14. vi. 6.——i Gen. xlv 24 Ps cxxxiii 1. Mark ix. 50. Luke xvii. 3—5 John xiii 34, 35 xv 17 Rom. xiv. 17—19 2 Cor. xiii 11. Gal. v 22. Eph. iv. 3. Col iii. 15. 2 Thes iii. 16 2 Tim. ii. 22 Heb xii. 14. Jam. iii 18.——† Or, *beseech.* Rom xii 1.——k *See on.* 12.——l Jer. vi 10. Ez. iii 17—21. xxxiii. 3—9. Acts xx. 27. 31. 1 Cor. iv. 14. Col. i. 28.——m Tit. i 6—10 ——‡ Or, *disorderly.* 2 Thes. iii. 11—13.
n ii. 7—12. Is. xxxv. 3, 4. xl. 1, 2. 11. Ez. xxxiv. 16 Matt. xii. 20. Luke xxii. 32 John xxi. 15—17 Rom. xiv. 1. xv. 1—3. Gal vi. 1, 2. Heb. xii 12 ——o Acts xx. 35. *Gr.*
p Is. lxiii. 9. 1 Cor. xiii 5 Gal. v. 22 Eph. iv. 2. 32. v. 1, 2. Col. iii. 12, 13 1 Tim. iii 3. vi. 11. 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25. iv. 2. Heb v. 2, 3 xiii. 3.——q Gen. xlv. 24. 1 Cor xvi. 10. Eph v. 15. 33. 1 Pet. i 22. Rev. xix. 10. xxii. 9 ——r Ex xxiii. 4. 5. Lev. xix 18 1 Sam. xxiv. 13 Ps vii. 4. Prov. xvii 13. xx. 22. xxiv. 17 29. xxv 21. Matt. v 39 44, 45. Luke vi. 35. Rom. xii 17—21. 1 Cor. vi. 7. 1 Pet ii. 22, 23. iii. 9 ——s iii. 12. Deut. xvi. 20. Ps. xxxviii. 20. Rom. xiv. 19. 1 Cor. xiv. 1. 1 Tim. vi. 11. Heb. xii. 14. 1 Pet iii. 11—13. 3 John 11.——t Rom. xii. 17, 18 Gal. vi. 10. 2 Tim. ii. 24. iii. 2. 1 Pet. ii. 17.

V. 4—11. The apostle judged it needful to give these warnings, for the benefit of such persons as were negligent in preparing for the coming of the Lord; yet, he was well satisfied as to the Thessalonians in general. They not only enjoyed the outward light of the Gospel, and professed to believe and walk in it, but he was persuaded, that they were really delivered from the power of darkness, and the ignorance and wickedness of their heathen state. They were not, therefore, in danger of being overtaken by the day of the Lord, when unprepared, as the thief surprises those that are asleep. They were all, according to their profession, nay, his confidence in them, "the children of light, and of the day." (*Note, Eph.* v. 8—14;) for none of Christ's true disciples were "of the "night, or of darkness." They neither continued in ignorance, nor lived in wickedness, nor wanted concealment for their secret practices; but, being delivered from the thick darkness of heathenism, or the comparative darkness of Judaism, they enjoyed, and walked according to, the clear light of the Gospel. It behooved them, therefore, to act up to their privileges; and not to be supine, indolent, careless, and unwatchful, as others were: but to be vigilant, circumspect, upon their guard against the assaults and stratagems of their enemies, and attentive to every opportunity of duty; and to be serious, considerate, moderate in every thing of a secular nature, and indifferent to all animal indulgences. In general, men chose to sleep during the quiet of the night; and to be drunken or riotous when others were asleep, that their excess might be the less noticed. In like manner, all sloth, unwatchfulness, intemperance, or excessive worldly pursuits, were more consistent with the condition of benighted heathens, than with that of Christians; who would, as it were, turn the day into night, if they were betrayed into such practices. As therefore they enjoyed the full light of "the Sun "of righteousness," they ought to be sober and vigilant; for they had not only a great work to do, but an arduous warfare to maintain, against numerous, potent, active, and subtle enemies: (*Notes, Eph.* vi. 10—19.) They ought therefore to stand armed like soldiers, and be vigilant as centinels: while faith in Christ, and a firm belief of the divine word, with reliance on the promises, with love to God, to Christ Jesus, to holiness, to each other, and to all men, constituted a breast-plate to defend their heart and affections from mortal wounds; and a well-grounded, realizing hope of eternal happiness and complete salvation, was like a helmet, to cover their heads in the day of battle, to defend them from the fear of the most cruel persecutors. This hope they were warranted to entertain; as their conversion proved, that God had not appointed them to endure the severity of his wrath, which their sins had deserved; but that he had chosen them to obtain salvation of his free mercy, through Jesus Christ; who had willingly suffered death, to atone for their sins, and to ransom their souls; that "whether they waked or slept," whether they lived or died, or however they were found at death, or at the coming of their Lord, they might live together with him in glory. They ought therefore to comfort themselves and each other, when they met together, by mutual exhortations and encouragements; while every individual endeavoured to animate his brethren, and especially his most intimate friend and companion; and thus to instruct and edify one another in faith and holiness, as they had already begun to do.

V. 12—15. It is evident that the apostle, either personally, or by Timothy, Titus, and others of his fellow-labour-

16 [u] Rejoice evermore.

17 [x] Pray without ceasing.

18 In [y] every thing give thanks: [z] for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

19 [a] Quench not [b] the Spirit.

u See on, 2 Cor. vi. 10 Phil. iv. 4. Matt. v. 12 Luke x. 20. Rom. xii. 12

x See on, Luke xviii. 1. Eph. vi. 18. Col. iv. 2.

y See on, Eph. v. 20. Phil. iv. 6 Col. iii. 17. Job i. 21. Ps. xxxiv. 1 Heb. xiii. 15.——z iv. 3 1 Pet. ii. 15. iv. 2. 1 John ii. 17 a Cant. viii. 7 Eph. vi. 16 ——b Gen. vi. 3 1 Sam. xvi 14. Neh. ix. 30. Ps. li. 11. Is. lxiii. 10. Acts vii. 51. Eph. iv. 30 1 Tim. iv. 14. 2 Tim. i. 6.

20 [c] Despise not prophesyings.

21 [d] Prove all things: [e] hold fast that which is good.

22 [f] Abstain from all appearance of evil.

c iv. 8. Num. xi. 25–29 1 Sam. x. 5, 6. 10–13. xix. 20–21. Acts xix. 6. 1 Cor. xi 4. xii. 10. 28. xiii. 2. 9 xiv. 1. 3–6. 22–25 29–32. 37–39. Eph. iv. 11, 12. Rev. xi. 3–11——d Is. viii 20 Matt. vii. 15–20. Mark vii 14–16. Luke xii 57. Acts xvii. 11 Rom. xii. 2. 1 Cor. ii. 14. 15 xiv 29 Eph. v 10. Phil. i. 10. *Marg* 1 John iv. 1. Rev. ii 2.——e Deut. xi. 6–9. xxxii 46 47 Prov. iii 1 21–24. iv 13 vi. 21–23. xxiii. 23. Cant. iii 4. John viii. 31. xv. 4. Acts xi. 23. xiv. 22 Rom. xii 9. 1 Cor. xv. 58 Phil. iii. 16 2 Thes. ii. 15 2 Tim. i 15 iii. 6 iv. 14. Heb. x. 23 Rev. ii. 25 iii 3. 11.——f iv 12 Ex. xxiii. 7. Matt. xvii. 26, 27. Rom. xii. 17. 1 Cor. viii. 13. x. 31–33 2 Cor. vi. 3. viii. 20, 21. Phil. iv. 8 Jude 23.

ers, was used to "ordain elders in every city," (*Acts* xiv. 23. xx. 17. 28. 1 *Tim.* v. 22. *Tit.* 1—5 :) and though no mention is made of this, in the brief history of his labours at Thessalonica, nor in the opening of the epistle, there can be no reasonable doubt that he had appointed elders over the Church in that city. It was their office to labour among the people, in preaching the word of God, and in every means of promoting their edification, and the conversion of sinners; to preside in the regulation and conduct of public worship, and in the management of their spiritual concerns, as placed over them in the Lord; to act by his authority and in his name; and to admonish, reprove, and warn, such persons as acted wrong, or were likely to be drawn aside. The apostle therefore exhorted the people to be observant of these teachers, to acknowledge them as the Lord's stewards, and to regard their admonitions; and they were not only directed to love them as Christians, but to esteem them "more abundantly in "love," for their work's sake; and to show them all respect and kindness, in return for the benefit which they derived from their faithful labours; that, under their guidance and instruction, they might live in entire harmony with each other. The apostle likewise exhorted the pastors, and others in conjunction with them, to warn, reprove, and censure such persons, as were unruly, and acted like soldiers who quit their ranks. They should also comfort those, who were weak in the faith, timorous, discouraged through temptation, and harassed by perplexities, fears, and misapprehensions; and support, by proper instructions and every encouraging topic, such as were ready to stumble, or were of a weak and feeble capacity; as well as support and provide for those that were sick, and unable to maintain themselves, (*Marg. Ref.*) and they should also exercise patience and long-suffering towards persons of all kinds, behaving with tenderness and meekness even to those who acted in the most ungrateful or perverse manner. Nor might they in any case render to any man evil for evil; but they ought steadily to persevere in all those things, which were kind, benevolent, beneficent, and useful, both among themselves and towards all men, without excepting even their virulent persecutors, (*Notes, &c. Rom.* xii. 14. 17—21.) This may also imply an instruction to the pastors, and other Christians, to watch over their brethren: and if they perceived any indications of a bitter and vindictive spirit against their persecutors, to repress it by every suitable means, and with all their influence.

V. 16—22. The substance of these exhortations has before been considered. (*Notes on the passages referred to in the margin.*) The Christians at Thessalonica were exhorted to consider it as their duty, as well as privilege, to be "always rejoicing" in the Lord: they were directed to pray incessantly, at stated seasons, occasionally, and with frequent ejaculations; and to watch against every thing which could put them out of frame for this important privilege and duty. In every circumstance, they were to give thanks, as all their mercies were unmerited, and all their trials would prove beneficial; so that this constant spirit of gratitude was the will of God concerning them, as his children in Christ Jesus. Many have explained "quenching the Spirit," of restraining the exercise of spiritual gifts in themselves or others; but doubtless it relates principally to the sanctifying and comforting influences of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers; not excluding his strivings and convictions in the hearts and consciences of sinners. (*Marg. Ref.*) These tend to kindle a flame of sacred love in the soul: but they may be quenched by evil tempers, by procrastination, by worldly cares, by inexpedient indulgences, by trifling company, or by negligence, even as fire may be quenched with water, and will go out, if it be not supplied with fuel, if it want air, or be choked with ashes. Thus convictions are often finally extinguished, and the Holy Spirit will no more strive with men: and thus believers often greatly damp the holy ardour of their souls, mar their own comfort, and impede their growth in grace, by not giving themselves up without delay to those spiritual affections, which are excited in their hearts by the Holy Spirit, and by quenching them in the manner before mentioned. The apostle also warned his brethren, "not to despise prophesyings," or those instructions and intimations of the divine will, which were given them by the prophets, either in explaining the scriptures, or from immediate suggestions of the Spirit. (*Notes,* 1 *Cor.* xiv.) The exhortation may also fairly include the more ordinary preaching of God's word. Yet, as there would be many false teachers, and erroneous doctrines propagated by them, they must be careful to *prove,* or try, both the teachers and their instructions by the word of God; that they might reject what was spurious, and adhere to what was good and excellent. And, not only were they exhorted to abstain from evident evil, but from every thing which appeared to be sinful, either in their own judgment, or in that of others; and to do nothing, concerning the lawfulness of which they doubted, or which might appear suspicious to those around them, and so prejudice them against the truth. No doubt cases often arise, in which we are required to do those things, which appear evil to misinformed, prejudiced, and unreasonable men, in order to obey the commands of God, and to follow the clear dictates of our own consciences. But these are exceptions to the *general* rule, which could not be particularized in so compendious an exhortation: and they seem to be the only exceptions: for it is better to avoid what appears evil to others, though lawful in itself, if it can be

23 And the very [g] God of peace [h] sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* [i] your whole spirit and soul, and body, be [k] preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

24 [l] Faithful *is* he that [m] calleth you, [n] who also will do *it*.

g Rom. xv. 5. 13. 33. xvi. 20 1 Cor. xiv 33. 2 Cor. v. 19. Phil iv 9. 2 Thes. iii. 16. Heb xiii. 20. 1 Pet v. 10. h ii. 13. iii 3 Lev. xx. 8 26 Ez. xxxvii 28 John xvii. 19. Acts xx. 32 xxvi 13. 1 Cor i 2. Heb. ii. 11. 1 Pet. i 2 Jude 1.——i Heb iv. 12.——k iii. 13 1 Cor. i. 8 Eph. v. 26, 27. Phil. i. 6. 10 ii. 15 16. Col i. 22 Jude 24.——l Deut. vii 9. Ps xxxvi. 5 xl 10 lxxxvi. 15. lxxxix 2 xcii. 2. c 5. cxxxviii. 2. cxlvi 6. Is xxv. 1. Mic. vii. 20. John i 17 iii. 33. 1 Cor. i. 9. x. 13 2 Thes. iii. 3 2 Tim. ii 13 Tit i 2. Heb. vi. 17, 18.———m ii 12 Rom viii. 30. ix. 24 Gal i 15 2 Thes. ii 14. 2 Tim i. 9. 1 Pet. v. 10. 2 Pet. i. 3 Rev. xvii. 14 n Num xxiii 19. 2 Kings xix. 31 Is. ix. 7. xiv. 24—26. xxxvii. 32. Matt xxiv 35.

25 Brethren, [o] pray for us.

26 [p] Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss.

27 [q] I * charge you by the Lord, [r] that this epistle be read unto all the [s] holy brethren:

28 The [t] grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

o Rom. xv. 30. 2 Cor. i. 11. Eph v. 18—20. Phil. i. 19. Col. iv. 3. 2 Thes. iii 1—3 Philem. 22. Heb. xiii. 18, 19 p *See on*, Rom. xvi 16. 1 Cor. xvi 20. q ii. 11. Num. xxvii 23. 1 Tim i. 3 18 v. 7. 21. vi. 13, 17. 2 Tim. iii. 14.

* Or, *adjure*. 1 Kings xxii 16 2 Chr. xviii 15. Matt. xxvi. 63. Mark v. 7 Acts xix. 13 r Col iv 16 2 Thes. iii. 14 ———s Heb. iii 1.———t *See on*, Rom. i. 7. xvi. 20 24. 2 Thes iii. 18.

done with a safe conscience, than, by an uncharitable exercise of our Christian liberty, to cause our weak brother to offend, or to prejudice others against the Gospel. *The Spirit.* (19.) 'That is, the afflatus, and light of God 'shining into our minds. But, some one will say, if 'that be never extinguished in the elect, this is com'manded in vain. This, however, I strenuously deny. 'Nay, for this reason it is not extinguished in the elect, 'because they cherish it; and they are induced by these 'exhortations to cherish it. For he, who hath determined 'never wholly to extinguish his Spirit in the elect, hath 'also made known by what means he will cherish it, 'namely, by the progress of his people in piety.' (*Beza.*) —*Prove*, &c. (21.) 'The apostle gives an injunction, 'common to all Christians, having "their senses exercised "to discern good and evil," 'to all, who are obliged "to "hold fast that which is good," 'and not to believe false 'prophets; which is a strong argument for the perspicuity 'and sufficiency of the scripture, and against the neces'sity of a living judge. For he that must try all things, 'must first try the doctrine of this living judge. For 'these words plainly teach, that what we must hold fast 'must first be tried. Hearers, says St. Basil, who are in'structed in the scriptures, ought to try the things spoken 'by their teachers; and receive those things which are 'consonant, and reject those things which are alien from, 'the holy scriptures.' (*Whitby.*)

V. 23—28. The apostle subjoined to his exhortations, his fervent prayers to God, knowing that his efficacious grace alone could produce the will and power to do all these things. He besought the God of peace himself, as reconciled to believers in Christ Jesus, and the Author of all their inward and outward peace, that he would sanctify the Thessalonians in respect of their whole nature, as consisting of a rational and immortal soul, an animal life, with its various sensitive appetites, and a material body; that every sense, member, organ, and faculty, might be completely purified, and devoted to the service of God, and that thus they might be preserved blameless till the coming of Christ.—He was confident that the Thessalonians in general were true believers: and as he was assured of the Lord's faithfulness to his promises and covenant-engagements to his people, whom he had called by his grace, so he was satisfied that he would fully grant his prayer for them. Having therefore desired them also to pray for him, and solemnly charged them, by the authority of the Lord Jesus, to let this epistle be read to all the holy brethren, the saints that formed their church, he concluded with his usual salutations and benedictions. *Charge you*, &c. (27.) It seems evident that this was addressed to the pastors of the Church, and not to believers in general: else the persons charged, and they for whose benefit the charge was given, would have been precisely the same. The original is, "I adjure you." (*Marg. Ref.*) This shows, both that oaths and adjurations are in some cases lawful; (*Note, Matt.* xxvi. 63—68;) and that the subject, concerning which the apostle wrote, was considered by him, as peculiarly important. This is worthy of the most serious consideration of all those, even among protestants, who do not make the reading of the scriptures a part of the service, when they meet in the worship of God; and of those who read them in so careless and indistinct a manner, that the congregation cannot hear or understand them. The advantage to illiterate people, to the multitude who cannot read, or, who can read but imperfectly, of an audible, distinct, and emphatical reading of the scriptures in public, can scarcely be calculated. It will soon render even the best preaching more fully understood; and it will, in some degree, supply the deficiency in other cases.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

Curious inquiries about times and seasons are commonly unprofitable and vain. "Behold, *now* is the accepted "time;" the *present* time we ought to redeem, the *present* season of making our peace with God, and of doing his will, we ought to embrace: and then we shall be safe and happy at all events. But, if we regard the scripture, we know perfectly, "that the day of the Lord cometh as "a thief in the night;" and that when sinners are presumptuously, or carelessly, saying "peace and safety, "then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail "upon a woman with child, which they shall not escape." No man is sure that death and judgment will not thus surprise him, unless he continually expect and prepare for those approaching events: 'Numbers, at this very hour, 'are speaking peace and safety to themselves, over whose 'heads instantaneous destruction is hovering.' (*Doddridge.*) And how dreadful will be the astonishment and consternation of the scornful infidel, the careless profligate, the proud Pharisee, or the hardened hypocrite, when sudden destruction shall thus seize upon him, and no possible method of escape can be found! As yet we are in the land of light, of prayer, of forgiveness, though we might before this have been cast into outer darkness. Nor are we enveloped with Pagan, Mahometan, or Antichristian darkness and delusion; we have the light of the Gospel, and the holy scriptures, afforded us; we have been led to pay some attention to them: if then we are yet in darkness, that the day of the Lord should overtake us as a thief, our guilt must be peculiarly aggravated. Let us therefore seriously inquire whether we really be the children of the light and of the day, by divine illumination, and by an obedient faith ? Let us seek to render this evident, as well as to act consistently with our profession, by casting off the works of darkness, and shaking off indolence and carelessness, that we may not sleep as others do, but may “ watch and be sober.” Let us leave sloth, self-indulgence, ungodliness, and worldly lusts, to “ the children of the night and of darkness ;” but let us, who profess to be of the day, be sober, vigilant, awake, and armed with the breast-plate of faith and love, and with hope as the helmet of salvation. Thus our evidence will continually increase, that God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by the Lord Jesus ; and that, “ whether we wake or sleep,” we shall surely live together with him. And when we remember that he purchased our deliverance from the wrath to come, by dying on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, we shall not only be directed how to comfort ourselves together, and to edify one another in all holy affections, but we shall feel the constraining power of grateful love, and learn how to live to him, with whom we hope to live for ever in glory.

V. 11—22.

The office of a minister calls a man to *labour* for the salvation of souls with unwearied assiduity, as well as to preside over them in the Lord ; nor ought the spiritual authority ever to be separated from the labouring in the “ word and doctrine.” Faithful pastors should carefully be distinguished from slothful, ambitious, or mercenary men, who have the name and garb of ministers : they should be owned and attended to, and their admonitions should be valued and obeyed, and they ought to be esteemed very highly in love, not because of the name and office which they bear, but “ for their work’s sake,” and in proportion to their skill, faithfulness, and diligence in it. They therefore are highly culpable, who despise the admonitions, reject the authority, and refuse respect and affection to the persons of faithful ministers : but such as expect the reputation, esteem, authority, or emolument of the ministry, without a diligent attention to its various and laborious duties, are even still more criminal. Outward respect may indeed be paid them ; but it is impossible for intelligent Christians “ to esteem them very highly in love “ for their work’s sake,” though they will compassionately mourn over and pray for them. Our love of peace among ourselves must not induce us to connive at sin ; but we must, according to our several relations in the church, in domestic life, or in society, warn, reprove, and censure the unruly, as well as tenderly soothe, and comfort the feeble-minded, and support the weak in body or soul. We should also learn patience towards all men, especially towards persons of weak capacities or little faith, who are often very wearying with their complaints, scruples, doubts, mistakes, and infirmities, and yet give no reason at all to suspect their sincerity, but rather call for compassion, as harassed with sore temptations, which perhaps have an effect for the time upon their tempers.—Even when we are injured in the most atrocious manner, we must see to it, that we on no account render evil for evil to any man ; but must learn to follow, with persevering constancy, that which is good and friendly, both among ourselves, and to all men, as knowing what patience and mercy we have experienced from God. His glory is concerned in our “ always rejoicing :” this will be greatly promoted, if we “ pray without ceasing ;” and in “ every thing give thanks,” according to the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning us. To make progress in this life of communion with God, we must be careful not “ to quench the Spirit,” by refusing compliance with his holy suggestions, or postponing the good works to which his influences tend to excite us. We should also learn to pay a reverent attention to every message delivered to us by his ministers ; and thus we shall grow in grace, and abound in consolation. Yet, as Satan’s ministers are transformed into the ministers of righteousness, whilst we “ despise not prophesyings,” we must learn to prove and assay men and doctrines, that we may distinguish between truth and specious error, and so choose and cleave to that which is good and right ; and that, for the honour of the Gospel, we may “ abstain from all appearance of evil.”

V. 23—28.

The exhortations, above given, show us what we ought to be and to do : but we must remember, that our hearts are naturally opposite to them ; nor can any inward and abiding change be wrought in us, save by a divine power. As therefore ministers should pray for, as well as exhort, their people, every individual should turn the precepts and promises of God into prayers for himself and his brethren ; and whilst he uses every other means of grace, and vigilantly shuns all hinderances and temptation, he should still beseech “ the God of peace himself to sanctify him “ wholly, in spirit, and soul, and body, and to preserve “ him blameless until the coming of the Lord Jesus.” If these be our earnest desires, fervent prayers, and diligent endeavours, the promises and covenant of our God, his power and love, and his immutable faithfulness, authorize our fullest assurance, that, having called us by his grace, he will keep us by the same unto complete and everlasting salvation, whatever immense inward or outward difficulties may seem to render it impracticable. The most eminent servants of Christ want and value the prayers of their weakest brethren. Let us be thankful that these excellent epistles are preserved for our perusal also : and while we rememember that the apostle charged the Thessalonians, by the authority of the Lord Jesus, to let them be *read to* all the holy brethren, some of whom might not be able to read them all for themselves, we may be sure that Antichrist alone would forbid the laity to read the scriptures, lest they should lead them into heresy. We shall also learn the propriety of reading them in our public congregations ; and we shall be stirred up to study them with more humble diligence and obedient faith, that thus the grace of the Lord Jesus may be with us also.

THE

SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

THESSALONIANS.

This epistle is commonly supposed to have been written from Corinth, not very long after the foregoing, because Silvanus and Timothy still continued with St. Paul; but the evidence is not very conclusive, and some difficulties attend this opinion. (Note, i. 3, 4.) *It is, however, certain that it was not sent from Athens, according to the spurious postscript. The main object of the epistle seems to have been, to prevent mistakes, which the Thessalonians were about to fall into, concerning the near approach of the day of judgment; grounded in part on a misconstruction of some expressions in his former epistle, and of what he had spoken when at Thessalonica; but supported also by some person, or persons, pretending to inspiration, and, as some think, by a forged epistle. As this opinion was of a very injurious tendency, the apostle strenuously opposed it.* (Notes, ii. 1—4.) *He had also heard of some individuals, who on religious pretences neglected their secular employments, and walked disorderly; whom he exhorted them to censure and shun, yet so as to seek their good. Amidst a number of instructive warnings, exhortations, and encouragements, it contains a most remarkable prophecy,* (Notes, ii. 2—12,) *the exact fulfilment of which is a full demonstration of the divine inspiration, by which the apostle wrote his epistles. 'Besides the 'general marks of its genuineness and divine authority, which it bears in common with the rest of the 'epistles, it has one peculiar to itself, from the exact representation it contains of the papal power, under the characters of "the man of sin," and "the mystery of iniquity." For, considering how directly 'opposite the principles, here described, were to the genius of Christianity, it must appear, at the time when 'this epistle was written, highly improbable, that they should ever prevail in the Christian church: and consequently a prediction like this, which answers in every particular so exactly to the event, must be allowed to 'carry its own evidence with it, and to prove that the author of it wrote under a divine influence.'* (Doddridge.)

A. D. 56. *A. D.* 56.

CHAP. I.

The apostle salutes the Thessalonians, 1, 2; *thanks God for their growth in faith and love; encourages their perseverance under persecutions, by the prospect of the coming of Christ; and shows how glorious he will then appear in the destruction of all unbelievers, and the complete salvation of his people,* 3—10. *He prays for their complete sanctification and meetness for heavenly felicity, by the grace, and for the glory, of God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ,* 11, 12.

PAUL, [a] and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ;

[a] *See on,* 2 Cor. i. 19. 1 Thes. i. 1.

2 Grace [b] unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

[b] *See on,* Rom. i. 7. 1 Cor. i. 3.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. (*Marg. Ref. and notes on the scriptures referred to.*)

V. 3, 4. The apostle had received such further good accounts of the Thessalonians, that he deemed himself bound to return continual thanks to God in their behalf.

3 We [c] are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, [d] as it is meet, because that [e] your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all towards each other aboundeth:

4 So that we ourselves [f] glory in you in the churches of God, for [g] your patience and faith in all your [h] persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:

5 *Which is* [i] a manifest token of the [k] righteous judgment of God, that ye [l] may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, [m] for which ye also suffer:

6 Seeing [n] *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;

7 And to you [o] who are troubled, rest with us, [p] when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his * mighty angels,

8 In [q] flaming fire † taking [r] vengeance on them that [s] know not God, [t] and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

9 Who shall [u] be punished with everlasting destruction [x] from the presence of the Lord, and from [y] the glory of his power;

10 When he shall come [z] to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, (because [a] our testimony among you was believed,) [b] in that day.

c ii. 13. *See on,* Rom i. 8. 1 Cor. i 4.
d Luke xv. 32. Phil. i. 7. 2 Pet. i 13.
e Job xvii. 9 Ps. lxxxiv 7 xcii. 13 Prov iv. 18. Is. xl. 29–31. Luke xvii 5. John xv 2 Phil. i. 9. 1 Thes iv. 1 9, 10. 1 Pet. i. 22. 2 Pet. i. 5–10 iii. 18.
f 2 Cor. vii. 14. ix 2 4 1 Thes. ii. 19, 20.
g iii. 5. Rom ii. 7. v 3–5. viii 25. xii. 12 1 Thes i 3. iii. 2–8 Heb. vi. 15 x. 36. xii. 1–3. Jam. i 3. 4 v. 7, 8 2 Pet i 6. Rev. xiv. 12.
h 1 Thes. ii. 14. iii. 3, 4
i 6. Phil. i. 28. 1 Pet. iv 14–18.
k Job viii 3. Ps. ix. 7, 8. xxxiii. 5. l 6. lxxii 2. xcix 4 cxi 7. Jer ix 24 Dan. iv. 37. Rom ii. 5. Rev. xv. 4 xvi. 7. xix. 2 ——l 11 Luke xx 35 xxi. 36. Acts xiii 46 Eph. iv. 1. Col. i. 12. Rev. iii. 4.——m 7 Acts xiv. 22. Rom. viii. 17. 1 Thes. ii. 14 2 Tim. ii 12.——n Deut. xxxii. 41–43. Ps lxxiv. 22 23. lxxix. 10–12 xciv. 20–23. Is. xlix. 26 Zech. ii. 8. Rev. vi. 10 xi. 18 xv. 4. xvi 5, 6. xviii. 20. 24. xix 2 ——o Is lvii. 2. Matt v. 10–12 Luke xvi. 25. Rom. viii 17 2 Cor. iv. 17. 2 Tim. ii. 12. Heb iv. 1 9. 11. 1 Pet. iv. 1. Rev. vii. 14–17. xiv. 13. xxi. 4.

p Matt. xiii 39–43. xvi. 27. xxv. 31. xxvi. 64. Mark viii. 38. xiv. 62 John i 51. Acts i. 11. 1 Thes. iv 16, 17. Tit. ii 13. Heb. ix. 28. Jude 14, 15. Rev. i. 7. xx. 11.
* Gr *the angels of his power.* John i 3. Eph. i. 21. Col. i. 16 1 Pet. iii. 22. Rev. xxii. 6. 9 16.
q Gen iii 24. Deut. iv 11. v. 5. Ps xxi 9. l. 2–6 Dan. vii. 10 Matt. xxv. 41. 46. Heb x 27 xii. 29 2 Pet iii. 7. 10–12 Rev. xx. 10 14, 15. xxi 8.
† Or, *yielding.*
r Deut. xxxii 35. Ps ii. 9–12. xciv. 1. Is. lxi. 2. lxiii. 4–6. Heb. x. 30. Rev. vi 10. 16, 17 ——s Ex. v. 2 1 Sam. ii. 12. Ps. ix. 10. lxxix. 6 Is. xxvii. 11. Jer. ix. 6. John iii. 19 viii. 19. Rom. i 28. 1 Cor. xv 34. 1 Thes iv. 5.
t Deut. iv. 30. Ps. xviii. 44. Is. i. 19. Acts vi 7 Rom. i 5. ii. 7, 8. vi. 16. x 16. xv. 18. xvi. 26. 2 Cor. x. 5. Gal iii. 1. Heb ii. 3. v. 9. xi. 8. 1 Pet. i. 2. iii. 5. iv. 17.——u Is. xxxiii. 14. lxvi. 24. Dan xii. 2. Matt. xxv. 41. 46. xxvi 24. Mark ix 43–49. Luke xvi. 25, 26 John v. 14. Heb. x. 29. 2 Pet. ii 17. Jude 13. Rev. xiv. 10, 11 xx. 14. xxi. 8. xxii. 15.——x Gen. iii 8. iv 16 Job xxi 14 xxii. 17. Ps. xvi. 11 li. 11. Matt. vii. 23. xxii. 13 xxv. 41 Luke xii. 27 ——y Deut. xxxiii. 2 Is. ii. 10 19 21. Matt. xvi. 27. xxiv. 30. Tit ii. 13 *Gr.* Rev. xx. 11.——z 12 Num. xxiii. 23. Is xliii. 21. xliv 23. xlix. 3 lx 21. Jer. xxxiii 9. John xi. 4. xvii. 10. Gal i. 24. Eph. i. 6. 12. 14 18. ii 7. iii 10 16 1 Pet ii. 9. Rev vii. 11, 12.——a ii. 13. 1 Thes. i. 5. ii. 13.——b Mal. iii. 17. Matt. vii. 22. xxiv. 36. Luke x. 12 2 Tim. i. 12. 18. iv. 8.

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this was meet and right: seeing that, in answer to his prayers, and by means of his epistolary exhortations, they became more fully acquainted with divine truth, and grew stronger in faith, by an exceedingly rapid progress: and the *love* of every one of them towards all the rest abounded, in all its manifold exercises and beneficial effects: so that he rejoiced and gloried in them in the churches of God, showing them what flourishing Christians the Thessalonians were, and what a blessed seal God had given to his ministry in their conversion. This may induce a doubt, whether the epistle were written from Corinth or not: for on that supposition Paul had visited no other churches, since he wrote the former epistle, except such as were planted in that vicinity: and we can hardly suppose, that he only referred to what Timothy or Silvanus had said of them, if they had left him for a season to visit other churches, and then returned. However, he and his fellow-labourers gloried in them; because they endured various persecutions and afflictions, with exemplary patience and constant faith. We are not informed of the particulars relative to these persecutions; but they seem to have exposed the Thessalonians to very great hardships and dangers.

V. 5—10. The patience of the Thessalonians, in suffering in the cause of Christ, and for conscience' sake, was a manifest token or demonstration, of the righteous judgment of God: it fully proved, that he would judge the world in righteousness, and rectify all the apparent disorders of the present scene; seeing he left his blameless and zealous worshippers to endure persecutions and tribulations, and his enemies to prosper in their impious and iniquitous opposition to his cause and people. Indeed, he permitted his servants to be afflicted, in order to prove and manifest their faith and grace, and to increase in them all holy dispositions; that they might at length be counted meet and proper persons to inherit that kingdom of heavenly glory, which God hath prepared for them that love him: in hope of which they so patiently suffered, as well as from love to his kingdom of grace established upon earth, as introductory to the kingdom of glory in heaven. Seeing, by these means, it would be manifestly shown to be perfectly just and righteous in God, to recompense with tribulation and anguish those, who troubled his harmless and holy friends and worshippers by their cruel enmity and persecution, because of their relation and conformity to him; as they would evidently be proved to be his inveterate enemies. On the other hand, it would appear honourable to his justice, as well as his mercy, to bestow rest and felicity in heaven on those, who willingly endured tribulation in his cause, for his sake, from his enemies, and according to his will: and, indeed, having given promises to this effect, his equity required the fulfilment of them. This righteous judgment of God will take place, when "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed," as visibly descending from heaven, attended by "the angels of his "power;" his creatures, worshippers, and servants, who shall then act as the ministers of his authority, in showing mercy and in executing vengeance. (*Marg. Ref.*) Then he will appear "in flaming fire," to burn up this visible creation, and this will be an emblem of his awful avenging justice: for he will take vengeance on all; not only on idolatrous Gentiles, persecuting Jews, and men of scandalous and abandoned characters; but on all who continue strangers and enemies to the true God, and his holy worship and service; who have not so known him, as to fear, love, trust, and serve him; and on all, who obey not the Gospel of the Lord Jesus, by receiving him, relying on him, and submitting to him, as their Saviour and King. All these persons, however numerous, or distinguished by rank, accomplishments, or splendid actions, will be punished with eternal destruction, being banished, as accursed, from the presence of the Lord, in which alone felicity can be found, (*Marg. Ref.*) and finding his avenging frown, like lightning, to appal and torture their inmost souls, and the glory of his power irresistibly forcing them with dreadful con-

11 Wherefore also, [c] we pray always for you, that [d] our God [e] would * count you worthy of *this* [f] calling, and [g] fulfil all [h] the good pleasure of *his* goodness, and [i] the work of faith with power:

12 That [k] the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, [l] and ye in him, according to [m] the grace of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

[c] *See on*, Rom. i. 9. Eph i. 16. iii. 14–21. Phil. i. 9–11 Col i 9–13 1 Thes iii. 9–13.——[d] Ps xlviii. 14. lxviii. 20. Is. xxv 9. lv. 7. Dan. iii 17 Rev v. 10.——[e] *See on*, 5 ——* Or. *vouchsafe*.——[f] ii. 14. Rom viii. 30. ix. 23, 24 Phil. iii. 14. 1 Thes. ii. 12. Heb. iii 1. 1 Pet. v. 10.——[g] Ps. cxxxviii. 8. Prov. iv. 18. Is. lxvi. 9. Hos. vi. 3. Zech. iv. 7. Mark iv. 28. 1 Cor. i. 8. Phil. i. 6.——[h] Ps. li. 18. Luke xii. 32. Eph. i. 5. 9. Phil. ii. 13. Tit. iii. 5–7.

[i] John vi. 27–29. Eph i. 19, 20. 1 Thes. i. 3 ii. 13 Heb. xii 2.——[k] *See on*, z 10. John xvii. 10. 1 Pet iv. 14.——[l] Gen. xvii. 13 Ps. lxxii 17. Is. xlv. 17. 25 John xvii. 21–26. Phil. iii. 9. Col. ii. 9. 10. 1 Pet. i. 7, 8.——[m] *See on*, Rom. i. 7 1 Cor. i. 4. 2 Cor. viii. 9 xiii. 14. Tit. ii. 11. Rev. i. 4.

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sternation into the place of torment. This will take place, when he shall appear with divine majesty in human nature, to be glorified by his saints; as the riches of his love, the preciousness of his redemption, the efficacy of his grace, the power of his arm, and his faithfulness to his promises, will be most gloriously displayed by their complete salvation. And not only will he then be admired *by* those, that now believe in him, who will then find their largest expectations far exceeded, and who will not think it possible, sufficiently to adore and praise such a glorious Benefactor; but he will be admired *in* them, likewise, by all the inhabitants of heaven, who will celebrate the wonders wrought by him, in thus saving and exalting such polluted rebels and enemies. This the apostle was confident would be the case of the Christians at Thessalonica, because his testimony concerning Christ had been credited by them, and their faith manifested by its genuine effects.

V. 11, 12. In the prospect of this decisive season, the apostle and his brethren prayed continually for the Thessalonians, that the Lord would vouchsafe them whatever was wanting to make them meet for this felicity, to which the Gospel called them; that he would adjudge them to be entitled to it, according to the grace of the new Covenant in Christ; and that he would accomplish that work of complete sanctification, and prepare them for that glory, to which the sovereign good pleasure of his goodness and love had appointed them, and which he had great complacency and delight in conferring on them: that so he would finish the work by his almighty power, which he was carrying on in their souls through faith, till at length it should be perfected in vision and enjoyment. This they prayed for, in order that the name of Christ might be glorified in them, both by their present bold profession of his truth, and their holy conduct, and zealous labours to spread the Gospel; and in the sight of the whole world, and to all eternity: and that they might also be glorified in Christ, by perfectly bearing his image, enjoying his love, being owned as his brethren, and sharing, as it were, all his honour, according to the infinite riches of the mercy and grace of God the Father, and the Lord Jesus. The context shows, that the word *calling* must here mean the inheritance to which they were called. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

They who have already distinguished themselves by "the work of faith, and the labour of love, and the "patience of hope," are capable of growing exceedingly in all these things: for the highest attainments of saints on earth fall far beneath real perfection. When Christians thus grow in grace and abound in all the exercises of mutual love, the hearts of faithful ministers will rejoice: and they will deem themselves bound to give thanks to God always for them, as it is meet; and to speak of them in the churches of God, to excite their thanksgiving also, and to animate them to a holy emulation. The patient sufferings of exemplary Christians, and the prosperity of ungodly men and cruel persecutors, fully demonstrate a future judgment, when all shall "discern between the "righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth "God, and him that serveth him not." This helps to explain those mysteries of providence which would otherwise greatly perplex us; and we perceive that the devoted worshippers and beloved children of God are proved and purified in the fiery furnace of tribulation, "that they "may be accounted worthy of that kingdom for which "they suffer;" and that wicked men are permitted to prosper, that their rancorous enmity against God may be manifested, and the measure of their crimes filled up, and that all may see the glory of that justice, which consigns them to the punishment intended for them. It must indeed at length appear evident to all rational creatures, that it is righteous in God to recompense tribulation to those, who trouble his people from hatred to his holy truth and service; and that it is honourable to all his perfections to give rest and felicity to those, who have been troubled for his sake, and for their love to his cause and worship. Faith, anticipating the grand decisive day, is enabled by the light of revelation to read, and, in a measure, to understand, the book of providence; and thus to wait with composure and comfort for the coming of the Lord.—That will be indeed "a day of wrath, and of the revelation "of the righteous judgment of God:" then the Saviour, once a Man of sorrows, and generally despised, rejected, and disobeyed, will "be revealed, with his mighty angels, "in flaming fire, taking vengeance," not only on cruel oppressors, persecutors, and murderers, or on scandalous profligates and depredators, but "on all who knew not "God, and obeyed not the Gospel of his Son;" whether infidels, Pharisees, scoffers, hypocrites, enthusiasts, or Antinomians, or however they might otherwise be denominated or distinguished. All these shall be punished with "an everlasting destruction from the presence of the "Lord;" the majesty of that countenance, which was once defiled with blood and spitting, and the glory of his power, who was once crucified in apparent weakness, shall be intolerable to all the multitudes of the wicked; and they will be wholly incapable of making the least resistance, when with a tremendous frown he shall say to them, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the "Devil and his angels!" But at that awful season, he will come especially to be glorified in his saints, who have here believed the testimony of his apostles concerning him, and thus learned to trust, love, obey, and rejoice in him, whom they have not yet seen, and to know and worship God the Father in and through him. No words can possibly express the admiring and adoring gratitude and love, which will unite with the exulting joy and triumph of that

CHAP. II.

The apostle warns the Thessalonians, against groundlessly supposing that the day of Christ was at hand, 1, 2; *and shows, that it must be preceded by a great apostacy; in which "the man of sin," by his blasphemies, usurpations, and impostures, would cause the destruction of numbers, and then sink himself into perdition,* 3—12. *He thanks God for his special grace shown to the Thessalonians,* 13, 14; *exhorts them to steadfastness,* 15; *and prays, that they may be comforted, and established in every good word and work,* 16, 17.

NOW [a] we beseech you, brethren, [b] by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, [c] and *by* our gathering together unto him,

2 That ye be not soon [d] shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither [e] by spirit, nor by word, [f] nor by letter, as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

3 Let [g] no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come,* [h] except there come a falling away first, and that [i] man of sin be revealed, [k] the son of perdition;

4 Who opposeth [l] and exalteth himself above all that is [m] called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, [n] sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

a *See on* Rom. xii. 1.
b *See on* 1 Thes. iv. 14–16.
c Gen. xlix. 10. Matt xxv. 32. Mark xiii 27. Eph. i. 10. 1 Thes iii. 13 2 Tim. iv 1
d Is. vii 2. viii. 12, 13. xxvi. 3. Matt xxiv 6. Mark xiii. 7. Luke xxi 9. 19. John xiv. 1. 27. Acts xx 23, 24. 1 Thes. iii. 3
e Deut xiii 1—5. Jer. xxiii 25—27. Mic. ii, 11. Matt. xxiv. 4 5. 24 2 Pet ii. 1—3. 1 John iv. 1, 2. Rev. xix 20
f 1 Thes. iv. 15. 2 Pet iii. 4—8.
g *See on,* Matt. xxiv. 4 1 Cor. vi. 9. Eph. v 6.
h 1 Tim iv. 1—3. 2 Tim. iii 1—3. iv 3, 4
i 8—10 Dan. vii, 25. 1 John ii 18. Rev xiii 11,&c.
k John xvii 12. Rev. xvii 8 11.
l Is. xiv. 13. Ez. xxviii 2 6. 9. Dan. vii 8 25 viii. 9—11. xi. 36. Rev. xiii. 6.
m 1 Cor. viii. 5.
n Dan. viii. 12—14. xi. 45. Rev. xiii. 6, 7.

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happy period. All hopes and imaginations must fall immensely beneath those unutterable glories, and the holy affections with which they will be contemplated and adored. But every believer will then reflect, display, and increase, the manifested glory of the divine Saviour, and enhance the praises of all the inhabitants of heaven "to the Lamb "that was slain, and hath redeemed them to God with his "blood." May we then pray always for ourselves and each other, that "our God may count us worthy of this "calling, and fulfil in us all the good pleasure of his "goodness, and the work of faith with power; that so "the name of our Lord Jesus may be" finally "glorified "in us" and our salvation, "and that we may be glori-"fied in and with him, according to the grace of our "God, and the Lord Jesus Christ." May we diligently seek to obtain and possess the full assurance, that this shall be our felicity, when "the wicked shall be turned into "hell, and all the people that forget God;" and may we now do all in our power to promote and recommend the Gospel, and to do good to our fellow-sinners and fellow-christians; that, glorifying him on earth, we may be sure of being for ever glorified with him in heaven!

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. Having encouraged the faith and patience of the persecuted Thessalonians, by the prospect of Christ's coming to perfect their salvation, the apostle exhorted them concerning that great event; and as they hoped to be gathered together unto Christ in glory, he besought them not to allow themselves to be easily deluded into the opinion that the day of Christ was at hand, whether that opinion were propagated by men professing to speak by the Spirit of God, or whether it were grounded on something which he had spoken among them, or on a misconstruction of some expressions in his former epistle. For such an erroneous expectation would disquiet their minds, and create in them needless troubles and apprehensions: and when they found themselves disappointed in it, they might be tempted to question the truth of the Gospel itself. It would at least take them off from the duties of their several callings in society; and their conduct, expectations, and disappointments, might render them the derision of their unbelieving neighbours. *By the coming,* &c. (1.) This is generally explained, as a solemn charge or adjuration; which indeed agrees very well with the apostle's general manner: but the preposition (ὑπὲρ,) here used, seems not to admit of that interpretation.—Several learned men would explain this, of our Lord's coming in providence to destroy Jerusalem, and terminate the persecutions excited by the Jews: but that coming was very near; and the apostle earnestly warned his readers against supposing, that the coming of which he spake was at hand. If, however, this had not been the case, what could there be, in the near approach of divine judgments on Judea, to excite any extraordinary commotion among the Gentile converts at Thessalonica?

V. 3, 4. The apostle again most earnestly exhorted them to let no man deceive them, by any artful device or pretence whatever, into so injurious an expectation: and it is evident that this caution was not unnecessary; for, notwithstanding it, many of the early Christians expected the day of judgment speedily to come, which betrayed them into various practical mistakes. But St. Paul, by the Spirit of prophecy, assured them, that Christ would not come for this purpose, till a *falling away,* or *an apostacy,* of a great body of professed Christians from the true Gospel of Christ had previously taken place. Doubtless many apostacies occurred in the primitive ages under different heresiarchs: but all the circumstances of this prediction were never verified, except in that departure from the faith, and that usurpation and spiritual tyranny connected with it, which took place in the Church of Rome: and the manifest absurdity of all other interpretations, as clearly shown in the controversies of those who abet one or another of them against their opponents, abundantly proves this. No apostacy of equal magnitude and duration, no delusions equally pernicious and abominable, have taken place since the apostle's days. The imposture of Mahomet alone can be at all compared with it, and this could not be here intended; for that impostor and his successors were

[o] Matt. xvi 9. Mark viii. 18.
[p] Luke xxiv. 6, 7. Acts xx. 31.
[p] iii. 10. John xvi. 4. Gal. v. 21. 1 Thes. ii. 11. 2 Pet i 15.
* Or, *holdeth*. 7.——[q] 3. 8.

5 [o] Remember ye not, that, [p] when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

6 And now ye know what* withholdeth, that he might be [q] revealed in his time.

7 For [r] the mystery of iniquity [s] doth already work: only [t] he who now letteth, *will let*, until he be taken out of the way.

[r] 1 Tim iii. 16. Rev. xvii 5. 7.
[s] Acts xx. 29. Col. ii 18–23. 2 Tim ii. 17, 18 1 John ii 18. iv. 3.
[t] 6.

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not placed "in the temple of God," the visible church; but without it, and in direct opposition to the very name of Christianity; they propagated their delusions mainly by the sword, and not by lying miracles; and the impieties of Mahomet never equalled the blasphemies here predicted. In connexion with this apostacy, "the man "of sin would be revealed." In the language of prophecy, a king generally signifies a succession of monarchs, of the same family, or carrying on the same design, (*Notes, Dan.* vii. 17—24.) Thus "the man of sin," does not mean a single person, but a succession of men, impious in themselves, and conducting the same wicked design of corrupting Christianity, in doctrine, worship, and practice; establishing an intolerable tyranny on religious pretences, and using all kinds of seduction, iniquity, and cruel persecution, to induce mankind to adopt the antichristian system. This "man of sin," would be "the son of "perdition," (*John* xvii. 12;) a genuine descendant of Judas, the apostle and traitor, who sold his Lord for money, and betrayed him with a kiss; a peculiar factor and agent of Satan in destroying the souls of men, and finally sinking himself into perdition as his inheritance. It is manifest, that no succession of men have yet appeared on earth, to whom this description so exactly accords, as that of the Roman pontiffs, as the visible head of the popish church. This deceiver, however, would "oppose "and exalt himself above all that is called God, or is "worshipped," either by Christians or Pagans: thus the Roman pontiffs have opposed the truths, commandments, and disciples of Christ, in every age, and by every means; they have opposed the prophetical office of Christ, by teaching human inventions; his priestly office, by the doctrine of human merits and created intercessors; and his kingly office, by changing and dispensing with his laws. They have exalted themselves above all that is called God, "and is worshipped," by pretending to forgive sins, even in those who manifestly continued impenitent; by granting indulgences to men to break the commandments of God; by dispensing with, and placing their own decrees above, his laws, as if of superior validity; and by presuming to give meaning and authority to the scriptures themselves, which must not be understood in any other sense than what they impose upon them. Moreover, "This man "of sin," "sits as God in the temple of God," and we must therefore look for him within the visible church: there he blasphemously usurps the throne of God, showing himself to be God. Many Roman emperors affected divine honours, and demanded adoration: but there was no antecedent apostacy from Christianity; and they might rather be said to sit in the temple of Jupiter, or Mars, than in that of God, whose temple must be considered to be among his professed worshippers, and not among avowed heathens. But the Roman pontiff, claiming to be the universal head of the whole church of God, called by his flatterers *Vice-God, a God upon earth*, arrogating the title of *his Holiness*, boasting of infallibility, pretending to a right to depose kings, and bestow kingdoms on whom he pleased, (with those arrogant claims before-mentioned,) answers so exactly to the description here given, that we cannot doubt for whom it was designed. While the Roman pontiff opposed the worship of God, by enjoining the worship of images, and of saints and angels, and the authority of his laws to enforce subjection to his own edicts, he himself might be called the great idol, as well as the great tyrant of the Romish church; as he demanded the most abject submission and prostration from all men, and poured contempt on all authority, human and divine. But particulars cannot here be more fully insisted on. It suffices to show that the Roman pontiffs answered this description, as the original does a striking picture; and we may venture to assert, that no other succession of men ever did thus accord to it; perhaps no single individual within the visible church. The apostles, at least after the Gospel was preached to the Gentiles, never spake of the temple at Jerusalem as the temple of God; but the Christian church in general, or believers in particular, are always denoted by that phrase. The striking coincidence of this extraordinary prediction with many parts of the prophecy of Daniel may be seen to advantage, by consulting the marginal references; and, as far as the author's views of them are concerned, by examining the notes on the passages referred to in that prophecy.

V. 5—7. During the short time which the apostle spent at Thessalonica, he had stated these particulars to his converts, which they ought to have remembered. When they recollected what he had spoken upon this subject, they would know what withheld, or retarded, this apostacy for the present; and so prevented its taking place openly and evidently, till the time appointed for it in the purpose of God. The Roman empire, united under one potent government, and extremely jealous of all other power and authority, prevented the establishment of that spiritual tyranny and usurpation, by which Satan was attempting to make his grand effort against Christianity: but it would not have been prudent in the apostle, to have explicitly mentioned it in an epistle for general perusal; nor would it have accorded to the style of prophecy: however, most of the fathers so far understood him, as to declare that Antichrist would not come, till after the downfall of the Roman empire. Had it not been for this obstacle, the evil would have broken out much sooner: for even when this was written, "the mystery of iniquity did "already work." This grand and deep design of Satan, this mysterious system, which was founded in and productive of all kinds of iniquities, being placed in direct opposition to the "great mystery of godliness," was already operating upon the minds of men. The ambition and avarice of some, who preached the Gospel, and exercised spiritual gifts from corrupt motives; who opposed the apostles, in order to obtain authority, influence, and secular advantage; or who perverted the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ, introducing legal confidences, 8 And then shall [u] that Wicked be revealed, [x] whom the Lord shall consume with [y] the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy [z] with the brightness of his coming:

9 *Even him*, whose coming [a] is after the working of Satan, with all power [b] and signs, and lying wonders,

10 And with all [c] deceivableness of unrighteousness [d] in them that perish; because [e] they received not the love of the truth, [f] that they might be saved.

11 And [g] for this cause [h] God shall send them strong delusion, [i] that they should believe a lie;

12 That [k] they all might be damned who believed not the truth, [l] but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

u 3. Matt xiii 19 38 1 John ii. 13. 14 iii 12 v. 18, 19 x Dan vii. 10, 11. 26 Rev xviii. 8—10 xix 20. xx 10 y Job iv. 9 Ps. xviii. 15 Is. xi. 4 Hos vi 5. Rev. i 16 ii 16. xix. 15 21. z *See on*, i 8, 9 a John viii. 41. 44. Acts viii. 9—11. xiii 10. 2 Cor. iv. 4 xi. 3 14. Eph. ii 2. Rev. ix 11. xii. 9 17. xiii. 1—5. xix. 20 xx. 10 —— b Ex. vii. 22. viii. 7. 18 Deut. xiii 1, 2 Matt xxiv. 24. Mark xiii 22. 2 Tim iii. 8. Rev. xiii 11—15. xviii. 23. xix. 20 Rom xvi 18. 2 Cor. ii. 17. iv 2. xi. 13. 15. Eph iv. 14. 2 Pet. ii. 18.

d 1 Cor. i 18. 2 Cor. ii. 15. iv. 3. 2 Pet. ii. 12. e Prov. i. 7. ii 1—6. iv 5, 6 viii. 17. Matt xiii. 11. John iii 19—21. viii. 45—47. Rom. ii. 7, 8. vi 17. Jam i. 16—18. f John iii. 17. v. 34. Rom x 1. 1 Thes. ii. 16. 1 Tim ii. 4. g Ps lxxxi. 11, 12. cix. 17. Is. xxix. 9—14. John xii. 39—43 Rom. i. 21—25. 28 —— h 1 Kings xxii. 18—22 2 Chr. xviii 18—22. *See on*, Is. vi. 9. 10 Ez. xiv. 9. i Is. xliv. 20 lxvi 4. Jer. xxvii. 10. Ez. xxi. 29. —— k Mark xvi. 16 John iii 36. 1 Thes. v. 9. 2 Pet. ii. 3. Jude 4, 5. —— l Ps. xi. 5 l. 16—21. lii. 3, 4. Hos. vii 3. Mic. iii 2. Mark xiv. 11. John iii. 19—21. Rom. i. 32. ii. 8. viii. 7, 8. xii. 9 2 Pet. ii. 13—15. 3 John 11.

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superstitions, will-worship, self-imposed austerities, and the worship of angels: and the disposition of many professed Christians to follow their pernicious ways, were as a corrupt leaven, which, working secretly, would at length produce this great apostacy. (*Marg. Ref.*) But, the Roman empire, which then *let* or *hindered*, its full effect, by keeping the church under persecution, and curbing all authority but its own, would continue to retard this event, until it should be removed out of the way. The conversion of the Roman emperors to Christianity, in the beginning of the fourth century, tended greatly to prepare things for this apostacy; by giving scope to the ambition and avarice of the ecclesiastics, and by multiplying exceedingly nominal Christians; but it was not till the subversion of the western empire by the northern nations, and the division of it into ten kingdoms, that way was made for the full establishment of the papal usurpation at Rome, the capital city.

V. 8—12. The obstacle above-mentioned having been taken out of the way, that *wicked* or *lawless* one would be revealed, and would display the deformity of his character without disguise, by endeavouring to exalt himself above all laws human and divine. But, though this great usurper would practise and prosper, yet, the Lord would at length consume him by the spirit, or the breath, of his mouth. (*Marg. Ref.*) According to the predictions of his word, and by the preaching of his Gospel, attended by the influences of his Spirit, he would gradually waste and consume this anti-christian tyranny, and terminate all his corruptions of the Gospel. This he hath been accomplishing, during the space of above three hundred years, since the first dawnings of the Reformation: he will shortly destroy the whole papal authority, and all its dependencies, by the brightness of his coming to spread the Gospel through the nations; (*Notes, Rev.* xviii. xix. xx. 1—6:) and he will finally condemn, and punish with everlasting destruction, all the actors in this grand delusion, when he shall come to judge the world. Such will certainly be the doom of this "lawless one," this "man of sin," this "son of "perdition," whose coming was to be attended, and success obtained, not by open force, but by the deep subtlety and peculiar energy of Satan: with the highest pretences to authority and claims of power; and with every kind of counterfeit signs and wonders, either of deep-laid human imposture, or of satanical operation, by which men would mimic the miracles of Christ and his apostles, as the Egyptian magicians did those of Moses. It would also be accompanied with all the various kinds of forgery, fraud, and imposture, with which men's senses and understandings have been deluded by artful deceivers, in different ages and nations of the world; and with every hypocritical device, which the ingenuity and sagacity of men or devils could possibly invent; to support the cause of unrighteousness, and delude the world into a stupid admiration, a blind reverence, and an implicit submission to the arrogant claims, and multiplied idolatries, and abominations of this grand delusion. Thus, by artful stratagems and machinations, multitudes would be fatally deceived, among such as were in the way of perdition. For, seeing they had not received the love of the truth, but had neglected or perverted the saving doctrine of the Gospel, through pride and carnal enmity, they would, for this cause, be left to judicial blindness; and God would, by means of these men, send them a delusion, which would bind them, in the strongest chains of error and false confidence; so that they would be fascinated into the firm belief of Satan's lie, and venture their souls upon it. Thus, being held in impenitence and unbelief, and under the power of their own lusts, they would be left to manifest their enmity to God, and to fill up the measure of their sins; that they might all be condemned at the day of judgment, and receive their merited punishment, who had not believed the truth of Christ, but had pleasure in Antichrist's "deceivableness of unrighteousness," because it accorded to their pride, love of the world, and dislike to the spiritual worship and service of God: for this seems rather to refer to the deceived, than to the deceivers. It implied that God would act in this matter, according to the general rule of giving up those who obstinately hate the truth through love of sin, to be blinded by Satan; and that there would be a remnant, even under the deepest darkness of Antichrist's reign, of another character and description. Nothing can more exactly coincide with the system of popery, as it prevailed in the Roman church, and under the Roman pontiff, for many ages, than this passage does. Even their boasted pretensions to miraculous powers, and the imposture or ambiguity of every instance, is the grand proof of all, that they were marked out by the Holy Spirit. (*Marg. Ref.*) And the adherence of the church of Rome, even to the present day, to the worship of images, saints, and angels, and to the doctrine of absolutions, penances, purgatory, transubstantiation, and the merit of good works, proves that the man of sin, though consuming by the Spirit and word of Christ, is not yet destroyed by the brightness of his coming. It is very wonderful, that any reflecting persons should ever think this prophecy applicable to the *anti-christian* delusions of modern infidels or atheists, who

13 ¶ But [m] we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, [n] beloved of the Lord, because God hath [o] from the beginning [p] chosen you to salvation, [q] through sanctification of the Spirit, and [r] belief of the truth:

14 Whereunto [s] he called you by [t] our Gospel, [u] to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

15 Therefore, brethren, [x] stand fast, and [y] hold [z] the traditions which ye have been taught, [a] whether by word, or our epistle.

16 Now [b] our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, [c] which hath loved us, and hath given *us* [d] everlasting consolation, and [e] good hope [f] through grace,

17 [g] Comfort your hearts, and [h] stablish you [i] in every good word and work.

m i 2 *See on*, Rom. i. 8. vi. 17. n 16 Deut vii. 7, 8. xxxiii. 12. 2 Sam. xii. 25 *Marg* Jer xxxi. 3 Ez. xvi 8. Dan ix. 23. x. 11 19. Rom. i. 7. Col. iii. 12 1 John iv. 10. 19. o Gen i. 1 Prov. viii 23. Is. xlvi 10. John i. 1. viii. 44. Heb. i. 10. p Rom viii. 33. ix. 11. Eph. i 4, 5. 2 Tim. i. 9. q 10 12. Luke i. 75. 1 Pet. i. 2—5.——r John viii. 45, 46 xiv. 6. Acts xiii. 48, xv. 9. Gal iii. 1. Eph ii. 8. Col. i. 5. 2 Tim. ii. 15 iii. 15 Jam. i 18.——s *See on*, Rom viii. 28—30. 1 Thes. ii. 12.——t Rom. ii. 16. xvi 25. 1 Thes. i 5——u Ps. xvi. 11. Matt xxv. 21. John xiv. 2, 3. xvii 22. 24. Rom. viii. 17. Eph. i. 18. 1 Thes. ii 12. 2 Tim. ii. 12. 1 Pet. i. 4, 5. v. 10. Rev iii. 21. xxi 23. xxii. 3—5.——x *See on*, 1 Cor. xv. 58. xvi. 13 Phil. iv. 1.

y iii. 6. 1 Cor xi. 2 z Rom vi. 17. Jude 3 *Gr.* a 2. iii. 14. b i. 2 *See on*, Rom. i. 7. 1 Thes iii. 11 c *See on*, n. 13. John iii 16 xv. 9. 13 Rom v. 8. Eph. ii 4, 5. v. 2 25 Tit iii. 4—7 1 John iii. 16. iv 9, 10 Rev. i. 5 iii 9. d Ps ciii. 17. Is xxxv. 10. li. 11. lx. 19, 20. lxi 7. Luke xvi 26. John iv. 14. xiv. 16—18. xvi. 22. 2 Cor iv. 17, 18. Heb. vi. 18. 1 Pet i 5—8. Rev. vii 16, 17. xxii 5.——e Rom. v. 2—5. viii. 24, 25. Col. i 5. 23. 1 Thes i. 3. Tit. i. 2 ii 13 Heb vi. 11 18, 19. vii 19. 1 Pet i. 3—5. 1 John iii 2, 3——f Acts xv. 11. xviii. 27 Rom. iv. 4, 16. v. 2. xi. 5. 6.——g 16. Is. li. 3. 12 lvii. 15. lxi. 1, 2. lxvi 13. Rom. xv. 13. 2 Cor i 3—6.——h iii 3. Is. lxii. 7. Rom i. 11 xvi. 25. 1 Cor. i. 8 2 Cor. i 21 Col ii. 7. 1 Thes. iii. 2, 13. Heb xiii. 9. 1 Pet v. 10. Jude 24——i Jam. i. 21, 22. 1 John iii. 18.

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have apostatized from a profession of Christianity; when the single expression, "signs and lying wonders," demonstrates that they could not be meant. Antichrist indeed has made strenuous efforts as an *unmasked* infidel; yet, these short-lived appearances must not be compared with the permanent and wide-spread mischiefs of 1300 years; and in some considerable degree, much longer. The original words may mean, either false and lying pretences to the power of working miracles, and the impostures by which they are rendered plausible; or to things really supernatural, when performed in support of false doctrine, and claims to a divine authority, in propagating it.

V. 13, 14. The apostle intimated in these verses, that even at that time strong delusions were sent to those who "received not the love of the truth, that they might "be saved:" he was therefore bound to thank God always for his brethren at Thessalonica; because it was evident that they were specially beloved of the Lord, having been "from the beginning chosen to salvation." (*Marg. Ref.*) Some contend that the apostle meant the beginning of the Gospel being preached to them; but he plainly distinguished this *choice* of them, from their *calling*, and spake of the latter as the effect of the former. The doctrine of election hath been repeatedly considered, (*Notes*, *Rom.* viii. 28—31. ix. 11. *Eph.* i.) but we may here add, that if the *calling* of the Thessalonians was the effect of any preceding *choice* of them; it comes to the same thing, whether that choice was made the preceding day, or from before the foundation of the world, or from eternity; except as the former suppositions would militate against the immutability of God, and his absolutely perfect prescience. Otherwise, if he acted wisely and righteously in choosing them, rather than their companions in idolatry and vice, it was equally wise and righteous to choose them from eternity, as at the very hour preceding their regeneration. This choice of them to salvation had not been made, because he foresaw they would be holy, nor yet with the purpose of leaving them unholy; but with the design of preparing them for salvation, "through the sanctification "of the Spirit," and his new-creating energy, beginning, carrying on, and perfecting their renewal to the divine image; and "through their belief of the truth, as here opposed to the *lie* of the man of sin. For when they had been quickened from the death of sin, he led them to believe the several truths of God's word, especially those relating to the Person and Redemption of Christ; thus they were brought to receive him, and rely on him for pardon, righteousness, and grace; and so they received their title to heavenly felicity, and were trained up for the enjoyment of it. According to these purposes of God respecting them, he had called them by the Gospel, which Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy were sent to preach to them; this "came to "them not in word only, but with the power of the Holy "Ghost;" and their conversion by it both evidenced their "election of God," and was intended for "their obtaining the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." 'How wisely and happily does the apostle unite the views of the grace of God 'and the duties of men! While he represents our choice 'to salvation in a light so worthy of God, since this salvation is still to be obtained, through sanctification of the "Spirit, and belief of the truth." (*Doddridge.*)

V. 15. The apostle, therefore, exhorted his beloved brethren to stand fast in the belief of those truths which they had heard from him, not only amidst the rage of persecutors, but against the artifices of deceivers; maintaining the instructions which he had given them, whether by word of mouth when with them, or by any verbal message, or by his former epistle. Doubtless the apostle's traditions were worthy of credence and obedience; but how shall we know any thing of them, except as they were written for our benefit? It is therefore a singular instance of the "deceivableness of unrighteousness" in "the man of sin," to attempt the support of his corrupt system, by a single word in that very chapter which most fully exposes his devices. For oral traditions, of equal authority to the written word, being the rule of its interpretation, and committed to the keeping of the church, (that is, to the Romish clergy,) was the grand support of popery for ages; and of this fundamental principle they have no better scriptural proof than this single word, and one or two more of similar import! (*Notes*, *Matt.* xv. 1—20.)

V. 16, 17. The apostle here addressed himself in prayer to "our Lord Jesus Christ himself," along with "God "even our Father," and he mentioned Christ first, in this most evident act of divine adoration; "for he and the "Father are One," even that one God, "who had loved "believers, and given them everlasting consolation," a well-spring of comfort in his Gospel, and by his Spirit in their hearts, which would endure to eternity, and of which they then enjoyed the earnest: and he had given them a "good hope," well-grounded, of a good, a suitable, and sufficient portion and felicity, which originated from his mercy, and was evidenced and sanctioned by his grace, in

CHAP. III.

The apostle requests the prayers of the Thessalonians; expresses his confidence respecting them, and prays for them, 1—5. *He charges them to censure, and withdraw from, disorderly walkers, who neglected their own business, and intermeddled in that of others; interspersing suitable arguments, directions, and exhortations,* 6—15. *He concludes with benedictions,* 16—18.

their hearts: and which produced the most beneficial effects in their lives, and supported them under their manifold trials. He therefore besought our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, still more and more to comfort them; and to render them steadfast, not only in faith and hope, but in a constant attention to holiness, in all their discourse and behaviour, and in an habitual readiness unto every good word and work.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is peculiarly incumbent on ministers to caution men against expectations, not warranted by scripture, but grounded on impressions, supposed revelations, and perversions of the word of God: for Satan makes immense use of these things: not only to unsettle men's minds, and fill them with needless apprehensions; but even to shake the foundations of their faith and hope, to draw them off from their duty, and to expose the Gospel itself to ridicule and contempt. It is sufficient for us to know that our Lord will come, and will gather all his saints unto him; and we should be careful to be always ready for his coming, and to guard against delusions and presumption, in respect to the exact time of that great event. We know, however, that the scriptures cannot be broken: the day of Christ could not come, till the predicted apostacy had taken place. These prophecies have now in a great measure received their completion, and confirm our assured belief of the truth of the scriptures: but though "the son of perdition" hath been revealed; though he hath "opposed and exalted himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped;" and hath spoken and acted as if he were a deity upon earth, who was to be adored in the temple of God himself; though the mystery of iniquity, after working long in secret, at length was brought to light; and "the lawless one" openly proclaimed his arrogance, enforced his presumptuous decrees, and supported his delusions, by the working of Satan, with lying miracles, and all kinds of impostures; yet the Lord hath not yet fully destroyed him with the brightness of his coming; and other prophecies still remain to be fulfilled, before the end shall come. But let us observe, that Satan does most mischief by those, who, Judas like, profess themselves disciples and apostles, and sell Christ for money: these are emphatically "sons of perdition," and "men of sin." Pride and ambition are always hateful; but they are most diabolical when employed about spiritual things; and there have indeed been many Antichrists; yet no one has been so mischievous as he who seated himself in the temple of God.

V. 5—12.

The world, in every age, has been replete with cheats and forgeries; yet none are so iniquitous or impious as those which some have called *pious* frauds; and "Satan, transformed into an angel of light," carries on his trade of destruction, by means of lying signs and miracles, of other species of the deceivableness of unrighteousness, with more fatal effect than in any other character, or by any other engine. However, neither the father of lies, nor any of his children, can go further, or proceed more rapidly, than the only wise God is pleased to permit him. Every event takes place in the appointed season; and after all the mysterious devices of iniquity, which Satan, or wicked men, can frame, "the counsel of God shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure;" and one Antichristian power has often been employed far beside his purpose, to stop the progress of another still more pestiferous. It will at last appear that none were deceived by any "energy of delusion," who were not at heart enemies to the truth and will of God, and disposed to take pleasure in unrighteousness: he is continually permitting the devil to seduce persons of this character into the belief of some lie, by which they are held, as with fetters of iron, till they receive their merited condemnation. To avoid this fatal doom, men should take heed not to repress their convictions, from love of sin: they should pray earnestly for the love of the truth, and for saving faith, from which it springs; and they should use every means of obtaining that humble and spiritual mind, which is the best security against every fatal delusion.

V. 13—17.

If we *now* hate sin and love the truth, we are bound to thank God for ourselves, and for each other. Many can well remember the time when they despised or hated the doctrines of scripture, and preferred soothing errors to them: nay, some of us *seemed* to provoke God to send "us strong delusion to believe a lie;" and we should certainly have held it fast, if we had been left to ourselves. If then it be now otherwise with us, we may thankfully ascribe it to the sovereign love of God, who from the "beginning chose us unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth." But let none conclude themselves chosen and called, who are strangers to the "sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus." (1 *Pet.* i. 2.) Let none place saving faith in any thing, but real efficacious "belief of the truth," as revealed in scripture. This belief of the truth brings the sinner to rely on Christ, and so to love and obey him; it is sealed by the Holy Spirit upon his heart, and it prepares him for the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ in heaven. Let us then stand fast in this doctrine of the apostles, and reject all spurious additions from every quarter; let us neither hesitate nor omit to pray to our Lord Jesus himself, as well as to our loving God and Father, that our interest in his "everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace," may be evinced, not only by his "comforting our hearts, but by his establishing us in every good word and work." Then

FINALLY, brethren, [a] pray for us, that [b] the word of the Lord may * have *free* course, and [c] be glorified, [d] even as *it is* with you:

2 And that we may be [e] delivered from † unreasonable and wicked men: [f] for all *men* have not faith.

3 But [g] the Lord is faithful, who shall [h] stablish you, [i] and keep *you* from evil.

4 And [k] we have confidence in the Lord touching you, [l] that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.

5 And [m] the Lord direct your hearts [n] into the love of God, [o] and into the ‡ patient waiting for Christ.

a Mat ix 38 Luke x 2. Rom xv. 30. 2 Cor. i. 11 Eph vi. 19, 20. Col iv. 3 1 Thes. v. 17 Heb. xiii. 18, 19
b Acts vi. 7 xii. 24. xiii 49. xix. 20. 1 Cor. xvi. 9. 2 Tim. ii. 9
* Gr. *run*
c Ps. cxxxviii. 2. Acts xiii. 48.
d 1 Thes i 5 ii. 1. 13.
Rom. xv. 31. 1 Cor. xv. 32. 2 Cor. i. 8–10. 1 Thes. ii 18. 2 Tim. iv 17
† Gr *absurd.*
f Deut. xxxii. 20 Matt. xvii. 17 xxiii. 23 Luke xviii. 8. John ii. 23–25. Acts xiii. 45 50 xiv. 2. xvii 5 xxviii. 24 Rom. x. 16. 2 Cor. iv 3, 4.——g *See on*, 1 Cor i. 9. x. 13. 1 Thes. v. 24.——h *See on*, ii. 17 ——i Gen. xlviii. 16 1 Chr iv. 10. Ps xix. 13. cxxi 7. Matt vi 13 Luke xi. 4. John xvii. 15. 2 Tim iv 18 2 Pet. ii. 9. Jude 24.——k Rom. xv. 14. 2 Cor. ii 3. vii. 16. viii 22. Gal. v. 10. Phil. i 6 Philem. 21.——l 6. 12. Matt. xxvii 20 Rom. ii 7. xv. 18. 1 Cor vii. 19 xiv. 37. 2 Cor. ii 9 vii. 15 Phil ii. 12. 1 Thes. iv. 1, 2. 10, 11.——m 1 Kings viii. 58. 1 Chr xxix. 18. Ps. cxix. 5. 36. Prov. iii. 6. Jer. x. 23. Jam i. 16–18.——n Deut. xxx 6. Jer. xxxi 33 Rom. v. 5. viii 28. 1 Cor. viii. 3 Gal. v. 22. Jam ii. 5 1 John iv. 19 ——o Ps xl. 1. cxxx 5, 6 Lam iii 26 Luke xii 36, 37 Rom. viii. 25. Phil. iii. 20, 21. 1 Thes i 3. 10. 2 Tim. iv. 8. Tit ii. 13. Heb. ix. 28. 2 Pet iii. 12. Rev. iii. 10, 11 xiii. 10.

6 Now we command you, brethren, [p] in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, [q] that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that [r] walketh disorderly, and not [s] after the tradition which he received of us.

7 For yourselves know [t] how ye ought to follow us: [u] for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;

8 Neither did we [x] eat any man's bread for nought; [y] but wrought with labour and travail [z] night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:

9 [a] Not because we have not power; but [b] to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.

‡ Or, *the patience of Christ.* Heb. xii. 2, 3. 1 Pet. iv. 1.
p 1 Cor v. 4. 2 Cor. ii. 10. Eph. iv. 17. Col iii. 17 1 Thes iv. 1. 1 Tim. v 21. vi. 13, 14. 2 Tim iv. 1.
q 14, 15. Matt. xviii. 17. Rom. xvi. 17 1 Cor. v. 11–13 1 Tim. vi 5 2 Tim iii. 5. Heb. xii. 15, 16. 3 John 10, 11.
r 7 11, 12. 1 Thes iv. 11. v. 14.
s 10 14. *See on*, ii. 15.
t 9 1 Cor iv. 16. xi. 1 Phil iii. 17 iv. 9. 1 Thes. i 6, 7. 1 Tim. iv. 12. Tit. ii. 7. 1 Pet. v. 3
u 6. 1 Thes. ii 10.
x 12 Prov. xxxi. 27. Matt vi 11.
y Acts xviii. 3. xx. 34 1 Cor. iv 12. 2 Cor. xi. 9. 1 Thes iv. 11.——z *See on*, 1 Thes. ii. 9 ——a Matt x. 10. *See on*, 1 Cor. ix. 4–14. Gal. vi 6. 1 Thes ii 6.——b *See on*, t. 7. John xiii. 15. 1 Pet ii. 21.

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we may, even in the most afflicted circumstances, look down with pity on the wealthiest of those who have only the perishing consolations and hopes of this vain world; or who have only the vain confidence, which attends the contempt, neglect, or perversion, of the Gospel of God our Saviour.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1—5. The apostle, as usual, requested the Thessalonians to pray for him and his fellow-workers, and for success to their labours; that so the word of the Lord Jesus, concerning him and his salvation, might *run*, and be diffused by a rapid progress, from heart to heart, and from place to place, through divers nations; and that its excellent nature and effects might be manifested in the conversion of numbers from idolatry and vice to the true worship of God, and in the holy lives of professed Christians; as the glory of the Gospel had been most signally displayed among them. He requested them also to pray for the protection of him, and the other preachers of the Gospel, from the malice and violence of perverse and wicked men, such as the Jewish zealots were; whom no arguments could convince, no persuasion or kindness mollify; seeing their prejudices, the effect of their perverseness and wickedness, hurried them into all kinds of crimes, in order to oppose and destroy the apostle, and others who preached Christ to the Gentiles. The blind devotees of the pagan idolatry, whom the Jews stirred up to aid their persecutions, may also be intended. Notwithstanding the abundance of miracles, and the fulfilment of prophecies, which evinced the truth of the Gospel, yet all men had not faith to believe it, that being the effect of a divine power upon the heart, which overcame the carnal pride, obstinacy, and enmity of fallen nature. Probably some professed Christians secretly concurred with more open enemies, in attempting the life of the apostle; and these false brethren, having no real *faith* in Christ, were also destitute of *faithfulness* in their pretended friendship to him and his fellow-labourers. He was, however, satisfied that the Lord was faithful to his promises; and that the Thessalonians were true believers, whom God would establish in the faith, and defend against the devices of the wicked one, and of evil men, and keep from the evil of sin, and all its fatal effects. He had also confidence in the Lord respecting them, that he would give them grace to dispose and enable them, both at present and in future, to observe all the directions and commandments which he had given them. He therefore prayed that God would guide and lead their hearts into the comfortable experience of his love towards them, and into the exercise of love to him, and into the "patience of Christ;" that patience which he exemplified, taught, required, and bestowed; even a resignation of soul under sufferings, meekness and long-suffering under injuries, "patient continuance in "well-doing," and a disposition calmly to believe and wait for the Lord's time of deliverance. As it is the work of the Holy Spirit to direct and lead the soul into the exercise of these holy dispositions, and as "the Lord" is here mentioned distinct from God, and from Christ, it has been supposed, with some probability, that the apostle addressed this prayer personally to the Holy Spirit, "the "Lord the Spirit," the third person in the adorable Trinity. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6—9. The Thessalonians were generally deserving of high commendation; but the apostle had occasion to speak with authority, and implied reproof in one particular, of which he had before given some intimation. (1 *Thes.* iv. 11, 12.) He therefore commanded and exhorted, or charged them, in the name, and as they valued the authority, favour, and glory, of the Lord Jesus, that they should withdraw from every one called a Christian brother, who walked disorderly, like a soldier that quitted his ranks or deserted his post. For they well knew in what respects they ought to imitate him and his brethren; as they had not behaved in a disorderly manner among them, or done any thing inconsistent with the regularity of families, or of society. In particular, they had not lived at other people's expense, nor in idleness: on the contrary, they had wrought, with very great labour and

c Luke xxiv 41. John xvi 4. Acts xx 18.
d Gen iii. 19 Prov. xiii 4. xx 4. xxi 25. xxiv. 30—34.
e See on, v. 6
f 1 Tim. v. 13. 1 Pet. iv. 15
g See on, p 6.

10 For even [c] when we were with you, this we commanded you, [d] that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

11 For we hear that there are some which [e] walk among you disorderly, [f] working not at all, but are busy bodies.

12 Now them that are such [g] we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, [h] that with quietness they work, and [i] eat their own bread.

13 But [k] ye, brethren, * be not weary in well-doing.

14 And if any man [l] obey not our word † by this epistle, [m] note that man,

h Gen. xlix. 14, 15 Prov. xvii. 1. Ec. iv. 6. 1 Thes. iv. 11. 1 Tim ii. 2.
i See on, 8. Luke xi 3.
k Is xl 30, 31. Mal. i. 13 Rom. ii. 7. 1 Cor xv. 58 Gal. vi 9.10. Phil i 9. 1 Thes. iv. 1. Heb xii. 3.——* Or, *faint not.* Deut. xx. 8. Ps. xxvii. 13. Is. xl. 29 Zech. iii 16. *Marg* Luke xviii. 1 2 Cor iv. 1 16 Heb. xii 5. Rev ii. 3 ——l Deut. xvii. 12 Prov. v 13 Zeph. iii. 2. 2 Cor ii 9. vii 15 x. 6. Phil. ii 12. 1 Thes. iv. 8 Philem 21. Heb. xiii 17 ——† Or, *signify that man by an epistle.*——m 6. Matt. xviii 17. Rom. xvi. 17. 1 Cor. v. 11. Tit. iii. 10.

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fatigue, to earn a maintenance for themselves; even during the night, when the day did not suffice for that, and the exercise of their ministry also. Thus they avoided being chargeable to any person, that they might excite no prejudice against the Gospel. Not that they had no right to a maintenance, or power to require one, by the rule of the Gospel; but because, in their circumstances, they counted it necessary to endure much hardship, that they might become a proper example for their converts to imitate. (*Notes*, **1** *Cor.* ix.)

V. 10—12. Perhaps the apostle had perceived a disposition in some persons at Thessalonica, to make religion a pretence for indolence, and for subsisting on the hospitality of their brethren, without working at their own trades. 'How they might fall into this evil, is easy to conceive. 'Persons all alive to God and his Christ, and knowing 'little of the deceitfulness of the heart, and the crafts of 'Satan, might find it irksome to attend to the concerns of 'this life. It was a fault indeed, and very dangerous, if 'persisted in; as it was soon corrected, in all probability, 'and in part occasioned by the strength of heavenly affec'tions, one cannot be very severe in censuring it. It may 'be worth while for those who feel themselves much 'irritated against similar evils attending on the out-pour'ing of the Holy Spirit in our days, to consider whether 'they do not exercise more candour toward the Thessa'lonians, and respect them as real Christians, while they 'scorn those who walk in their steps as enthusiasts.' (*Milner.*) The apostle, however, being fully aware of the consequences, had, when he was with them, commanded them not to maintain in idleness such as could work and would not, either by private or public charity; that, being left to endure the pinchings of hunger and want, they might be compelled to attend to their proper duty. As God gives every thing to man in the way of labour, so the industrious part of every community maintains the slothful. Or the words may signify, if any man refuse to work, he ought by all means to live without food: but, if that be impossible, let him thence learn to consider how unreasonable and iniquitous idleness is: by which a man that cannot but consume, does nothing to replenish, the stores that are thus exhausted. The expression was for substance a proverb among the Jews. 'They state it wrong, 'who render it, Let him not eat, who does not work; for 'none are more deserving of relief from others, than 'they who, through some just and necessary impediment, 'cannot labour, though they greatly desire it.' (*Beza.*) This venerable reformer, of course, here takes occasion to expose the mendicant monks and friars, as exactly answering the character described by St. Paul. How far relieving vagrant beggars, of whose character, or incapacity for labour, we know nothing, can consist with this rule, is worth inquiry. Certainly the money might be almost always better employed. Whatever rank men sustain, they are mere drones in the hive, unless they fill up the duties of their station for the common benefit. Christians, therefore, should not countenance such evident injustice; especially as this hath always been one of the slanders raised against the professed worshippers of God. (*Note*, *Ex.* v. 8, 9.) The kindness required from believers, and to which they are propense, often gives slothful persons an opportunity, on various pretences, to seek exemption from labour, by which they become useless and mischievous; they and their families are often reduced to great distress; debts are contracted which they cannot pay; and that bounty is diverted into a wrong channel, which should encourage the industrious poor, and support the sick and afflicted. The apostle therefore reminded his beloved Thessalonians of this rule; because he heard that there were some of these disorderly persons among them, who did not work at their own trades or callings, but expected to be maintained in idleness by their brethren. These persons would naturally contract a sauntering, gossipping habit, and would indulge a talkative, curious, and conceited temper; and, having much leisure, they would intermeddle with other men's concerns, to the disturbance of families, by exciting suspicions and jealousies among neighbours; and to the injury of men's characters. But, the apostle commanded, and charged them, in the name of Christ, and as they would stand accepted before his tribunal, to cease from this officiousness; and to attend to their own labour with humility, modesty, contentment, and peaceable industry; that, thus subsisting on their own earnings, they might "eat their own bread," and not consume what properly belonged to others.

V. 13. As the bad use which some individuals made of the liberality and hospitality of their brethren, tended to damp the ardour of Christian charity, the apostle thought it necessary to caution them against growing weary in well doing, in this or any other instance. (*Note*, *Gal.* vi. 8—10.)

V. 14, 15. Should any one continue to disobey the command given by the apostle, "to labour with quietness, "and eat his own bread," the others were directed to note him by some censure of the Church, and every Christian was required to separate from his company, that he might be put to shame, and brought to repentance. Thus the scandal would be prevented, and the credit of Christianity maintained. Yet, they were by no means to show any ill-will to him, or do him any injury, as if he were an enemy; but to persevere in seeking his good by loving admonitions, considering him as a brother, though "over"taken in a fault." (*Notes*, 1 *Cor.* v.)

V. 16. The Lord Jesus, our great Peace-maker with and have no company with him, [n] that he may be ashamed.

15 Yet [o] count *him* not as an enemy, but [p] admonish *him* as a brother.

16 Now [q] the Lord of peace himself [r] give you peace always by all means. [s] The Lord *be* with you all.

17 The salutation of Paul [t] with mine own hand, which is [u] the token in every epistle: so I write.

18 [x] The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

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[n] Num. xii. 14. Ezra ix. 6. Ps. lxxxiii. 16. Jer. iii. 3 vi. 15. xxxi. 18—20. Ez. xvi. 61—63. xxxvi. 31, 32. Luke xv. 18—21.

[o] Lev. xix. 17, 18. 1 Cor. v 5. 2 Cor. ii 6—10. x. 8 xiii. 10 Gal vi 1 Jude 22, 23.

[p] Ps. cxli 5. Prov. ix 9 xxv 12 Matt xviii. 15. 1 Cor. v 14. Jam. v. 19, 20.

[q] Ps lxxii 3, 7. Is. ix. 6, 7 Zech vi. 13 Luke ii 14 John xiv. 27. Rom. xv. 33. xvi. 20. 1 Cor. xiv. 33. 2 Cor. v. 19—21. xiii. 11 Eph. ii 14—17. 1 Thes. v. 23. Heb. vii 2. xiii 20.

[r] Num. vi. 26. Judg. vi. 24. *Marg* Ps xxix. 11 lxxxv. 8—10. Is. xxvi 12. xlv. 7. liv. 10 lxvi. 12 Hag. ii. 9. John xvi 33. *See on*, Rom. i 7. Phil. iv. 7—9.

[s] 18. 1 Sam xvii. 37. xx 13. Ps. xlvi. 7 11. Is. viii. 10. Matt. i. 23 xxviii. 20. 2 Tim iv 22. Philem. 25.

[t] 1 Cor xvi. 21. Col. iv. 18

[u] *See on*, i. 5. Josh. ii. 12. 1 Sam. xvii. 18.

[x] *See on*. Rom xvi. 20. 24.

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the Father and the great Author of all peace to men, was here addressed in prayer, to give the Thessalonians peace in their hearts and consciences, peace with each other, and peace with all men, at all times, and by all means, in his providence, by his grace, through the labours of his ministers, and their own mutual endeavours, and by their prayers for each other; and that he would be with them all, as the Author of comfort and holiness to their souls.

V. 17. It is probable, that the apostle's method of writing by an amanuensis gave occasion to some counterfeit epistles to be written in his name; he therefore subscribed the salutation with his own hand, as the token, in every epistle, that it came from him. It is not unlikely, that he dictated his epistles, while labouring at his trade as a tent-maker.

V. 18. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—5.

The success of the Gospel is as really promoted by fervent prayer, as by faithful preaching. All, in whose conversion it hath been glorified, should labour to honour it in their holy lives, and they should desire and pray that it may have free course, and be glorified in this manner all over the earth. They ought also to beseech the Lord to protect his faithful ministers against those unreasonable and wicked men, who are every where to be met with, even among professed Christians, and who are equally destitute of faith and faithfulness, that they may not be discouraged by their most virulent or determined opposition. Our whole dependence, however, must be upon the Lord's faithfulness to his promises, who will surely establish those who rely on him, and preserve them from every fatal snare and real evil. If by his special grace we have that faith, which multitudes have not, our obligations to him are immense; and we should earnestly apply to him to incline and enable us, perseveringly, and without reserve, to obey his commands, and that the Lord the Spirit may direct our hearts into the love of God and the patience of Christ.

V. 6—18.

It is of great importance to the credit and success of the Gospel, that the injunctions of the apostles be observed; and that believers withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly, and habitually neglects or violates the precepts of Scripture. Pious men are often betrayed into a disregard to this rule, through humility and tenderness; by which means the misconduct of a professed believer turns to the scandal of his profession, and he is soothed into carnal security by an ill-judged and *unkind* lenity. Whatever difficulties occur respecting public discipline, believers of every denomination might agree, in separating from disorderly walkers, with proper admonitions and expostulations; that thus being put to shame, they might be brought to repentance. This would be so far from treating them as enemies, that it would be the wisest exercise of brotherly love. It is peculiarly incumbent on ministers, to show the tendency of their doctrine in their own conduct, that the people may perceive how they ought to follow them. It is not indeed required, nor generally expected, that they should "labour and toil, night and 'day, to avoid being chargeable" to the people; for 'they that preach the Gospel have a right to live of the 'Gospel;" and, if faithful and diligent in their work, they by no means "eat any man's bread for naught." Yet they should be very careful to avoid every appearance of selfishness, indolence, or an encroaching spirit: and they must often give up their own interest, indulgence, and inclination, to make themselves an example to the people, and to give energy to their instructions. A slothful man is a scandal to any society, but most to a religious society. It would be deemed rigorous, should we enforce the apostle's rule, "that if any will not work, neither shall he eat;" yet, in fact, it is founded in equity and love. It is injustice to the indigent, the weak, and the industrious, when the bounty of their brethren is wasted on the indolent and extravagant. The greatest kindness that can be shown to the latter, is to constrain them, if possible, "to labour, "working with their own hands the thing which is good;" this alone can preserve them from mischief, temptation, and misery. None can "eat their own bread," who are not willing, in some way, to labour for it. They who neglect their own business become busy-bodies, officious intermeddlers, tale-bearers, and disturbers of the peace of families, churches, and communities; for 'the devil finds 'some mischief still for idle hands to do.' Persons of this description ought therefore to be discountenanced, rebuked, and commanded from the Lord Jesus, with quietness to labour and eat their own bread; and, if they refuse to do this, they should be censured, noted, and shunned by all believers, till brought to repentance. No abuses, however, of this or any other kind should make us weary of well-doing, check our bounty to proper objects, or our genuine good will to the most unworthy. While we use every means of peace in our private or public capacity, we must still pray to the Lord of peace, to give us peace always, and by all means, and that he would be with us, and confer his grace on us and all our brethren.

THE
FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO
TIMOTHY.

The time when this epistle was written, constitutes the principal difficulty respecting it. It was long the general opinion, that the apostle wrote it soon after he was driven from Ephesus, on account of the tumult excited by Demetrius and his craftsmen. (Acts xix. 20—40. xx. 1.) *But, several very learned and respectable men have, in modern times, started objections against this opinion, which they think insurmountable. There is no reasonable doubt, but that the Second Epistle to the Corinthians was written during the apostle's abode in Macedonia, after he came thither from Ephesus. But, it is evident that Timothy was with him when he wrote it; for his name is inserted in the superscription. How then, say they, could he have been left at Ephesus, and entreated to abide there?* (i. 3.) *'And as to the only solution of the difficulty, which can be 'thought of, viz. that Timothy might follow so soon after, as to be with the apostle in Macedonia, when he 'wrote his epistle to the Corinthians; that supposition is inconsistent with the terms and tenour of the epistle 'throughout. For the writer speaks uniformly of his intention to return to Timothy at Ephesus, and not of 'his expecting Timothy to come to him in Macedonia.* (iii. 14, 15. iv. 13.) *Therefore I concur with 'Bishop Pearson, in placing the date of the epistle, and the history referred to in it, at a period subsequent to 'St. Paul's first imprisonment, and consequently subservient to the æra, up to which the Acts of the Apostles 'brings his history.'* (Paley.) *This is a fair statement of the main objection; though some things, of inferior moment, will require a little attention. It may, however, be questioned, whether the conclusion here deduced, does not lie open to still more insuperable objections. Some regard may be due to the total silence of the scripture, as to any subsequent visit of the apostle to Ephesus, and his departure thence to Macedonia. It is indeed allowed, that during his imprisonment at Rome, he mentions in his epistles, a purpose of visiting several places, in the eastern regions.* (Phil. ii. 14. Philem. 22. Heb. xiii. 19. 23.) *And in his second epistle to Timothy, it appears, that he had been at several places in the neighbourhood of Ephesus. Still, however, there is no intimation that he visited Ephesus. He observes, in the close of this epistle, that he had sent Tychicus to Ephesus; which may imply, that he had not gone thither himself. Indeed whether it be allowed, according to historical records, not very satisfactory, that he hastened from Crete to Rome, hearing accounts which induced him to think that his presence there was necessary; or whether his persecutors seized on him, and conveyed him to Rome, in an unexpected manner; it seems evident that he was hurried out of these regions, before he had time to settle his several concerns, in the manner which he wished to have done.* (2 Tim. iv. 12—20.) *It might also be brought as an objection to this opinion, that Timothy, after the conclusion of St. Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, must, on any computation, have been above thirty years of age; and though, at that time of life, the exhortation to flee youthful lusts might not be unreasonable;* (2 Tim. ii. 22;) *yet the caution, "Let no man despise thy youth," seems not so consistent. But, the grand difficulty arises from the words of the apostle to the Ephesian elders at Miletus: "And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more." It is evident, that the persons present understood this, not as a conjecture, or as 'a desponding inference,' but as a prediction: when the apostle perceived the overwhelming sorrow which it had excited in them, he neither retracted nor qualified it: and it seems unquestionable that the historian records it as a prophecy.* (Notes, Acts xx. 25—38.) *The words 'Ye all, &c.' confine the interpretation to the persons present: the prediction therefore would be exactly fulfilled, though the apostle visited many places in that neighbourhood; nay, though he purposed, (which is not likely,) to visit Ephesus; provided he did not actually go thither, or meet any of the elders, to whom he gave the charge at Miletus. It can hardly be supposed, that after an absence of* *perhaps rather more than ten years, the apostle revisiting Ephesus, found that all the elders whom he had addressed at Miletus were dead. But, except on this very improbable supposition, or on that of the words before adduced being a mere conjecture, in which the event proved the apostle to have been mistaken, we must adhere to the old opinion, that this epistle was written immediately after the apostle had left Ephesus to go into Macedonia; because it is on every other supposition, absolutely certain, that he never after left Ephesus to go into Macedonia. But let us next consider whether the objections above so cogently stated, against the ancient opinion, may not be satisfactorily answered. The apostle must have spent some considerable time in Macedonia, after he left Ephesus, and before he went to Corinth; for "he went over those parts, and gave them much exhortation."* (Acts xx. 2.) *Now it is not in the least improbable, that unforeseen circumstances might induce Timothy to leave Ephesus sooner than either he or the apostle had intended. The virulence of the persecutors might drive him thence, or he might need some counsel and instruction, in respect of the false teachers, or on some particulars which he had learned concerning the state of the church.—Various circumstances, indeed, might render it inexpedient for him to continue at Ephesus, according to the plan at first formed. On the other hand, it is probable the apostle wrote this epistle as soon as he arrived in Macedonia; and at that time he might fully purpose, and confidently hope, to come to Timothy at Ephesus, and yet be disappointed.—Thus, he had once and again purposed to return to Thessalonica, "but Satan hindered him."* (1 Thes. ii. 18.) *Thus he had seen cause to alter his plan, in respect of going to Corinth, even after he had given some intimations of it.* (Notes, 2 Cor. i. 15—18.) *It may not improbably be conjectured that the apostle, when he left Ephesus, expected that Timothy would abide there till he had accomplished his business in Macedonia and Achaia; and that he should be enabled to go to him at Ephesus, as he took his voyage to Jerusalem with the contributions of the Churches; but, having been induced, by the malicious designs of the Jews, to go from Corinth through Macedonia, so much time had elapsed, that he found it necessary to sail* past *Ephesus, lest he should not arrive at Jurusalem by the feast of Pentecost. This might derange one part of his plan, and the departure of Timothy from Ephesus would defeat another.—As the difficulties on this side seem to me far less than those on the other, I adhere, though with diffidence, to the ancient opinion, and shall comment on the Epistle accordingly. The history in the Acts of the Apostles, implies that Timothy continued with the apostle during his progress through Macedonia, and his continuance at Corinth; and that he returned with him through Macedonia into Asia. But Timothy is not afterwards mentioned as accompanying the apostle either to Jerusalem, or in his subsequent imprisonment at Cesarea, or in his voyage to Rome; and it is probable that he abode in Asia, and going with the elders of Ephesus, when they parted from the Apostle, he settled at that city for some years, according to the ancient records of the church concerning him.—But when four years, or nearly, had passed, it seems that he went to the apostle at Rome, and was imprisoned with him, but was soon set at liberty, and sent to Philippi.* (Phil. ii. 19. Heb. xiii. 23.)—*In respect to Timothy, it is sufficient to refer to the account before given of his appointment to be St. Paul's companion in travel.* (Notes, Acts xvi. 1—3.) *Having been trained up under the apostle's immediate care, he imbibed, in an extraordinary degree, his spirit and principles, and was peculiarly beloved by him.—Having been suddenly driven from Ephesus, St. Paul had left Timothy behind him to settle the concerns of that church in the best manner that he could; and wrote this epistle to him for his direction in so doing.—Whether the above conjecture (for we have no authentic records to direct us,) of Timothy's return to Ephesus, and residence there, be well grounded, or not, these directions would not be in vain; for the substance of them would be equally applicable, in any other church to which he might be sent, or in which he might have resided.—Indeed, it does not appear that the apostle intended to give Timothy instructions, exclusively, or even principally, respecting the Ephesian church; but rather general counsels for his conduct in the churches of Christ; and for all others, when called to act in similar circumstances.—The epistle contains cautions against false teachers; directions concerning the worship of God, and the behaviour of believers; the character and conduct to be expected in bishops and deacons, and their families; exhortations to Timothy concerning his private and public behaviour, especially in ordaining ministers, censuring offenders, and settling the other affairs of the church; admonitions against several sins and temptations; solemn charges to faithfulness, and various doctrinal and practical matters interwoven with them. This and the two following epistles are peculiarly replete with instruction to ministers, and should be continually studied and meditated on by all who bear that sacred character.—The postscript dates the epistle from Laodicea, but it is almost certain that the apostle had never yet visited that city.* (Col. ii. 1.)

CHAP. I.

The apostle salutes Timothy, 1, 2; *reminds him for what purpose he was left at Ephesus.* 3. 4; *shows, that the end of the commandment is love, from a pure heart, a good conscience, and unfeigned faith,* 5; *from which some having swerved, in attempting to teach the law, had perverted it,* 6, 7. *The law is good; but is intended to condemn transgressors,* 8—10; *which accords with the Gospel also,* 11. *With humble thankfulness, the apostle speaks of his own conversion, and the encouragement given by it to sinners in every age; and ascribes glory to God,* 12—17. *He charges Timothy to maintain faith and a good conscience; and mentions some who had renounced the truth, and whom he had delivered unto Satan,* 18—20.

PAUL, [a] an apostle of Jesus Christ, [b] by the commandment of [c] God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, *which* [d] *is* our Hope;

2 Unto [e] Timothy, [f] *my* own son in the faith: [g] Grace, mercy, *and* peace, from God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord.

3 As I besought thee to abide still [h] at Ephesus, [i] when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest [k] charge some that they teach no other doctrine,

4 Neither give heed [l] to fables and [m] endless genealogies, which minister [n] questions, rather than [o] godly edifying which is in faith: *so do.*

5 Now [p] the end of the commandment is [q] charity, out of [r] a pure heart, and *of* [s] a good conscience, and *of* [t] faith unfeigned:

a *See on.* Rom. i. 1. 1 Cor. i. 1.

b ii. 7. Acts ix. 15. xxvi. 16—18. 1 Cor. ix 17. Gal. i. 1. 11. 2 Tim. i. 11 Tit i. 3.

c ii. 3. iv. 10. Ps. cvi. 21. Is xii 2. xliii 3 11 xlv. 15 21 xlix 26. lx 16. lxiii. 8. Hos xiii 4. Luke i. 47. ii. 11. 2 Tim. i. 10. Tit. i. 3. ii. 13. iii 4 6 2 Pet. i. 1 1 John iv 14. Jude 25.

d Rom. xv. 12. 13. Col i 27 2 Thes. ii. 16. 1 Pet. i. 3. 21.

e *See on.* Acts xvi. 1—3. 1 Thes. iii. 2.

f 18. 1 Cor iv 14—17 Phil. ii. 19—22. 2 Tim i. 2. ii 1 Tit i. 4

g *See on* Rom. i. 7. 2 Tim. i. 2. Tit. i. 4. 1 Pet. i 2.

h Acts xix. 1. &c.

i Acts xx. 1—3.

k iv. 6 11. v. 7. vi. 3 17. Gal. i. 6, 7. Eph iv. 14. Col. ii. 6—11. Tit. i. 9—11. 2 John 7. 9, 10. Rev ii 1, 2. 14 20.——l iv 7. vi. 20. 2 Tim ii. 16—18 iv 4. Tit i 14 2 Pet. i 16.——m Tit. iii. 9.——n vi 4, 5. 2 Tim ii. 23 ——o iii. 16. vi 3. 11 2 Cor. ix 12. vii 9, 10 Eph. iv. 12—16. Tit i 1. Heb. xiii. 9 ——p Rom. x. 4 xiii. 8—10 Gal v. 13, 14. 22. 1 John iv. 7—14 ——q Mark xii. 28—34. Rom. xiv 15. 1 Cor. viii 1. 3 xiii xiv. 1. 1 Pet. iv. 8 2 Pet. i. 7 ——r Ps xxiv 4. li 10. Jer. iv. 14 Matt v. 8. xii. 35 Acts xv. 9. Jam. iv 8 1 Pet i 22 1 John iii 3.——s 19 iii 9 Acts xxiii. 1. xxiv. 16. Rom. ix 1. 2 Cor i. 12. 2 Tim i. 3 ii. 22 Tit i. 15. Heb ix. 14. x. 22. xiii. 18 1 Pet. iii. 16. 21.

t Gal. v. 6. 2 Tim. i. 5. Heb. xi 5, 6. 1 John iii. 23

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. In this address, Paul called himself an apostle of Christ, by the commandment of God our Saviour; by which, in this connexion, the Person of the Father seems intended, as purposing salvation for sinners, forming the plan of it, and giving his own Son to be, in human nature, their Saviour; but the Lord Jesus was joined in granting this commission, as being one with him in essence, authority, and counsel. Him the apostle called "our Hope;" as all his hope of salvation and eternal happiness was fixed upon the Person and atonement of Christ. He also addressed Timothy as his *own* son in the faith, or his *genuine* Son. In all probability, he was the instrument of Timothy's conversion; he had, as it were, educated him in the Gospel; and Timothy reverenced him and served with him in his ministry, as a dutiful son with a loving father. From the exuberance of his love to Timothy, he added the word "mercy," to his usual salutation; or perhaps because his peculiar trials and services would require peculiar consolations, from the compassion and mercy of the Lord towards him. *God our Saviour.* (1.) 'The Father saves us, as reconciled to him in the Son; and the 'Son saves, as reconciled in his flesh.' (*Beza.*)

V. 3, 4. The apostle left Timothy at Ephesus, when he went thence into Macedonia, (*see Preface;*) that he might solemnly and constantly charge certain persons not to teach any other doctrines than what he had done. The Judaizers would be sure to take the opportunity of St. Paul's absence to propagate their tenets; and it seems that he knew them to be zealous for the traditions and fabulous pretences of the elders and Pharisees, as well as for the Mosaic law. But the Ephesians were warned not to take notice of such fables, or of their genealogies, which related to their descent from Abraham, or the patriarchs, by which they imagined themselves entitled to peculiar privileges. These genealogies led to endless intricacies and perplexities, and to many difficult questions and useless controversies; and, at last, they rather induced a carnal confidence and a self-confident temper, than any improvement in godliness of heart and life; which could only be maintained and increased by faith in the truths and promises of God, through Jesus Christ. This charge therefore was to be steadfastly observed by him. Some imagine, that "endless genealogies," denotes the extravagant, and indeed unintelligible, notions of the Gnostics and other heretics, about the origin of the world; but the context seems to determine in favour of the interpretation before given; and it may well be questioned, whether these heretics had, at so early a period, openly propagated their incoherent and profane jargon. *Godly edification,* or "Edification of God;" 'because it hath God for its Object and 'End, as tending to the true knowledge and right worship 'of God: it is efficiently from him, and tendeth highly to 'his glory.' (*Whitby.*)

V. 5. The word rendered commandment, is, by some, explained of the moral law, the scope and substance of which is charity or love, towards God and man. Others understand it to mean the message of God to men by the Gospel; the end of which is to restore fallen sinners to the love required by the law; and this better suits the context: but others explain it of the charge given to Timothy by the apostle. This seems to be the right interpretation: and thus it had reference both to the law as the rule of duty, and to the grand design of the Gospel. The charity, or love, here spoken of, must arise out of a pure heart, or the affections of the soul, as cleansed by renewing grace from the love and pollution of sin, and from carnal enmity and selfishness, (1 *Pet.* i. 22:) and a "good conscience," or one well informed concerning the will of God, and made tender and active by divine grace, as well

6 * From which some having [u] swerved have [x] turned aside unto vain jangling;

7 Desiring [y] to be teachers of the law; [z] understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

8 But we know that [a] the law *is* good, if a man use it [b] lawfully;

9 Knowing this, that [c] the law is not made for a righteous man, but for [d] the lawless and [e] disobedient, for [f] the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and [g] profane, for [h] murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for [i] manslayers,

10 For [k] whoremongers, for them that [l] defile themselves with mankind, for [m] men-stealers, [n] for liars, for [o] perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is [p] contrary to sound doctrine;

11 [q] According to the [r] glorious Gospel of [s] the blessed God, [t] which was committed to my trust.

* Or, *which some not aiming at.*
u vi 21. 2 Tim ii. 18. *Gr.*
x v. 15. vi. 4, 5. 20 2 Tim ii 23, 24. Tit. i. 10. iii 9.
y Acts xv. 1. Rom ii. 19–21 Gal. iii 2. 5. iv 21. v. 3. 4. Tit. i. 10, 11.
z vi 4. Is. xxix. 13, 14. Jer. viii. 8, 9. Matt. xv 14. xxi 27. xxiii 16—24. John iii. 9, 10. ix. 40, 41. 2 Tim iii. 7. 2 Pet ii. 12.
a Deut iv. 6—8 Neh ix 13 Ps xix. 7—10. cxix 96—105. 127, 128. Rom. vii. 12, 13. 16. 18 22 xii 2. Gal. iii 21
b 2 Tim. ii. 5.——c Rom. iv 13—16. v. 20. vi 14. Gal iii. 10—14. 19. v. 23.——d 2 Thes. ii. 8 *Gr.*——e Rom. i 30 Tit. i 16. iii. 3. Heb. xi. 31. *Marg.* 1 Pet ii. 7 iii. 20.
f 1 Pet. iv. 18.

g Jer xxiii 11. Ez. xxi 25. Heb xii. 16.
h Lev xx. 9. Deut. xxvii 16. 2 Sam. xvi. 11. xvii. 1—4 2 Kings xix. 37 2 Chr. xxxii. 21. Prov. xx 20. xxviii 24. xxx. 11. 17 Matt x. 21
i Gen. ix. 5, 6. Ex. xx. 13. xxi. 14 Num xxxv. 30—33. Deut. xxi. 6—9 Prov. xxviii 17. Gal. v 21. Rev. xxi. 8. xxii. 15.
k Mark vii. 21, 22. 1 Cor. vi 9, 10. Gal. v 19—21. Eph. v. 3—6. Heb. xiii 4——l Gen. xix. 5. Lev. xviii. 22 xx. 13. Rom i 26, 27. Jude 7.——m Gen. xxxvii. 27 xl 15. Ex. xxi. 16. Deut. xxiv. 7. Rev. xviii. 13.——n John viii 44. Rev. xxi 8. 27 xxii 15. o Ex xx. 7 Ez xvii. 16—19. Hos. iv. 1, 2. x 4 Zech v 4 viii. 17 Mal iii 5 Matt v. 33—37.——p vi. 3. 2 Tim. i 13 iv. 3 Tit i. 9: ii. 1.——q Rom. ii 16.——r Ps cxxxviii. 2. Luke ii. 10, 11 14. 2 Cor. iii. 8—11 iv. 4. 6. Eph. i. 6 12. ii. 7. iii. 10 1 Pet i. 11, 12. s vi 15——t ii 7. vi 20. 1 Cor. iv 1, 2 ix. 17. 2 Cor. v. 18—20. Gal. ii. 7. Col. i. 25. 1 Thes ii. 4. 2 Tim. i. 11. 14. ii. 2. Tit. i. 3.

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as purged from guilt by the blood of Christ; that so the possessor might be influenced to act conscientiously in his whole conduct. It must also come from "unfeigned faith," or a sincere belief of revealed truths, and a reliance on the merits of Christ, and the promises of God through him. This faith, working by love, purifying the heart, and producing a good conscience, constituted the substance of what the apostle ordered Timothy to give in charge to the Ephesian teachers; because it comprised the grand essentials of evangelical religion. The several characteristics of charity or love, here given, admirably distinguish it from the spurious charity, now the favourite virtue of the world. It is not the natural growth of the human heart, but exists only in a heart *purified* by divine grace. It is consistent with, and grows out of, a *good conscience*, not sacrificing truth and common sense, as well as conscience, to the phantom of liberality: it springs from *faith*, instead of being independent of it and superseding it.

V. 6, 7. From this love, and purity, and conscientiousness, some persons had swerved or deviated, out of zeal for external distinctions, legal observances, and human traditions; thus they turned aside from the faith also, and got engaged in vain janglings and angry controversies, about doubtful points of small consequence. For they were desirous of being teachers of the law, or doctors of the law, (the name frequently given to the principal Scribes,) and to exercise that office among Christians, in order to acquire a reputation for learning, and to be called Rabbi; but they "neither understood what they said, nor whereof "they affirmed." They declaimed, in a loose and perplexed manner, upon general topics; not understanding the spiritual nature and uses of the moral law, which they pretended to explain, nor the typical import of those abrogated ceremonies which they enforced.

V. 8—11. The apostle, and, indeed, all competent ministers and established Christians, knew that the law was good in itself, or for its intended purposes, provided a man used it *lawfully*, according to its real import, and the design of the great Law-giver. The moral law is holy, just, and good, resulting from the nature of God and man, and men's relations to him and to each other. Even the ceremonial law had a relative goodness, for the time, as typical of Christ and the Gospel; and the entire Mosaic dispensation was good, as separating Israel from other nations, affording them the means of grace, and introducing the Christian economy. But to enforce the Mosaic law on Christians, or to teach them to depend on their own obedience to any part of it for justification, was contrary to the real meaning of the law itself, and the intention of the Law-giver. It was evident, even from the books of Moses, when properly understood, that "Christ "was the end of the law for righteousness to every be- "liever;" and that the strict demands and awful sanction of the law itself, were intended to show the Israelites that they could not be justified by it, but must live by faith in the promised Saviour. As then believers were righteous persons in God's appointed way, the law was not *enacted against* them. As with respect to laws in general, so with respect to the divine law, it was not made to coerce the well-disposed subject, but the ill-affected. Its design, (as far as it is *penal*,) is to restrain and condemn the wicked, not to hold the humble in servile bondage by its curse; though it will be, of course, the rule of their conduct and the standard of their duty. "The law is not made against "the righteous." This seems a fair translation, and certainly is the meaning of the words. "If a man use it law- "fully;" 'that is,' says Theodoret, 'if he comply with 'the scope of it, which is to bring him to Christ; for 'against such there is no law condemning them: but it 'lies against the lawless to condemn them.' (*Whitby.*)— After the general terms of lawless and disobedient, which relate to the disregard and contempt of God's commandments, as manifested in the outward conduct of "ungodly "and sinners," which seem to denote men's neglect of their duties to God and their neighbours; and "unholy "and profane," which may refer to the gross sensuality and debauchery of multitudes, and that daring impiety commonly connected with it; the apostle enumerates some particular crimes of the most atrocious nature. Doubtless, numerous examples of them were found among the Gentiles, and some perhaps among the bigoted Jews, who depended on the law, and yet scandalously broke it. (*Rom.* ii. 12—29.) "Men-stealers," are inserted among these daring criminals, against whom the law of God directed its awful curses. These were persons, who kidnapped men to sell them for slaves; and this practice seems inseparable from the other iniquities and oppressions of slavery; nor can a *slave-dealer* easily keep free from this criminality, if indeed 'the receiver be as bad as the thief.' They who 'make war, for the inhuman purpose of selling the van-

12 And [u] I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, [x] who hath enabled me, for that he [y] counted me faithful, [z] putting me into the ministry;

13 Who [a] was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: [b] but I obtained mercy, [c] because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief.

14 And [d] the grace of our Lord was [e] exceeding abundant, [f] with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

u John v. 23. Phil. ii 11. Rev. v. 9—14. vii. 10—12.
x 2 Cor. iii 5, 6. iv. 1. xii. 9, 10. Phil. iv. 13. 2 Tim. iv. 17
y Acts xvi. 15. 1 Cor. vii 25.
z Acts ix. 15. *See on,* 11
a Acts viii. 3. ix. 1. 5. 13 xxii. 4. xxvi. 9, 10. 1 Cor. xv 9. Gal. i. 13. Phil. iii 6.
b 16. Hos. ii. 23. Rom. v. 20, 21. xi. 30, 31. Heb. iv. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 10.
c Num. xv. 30. Luke xii 47. xxiii. 34. John ix. 39—41. Acts iii 17. xxvi. 9. Heb vi. 4—8. x 26—29 2 Pet. ii. 21, 22.——d Acts xv. 11. Rom xvi. 20. 2 Cor. viii 9. xiii. 14 Rev. xxii. 21
e Ex. xxxiv 6. Is. lv. 6, 7. Rom v. 15. 20. 1 Cor. xv. 10. Eph. i. 8. 1 Pet. i. 3.
f Luke vii. 47—50. 1 Thes. v. 8. 2 Tim. i. 13. 1 John iv. 10.

15 This *is* [g] a faithful saying, and [h] worthy of all acceptation, [i] that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; [k] of whom I am chief.

16 Howbeit, [l] for this cause [m] I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth [n] all long-suffering, [o] for a pattern to them which should hereafter [p] believe on him to life everlasting.

g 19. iii. 1. iv. 9. 2 Tim. ii. 11 Tit. iii. 8. Rev. xxi. 5 xxii 6
h John i. 12. iii. 16, 17. 36. Acts xi. 1. 18 1 John v. 11, 12.
i Matt. i. 23. ix. 13. xviii. 11 xx. 28 Mark ii. 17. Luke v 32 xix. 10 John i. 29. xii. 47. Acts iii. 26 Rom. iii. 24—26. v. 6. 8—10. Heb. vii. 25. 1 John iii. 5. 8. iv. 9, 10 Rev. v. 9.
k 13. Job xlii. 6 Ez xvi. 63 xxxvi. 31, 32. 1 Cor. xv. 9 Eph. iii. 8 ——l Num. xxiii. 23. Ps. xxv. 11 Is. i. 18 xliii. 25. Eph. i 6. 12 ii. 7 2 Thes. i. 10 ——m *See on,* b 13. 2 Cor. iv. 1.——n Ex xxxiv 6 Rom. ii. 4, 5. 1 Pet. iii. 20. 2 Pet. iii 9. 15.——o 2 Chr. xxxiii. 9—13. 19 Is. lv. 7. Luke vii 47. xv. 10 xviii. 13, 14. xix. 7—9 xxiii 43. John vi. 37. Rom. v. 20 Heb. vii 25.——p John iii. 15, 16 36. v. 24. vi. 40 54. xx. 31. Rom. v 21. vi 23. 1 John v 11, 12.

‘quished for slaves, as is the practice among African ‘princes, are really *man-stealers.* And they, who, like ‘African traders, encourage their unchristian traffick, by ‘purchasing that which they know to be thus unjustly ac‘quired, are partakers in their crimes.’ (*Macknight.*) The clause should have been, ‘know, or have reason to suspect.’ The apostle did not mean, that none but persons of so infamous a character lay under the curse of the law; but that it was directed against all other practices, that were contrary to sound doctrine, or the salutary nature and tendency of the Christian revelation. According to this every impenitent sinner, every man who allowed himself in the practice of any known transgression, remained under the covenant and curse of the law. This accorded to the Gospel of the glory of God, (as intrusted to the apostle,) by which he displayed all his perfections in the most honourable and harmonious manner, by saving believers from their sins, as well as from wrath: for, being “the “blessed God,” the Perfection and Source of felicity, as well as of holiness, he had devised to render fallen men partakers of his happiness, by renewing them to the participation of his holiness.

V. 12—14. The consideration, that the Gospel of the blessed God had been intrusted to him, awakened in the apostle's mind, the affection of humble admiring gratitude, and he broke forth into adoring thanks to Christ Jesus, for his distinguished mercy to him, both by conferring on him abundantly miraculous powers, and by enduing him richly with the courage, resolution, and patience of faith, hope, and love. Thus he had enabled him and qualified him for this honourable service; and had accounted him a faithful person, fit to be employed as his steward and ambassador; which he had evinced, by putting him into the sacred ministry, and owning him as his apostle. This was, in all respects, most astonishing grace; seeing he had before been a most daring blasphemer of his name, and had compelled others to blaspheme; he had furiously persecuted Christ's disciples, and most injuriously haled them to prison, with bitter sarcasms and reproaches, and sought to put them to death, from entire enmity to the name and cause of their Lord! But, though his conduct had been so aggravated, he had obtained mercy: for his sins were not absolutely unpardonable, because he had perpetrated them “ignorantly in unbelief;” whereas, if his knowledge had been greater, and if his malice had been exerted against the full convictions of his own conscience, he would have been given up to final impenitence. His ignorance and unbelief, indeed, amidst such abundant means of information and conviction, were the result of a self-sufficient, obstinate, and contemptuous prejudice against the truth; yet he “verily thought, that he ought “to do many things against the name of Jesus,” and was in no sense convinced that he was the Messiah: but there were others, who were hurried on by malice, ambition, and selfishness, to act in direct opposition to the dictates of their own consciences, and thus to “sin against the “Holy Spirit,” by maliciously and wilfully ascribing his undeniable operations to human imposture, or satanical influence. It is remarkable, that many persons have supposed Paul's proud and wilful ignorance, and his consequent unbelief, (two sins, in themselves deserving of divine wrath, though in his circumstances they *just* preserved him from the unpardonable sin,) to have been a kind of meritorious cause of his obtaining mercy; especially when joined with *his sincerity* in opposing the Gospel. They imagine, that in some manner or measure he deserved mercy more than any who are left to perish. This they must mean, if they mean any thing to the purpose: for, though his guilt might be less than that of some Jews, who, sinning against clearer light and with more deliberate malice, were given up to final obduracy; yet they, who maintain the doctrines of grace, suppose that many perish in their sins, whose criminality is far less than his was; that he might most *justly* have thus been left to perish: and that no reason can *by us* be assigned for his salvation in preference to others, who had not committed the sin against the Holy Spirit; except the sovereign grace of God, “who hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, “and whom he will he hardeneth;” and that other reason, which the apostle himself next assigns, namely, “the praise “of the glory of that grace.” For he supposes, that he should have righteously perished, if the Lord had been extreme to mark and punish his sins: nay, if his grace and mercy had not been “exceedingly abundant,” beyond all expectation, estimation, or conception; not only, in that he was ready to forgive, bless, and employ him, when he repented, believed, and was prepared for obedience; but “in quickening him when dead in sin,” and so working faith and love to Jesus Christ in his heart, that he might be interested in him and his righteousness. (*Notes,* &c. *Eph.* ii. 1—10.)

V. 15, 16. The conversion, acceptance, and recon-

17 Now unto [q] the King eternal, immortal, [r] invisible, [s] the only wise God, [t] *be* honour and glory for ever and ever. [u] Amen.

18 This [x] charge I commit unto thee, [y] son Timothy, [z] according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them [a] mightest war a good warfare;

19 [b] Holding faith and a good conscience; [c] which some having put away, [d] concerning faith have [e] made shipwreck:

20 Of whom is [f] Hymeneus, and [g] Alexander; whom [h] I have delivered unto Satan, [i] that they may learn not to [k] blaspheme.

q vi. 15, 16 Ps x. 16. xlv 1. 6 xlvii. 6—8 xc 2. cxlv 13 Jer x. 10 Dan. ii. 44. vii. 14 Mic. v. 2. Mal. i 14. Matt vi. 13. xxv. 34 Heb. i. 8—13 Rev. xvii. 14 xix. 16 r John i. 18. Rom. i. 26. Col. i 15 Heb. xi 27. 1 John iv. 12 ——s Rom. xvi. 27. Jude 25.——t 1 Chr xxix. 11. Neh. ix 5. Ps xli. 13. lvii. 11. lxxii 18, 19 cvi. 48 Dan iv. 34 37. Eph iii. 20, 21 1 Pet v. 11. 2 Pet iii. 18. Rev. iv. 8—11. v. 9—14 vii. 12. xix. 1 6.————u *See on*, Matt. vi. 13. xxviii 20 x *See on*, 11. 12. iv. 14. vi. 13, 14. 20. 2 Tim. iv. 1—3.——y *See on*, 2. Phil. ii. 22. 2 Tim. i. 2. ii. 1. Tit. i. 4. Philem. 10 ———z iv. 14.

a vi. 12. 2 Cor x. 3, 4. Eph vi 12—18 2 Tim. ii. 3—5. iv 7 b *See on*, 5. iii. 9. Tit. i. 9. Heb. iii. 14. 1 Pet iii 15, 16. Rev iii 3, 8 10. c Phil iii. 18, 19. 2 Tim iii. 1—6. 2 Pet ii 1—3. 12—22 Jude 10—13. d iv. 1, 2 1 Cor. xi. 19 Gal. i 6—8 v. 4 2 Tim. iv. 4. Heb. vi. 4—6. 1 John ii. 19 ———e vi. 9. Matt. vii. 27.———f 2 Tim. ii 17.———g Acts xix 33 2 Tim. iv. 14, 15.——h Matt. xviii. 17. 1 Cor. v. 4, 5. 2 Cor x. 6. xiii 10.——i 1 Cor. xi. 32. 2 Thes. iii. 15. Rev. iii 19.———k Acts xiii. 45. 2 Tim. iii. 2. Rev. xiii. 1 5, 6.

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ciliation of so virulent a persecutor, should be considered as an illustration of the nature of the Gospel; and of the exceeding riches of the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. It was indeed a true "and faithful saying," authenticated by every evidence which proves Christianity to be "the word of God, who cannot lie;" and it was worthy to be received, with humble and thankful faith, by men of all nations; (as all are sinners, and none can be saved in any other way,) and as none are excluded from salvation who seek it in this way; "that Jesus," Emmanuel, the Son of God, the Messiah, "came into the world" voluntarily, and with the express design, and for the single purpose, of saving sinners. "The Word," who was God and was with God, the Creator and Upholder of all worlds, the Lord of all creatures, became flesh, that he might be the second Adam, the Surety of the new covenant, to fulfil all righteousness, and make an infinitely valuable atonement for sin; in order to his officiating as the Advocate of his people in heaven, and reigning over all worlds for their benefit. The only end of this was "the salvation of sinners," of every nation and description, from condemnation, sin, Satan, the world, and death: even all, without exception, who came to him by faith for this salvation. Of these sinners, Paul judged himself the chief: the greatest enemy of Christ, and the most deserving of divine vengeance, of all who ever were, or would be, saved by him. This seems the purport of the expression: but it is possible, that he supposed *his* actual crimes to be so numerous and enormous, that his guilt even exceeded that of those who had sinned more entirely against their own convictions, and so had been given up to final impenitency. Instead of imagining that there was something meritorious in his blind and obstinate sincerity, as some have averred, he considered himself as one selected on purpose, because he was more guilty than any other person in the world, (those only excepted, who had committed the unpardonable sin, if even they were excepted;) that in him, *first* or the *chief* sinner, Jesus Christ might exhibit, with the greatest lustre imaginable, that degree, in which he can bear with, and pardon, his most virulent enemies and the vilest of mankind: that so it might stand upon record to the end of time, for the encouragement of all others, in every age and nation, who believe in Christ, and rely on his merits and grace for the pardon of their sins, and the gift of eternal life; to prevent their being disheartened by a retrospective view of the number, nature, and heinousness of their crimes.

V. 17. Some expositors suppose this doxology to be addressed personally to Christ as God, because the apostle had before been speaking of him; but it seems rather to be addressed to the Godhead, without distinction of persons. The Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, three Persons in the unity of the Godhead, as the triune God of salvation, constitute the Object of all our worship, which person soever we immediately address. To God, as the King eternal, in every age and under every dispensation, the universal and everlasting, though invisible, Sovereign, the inexhaustible Source of all wisdom, he ascribed all the glory of his conversion, salvation, faithfulness, and usefulness; and he desired earnestly that God might be honoured, in all his perfections and wonderful works, by all rational creatures, for ever and ever. Amen. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 18—20. The apostle here referred to what he had before spoken. (3. 5. 11.) The trust committed to him by Christ, as his apostle, he had committed to his "son "Timothy;" he was encouraged to repose great confidence in him, not only by what he knew of his principles and character, but by entertaining hopes of him "according to certain prophecies," which inspired persons had uttered concerning him, before his appointment to the ministry; and he expected, that by meditating upon them he should he animated and instructed, in "warring a good "warfare," or rather "the good warfare," as a valiant soldier of Jesus Christ. This must be done, by maintaining and insisting upon both the faith of the Gospel, or its doctrines as uncorrupted and unmutilated, and a good conscience, or an universally conscientious conduct. These Timothy must be careful to connect, both in his own example, and in his preaching; for some professed Christians, having neglected to maintain and insist on a good conscience, had, after a time, renounced the faith also, and made ship-wreck of their whole religion; either by a total apostacy from their profession, or the most heretical corruptions of the Gospel. Of this number were Hymeneus and Alexander, with whom Timothy had doubtless been acquainted. (*Marg. Ref.*) These the apostle had deemed it needful openly to excommunicate, and cast out of the church, into the visible kingdom of Satan; that they might not blaspheme Christ, or disgrace his Gospel by their impious tenets. It is generally supposed, that some severe correction was also miraculously inflicted on them, which would tend to make them sensible of their guilt and danger, and subserve the charitable design of bringing them to repentance. (*Marg. Ref.*) We afterwards read of Hymeneus; and, probably, Alexander the coppersmith was the other person meant. (*Marg. Ref.*) It does not, however, appear, that either of them was recovered by the discipline awarded them. It has often been justly observed, that the severe censures, which the apostle inflicted on those, who had once been professors or ministers of Chris-

CHAP. II.

The apostle enjoins prayers and thanksgivings to be made for all men; especially for kings and rulers, 1—3*; as the mercy of God, and the mediation of Christ, made no distinction of rank or nation,* 4—6. *He declares his appointment, as the teacher of the Gentiles,* 7*: gives directions concerning prayer, and the modest apparel of women,* 8—10*; prohibits them to teach, and requires them to be in subjection,* 11, 12*; as the man was first created, and the woman was first seduced into sin,* 13, 14 *A promise concerning child-bearing,* 15.

tianity, and publicly recorded, with their names annexed, constitute a most conclusive proof, that he had no fear of their being provoked to disclose any secret, or give information of any evil practices, which they had witnessed among Christians. His conduct implied a public challenge to them in this respect; and was the genuine expression of conscious integrity, and the courage which springs from it. Some think, that Timothy was chosen to the ministry by the prophecies respecting him, (18;) and that this was the way in which the pastors and teachers in the newly planted churches were generally selected: but this opinion does not appear to be supported by sufficient proof.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—4.

Apostles, and other eminent ministers in every age, who have most evidently been commissioned by God our Saviour, and the Lord Jesus Christ, have had no other ground of hope, as to the salvation of their own souls, than what they possessed in common with their meanest brethren. In some respects they have even more needed "grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and "our Lord Jesus," than others; their temptations, trials, and difficulties, have been greater; they had the same evil nature with other men, and no more wisdom or strength in themselves than they; and even their most faithful and useful services needed mercy for their acceptance, as well as grace for their performance. He, however, who appointed them, was always ready to uphold and help them; and his strength was perfected in their weakness. It is of great importance for us to charge curious and conceited persons to preach no other doctrine than that of the scriptures; for Satan makes immense use of such teachers, to sow tares in the Lord's field, to multiply hypocrites, to deceive souls, to disturb the peace of the churches, to excite questions and contentions; and, in short, to put men upon any thing, that may take them off from "godly "edifying, which is in faith."

V. 5—11.

The design of the Gospel is not answered by speculation, and solving abstract questions, or giving heed to fables and endless disputation; but when sinners, through repentance towards God and faith in Christ Jesus, are brought to the habitual exercise of holy love, out of "a pure heart, a "good conscience, and faith unfeigned." All doctrines, ordinances, and forms, are just so far beneficial to us, as they are useful in producing this effect in our hearts and lives; and all that faith is dead, which does not thus influence men to love God, and each other, in a practical manner. But, alas! in how many ways do men swerve from this plain and simple statement of the truth, and turn aside unto vain jangling! Many called Christian ministers desire to be teachers of the law, knowing neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm; and thus a few fragments of morality are substituted in the place of the holy law and the blessed Gospel of God our Saviour! Others know not, or acknowledge not, that the "law is "good, when used lawfully;" and they declaim in so general a manner against the law and good works, that many conclude the commandments of God to be evil, or void of obligation in themselves! But believers derive great benefit from the holy law; and none have any thing to fear from it, but the lawless and disobedient, the ungodly and profane. We have all indeed deserved this condemnation: there is none righteous, no not one, except as made so by faith in Christ, and through his grace. It is allowed, that few in comparison have been guilty of actual murder, parricide, men-stealing, or perjury; that many are free from the guilt of fornication, adultery, and other still baser practices; yet the same corrupt nature is in us all; and our enmity against God, and ingratitude to him; our disposition to disobey and despise parental authority, to hate and quarrel with our neighbours, to please ourselves, regardless of their good and the glory of God; and a variety of polluted thoughts and affections, lying and vain words. and many other things contrary to sound doctrine, would expose us to the wrath of God, and justify him in our final condemnation. Unless, therefore, we are made righteous by faith in Christ, and really repent and forsake every sin, we are yet under the curse of the law, even according to the Gospel of the blessed God, preached by St. Paul; and at the same time unmeet to share the holy felicity of heaven.

V. 12—17.

It is peculiarly encouraging to recollect what manner of persons have been converted, pardoned, qualified, counted faithful, put into the ministry, and made the instruments of good to mankind. Several who before were blasphemers, persecutors, and injurious, have, in different ways, been thus employed on earth, and are now with holy Paul in heaven, celebrating the rich mercy and grace, by which they were made partakers of repentance, faith and love, and that precious blood, by which they were washed from all their sins. These, in their day, bore witness to that faithful saying, which we now would recommend to general acceptation; even that Jesus Christ came into the world

I * EXHORT therefore, that, [a] first of all, [b] supplications, prayers, intercessions, [c] *and* giving of thanks, be made for [d] all men;

* Or, *desire.* 2 Cor. viii 6. Eph iii. 13 Heb. vi 11.
a 1 Cor xv. 3.
b v. 5. Gen xviii. 23—32. 1 Kings viii. 41—43. Ps. lxvii 1 — 4. lxxii. 19. Matt. vi. 9, 10. Jam v 16.——c Rom. i. 8. vi. 17. Eph v. 20. Phil i. 3. 2 Thes. i. 3.——d 4 Acts xvii 30. 1 Thes iii 12. 2 Tim. ii. 24 Tit. ii. 11. iii. 2

2 For [e] kings, and [f] *for* all that are in † authority; [g] that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in [h] all godliness and honesty.

e Ezra vi. 10 Neh i. 11. Ps. xx 1—4. lxxii. 1 Jer xxix. 7
f Rom. xiii. 1. 1 Pet. ii 13. 14.
† Or. *eminent place.*
g Gen xlix. 14, 15 2 Sam xx. 19 Prov xxiv 21 Ec. iii 12, 13. viii 2—5 Rom. xii 18. 1 Thes iv 11 Heb xii. 14 ——h Luke i 6 ii. 25 Acts x. 22 xxiv 16. Phil. iv. 8. Tit. ii. 10—14. 1 Pet. ii. 9—13 2 Pet. i. 3—7

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to save sinners; and it always hath been greatly encouraging to trembling penitents, when the preachers of this rich grace were themselves evidently illustrations of their own doctrine; even chief sinners, yet pardoned and changed, sent to declare to others the long-suffering and mercy of Christ to them, as a pattern to all who should believe on him to everlasting life. Indeed, no man, with Paul's example before his eyes, can reasonably question the love and power of Christ to save him, whatever his sins have been, if he really desire and endeavour to trust in him, as the incarnate Son of God, who once died on the cross, and now reigns upon the throne of glory, in order to save all that come to God through him. For though some, having obstinately rebelled against the light, are given up to final impenitence; yet all, who penitently seek salvation by Christ, according to the Gospel, are most certainly clear of that sin, having committed their crimes, however atrocious, in ignorance and unbelief. Let us then seek and hope for this salvation; and in humble consciousness of our unworthiness, let us admire and praise the grace of God our Saviour; and ascribe to "the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, all honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen." May all, who are intrusted with the ministry, faithfully and valiantly "war the good warfare," with such weapons as are mighty, through God, to destroy Satan's strong-holds! May they, in their doctrine and examples, and all Christians in their experience and practice, "hold faith and a good conscience!" May all, who are tempted to put away a good conscience, and to abuse the Gospel, remember, that this is the old way of making shipwreck concerning faith also! And may Hymeneus and Alexander be as beacons, to warn others from such fatal rocks; and as monitors, to teach them not to blaspheme, and to caution them, "while they think they stand, to take heed lest they fall!"

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1. Proceeding in his charge to Timothy, the apostle exhorted and enjoined, that "first of all," as a matter of great importance, supplications, and prayers of every kind, suited to every emergency, and accompanied with thanksgivings for mercies received, should be made, especially in their public worship; not only in behalf of themselves, each other, and all their fellow-christians; but for all men, without distinction of nation, rank, or party; and without exception of their enemies and persecutors, from a spirit of genuine and expansive philanthropy. The litany of the church of England accordingly beseeches God 'to have mercy upon all men:' yet this scriptural petition has been censured, as inconsistent with submission to the sovereignty of God! But whatever St. Paul understood by "all men," *that* we understand by 'all men;' and we must pray God *to have mercy on them*, unless we mean to imprecate vengeance on them. The command, to "love our neighbour as ourselves," is our rule of conduct, and should dictate our prayers. God will hear our supplications for temporal benefits, or eternal salvation, in behalf of those on whom he sees good in his sovereign wisdom to bestow them; and in other cases, our prayer will return into our own bosom. But how can we pray for enemies and persecutors, (whom we cannot know to belong to "the election of grace;") without equally appearing to interfere with God's sovereignty? How can we pray for our children, relatives, or neighbours, or indeed for any unconverted person, or for those whom we are not sure are converted, without violating the same *imaginary* rule? The malignity of an apostate, indeed, may be so excessive, that it would not be proper to pray for him: (2 *Tim.* iv. 14. 1 *John* v. 16:) but such exceedingly rare exceptions to a general rule no ways interfere with our praying even for the salvation of all men, that now are, or ever shall, live on earth. This is no more than the Lord's prayer teaches us, (*Notes, Matt.* vi. 10;) and if there be any individual, for whom we cannot pray that the Lord would have mercy on him, and convert him, the inability must arise from sin, even the sin of not "loving our neighbours as ourselves." Nothing can tend more to perplex theological subjects, to prejudice men's minds against the doctrines of grace, nay, to bring them into odium and contempt; nothing can more narrow and harden the heart against the human species in general; than this method of making the secret decrees of God our rule of action, instead of adhering to his revealed will. We know not, and cannot know, who are elect, and who are not; we are bound to love all men, to pray for them, and to do them good; and then leave it to God to govern the universe in his sovereign wisdom, justice, and mercy, as he sees good. (*Note, Deut.* xxix. 29.)

V. 2. It was a proper expression of benevolence, for Christians to pray for all orders and conditions of men; and to interest themselves in the calamities and deliverances of their neighbours, of the community, and of any of the human species. This would soften the prejudices, and conciliate the favour of those around them; especially when they persevered in such supplications and thanksgivings, notwithstanding the persecutions which they endured. It would likewise tend very much to silence the accusations of those who charged them with disaffection to the civil government, and with being troublers of the city, if they not only behaved with quiet subjection to the laws, in all things consistent with their duty, and conscientiously paid tribute and custom; but if they were known to pray for "kings, and all in authority" over them; for their preservation, and success in all their undertakings, for the protection and peace of the community, and for all blessings upon their persons and families; and that they opposed no other weapons than these to the injuries which they suffered. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Rom.* xiii. 1—8.) The Ephesians were under the Roman emperor, who was a monster of tyranny and cruelty; but the

3 For [i] this *is* good and acceptable in the sight of [k] God our Saviour;

4 Who [l] will have all men to be saved, [m] and to come unto [n] the knowledge of the truth.

5 For *there is* [o] one God, [p] and one Mediator between God and men, [q] the Man Christ Jesus;

6 Who [r] gave himself a ransom for all, * to be testified [s] in due time.

7 Whereunto [t] I am ordained [u] a preacher, and an apostle, ([x] I speak the truth in Christ, *and* lie not,) [y] a teacher of the Gentiles [z] in faith and [a] verity.

[i] v 4. Rom. xii. 1, 2 xiv 18 Eph v 9, 10 Phil i 11 iv 18 Col i 10 1 Thes. iv 1 Heb. xiii. 16 1 Pet. ii 5. 20. [k] See on, i 1 Is xlv. 21. Luke i. 47 [l] Is xlv 22 xlix. 6 lv. 1 [illegible] xviii 23 32 xxxiii 11. Luke xiv 23 John iii. 16 17 vi 37 Rom. iii 29, 30. 2 Cor v 17 19. 1 Thes. ii. 15, 16 Tit. ii. 11 2 Pet iii. 9.——[m] Matt xxviii. 19. Mark xvi 15. Luke xxiv. 47. Rom x 12–15 Rev xiv. 6——[n] Is. liii. 11. Hab. ii 14 Luke i. 77. John xiv 6. xvii. 3. 2 Tim. ii. 25. iii. 7. Heb. x 26.——[o] Deut. vi 4 Is xliv. 6 Mark xii. 29–33 John xvii. 3. Rom. iii 29, 30 x. 12 1 Cor. viii. 6. Gal iii 20 Eph iv. 6——[p] Job ix. 33. Heb. vii. 25. viii 6. ix. 15. xii. 24——[q] Matt i. 23 Luke ii. 10, 11. John i. 14. 1 Cor xv. 45—47. Phil ii 6–8. Heb. ii 6–13. Rev i. 13.

[r] Job xxxiii. 24. Is. liii. 6. Matt. xx 28. Mark x. 45 John vi 51. x 15 2 Cor v. 14, 15 21. Eph. i. 7 v. 2 Tit. ii 14. Heb ix. 12 1 Pet. i. 18, 19 ii 24. iii 18. 1 John ii. 1, 2. iv 10 Rev i. 5. v. 9.

* Or *a testimony.*

1 Cor. i. 6. 2 Thes i. 10 2 Tim i 8. 1 John v. 11. 12——[s] vi. 15. Rom v 6. xvi. 26. Gal iv 4 Eph. i 10. iii 5. Tit i. 3——[t] *See on*, i 11, 12——[u] Ec. i 1, 2. 12. vii 27. xii. 8–10. Rom x. 14. Eph iii. 7, 8 2 Tim i. 11 2 Pet ii. 5——[x] *See on*, Rom . 9. ix. 1 2 Cor. xi. 31 Gal i. 20——[y] John vii 35 Acts ix. 15. xxii. 21. xxvi. 17. 18. 20 Rom. xi. 13 xv 16. Gal i 16 ii. 9——[z] Acts xiv. 27. Gal. ii. 16. iii. 9. [a] Ps. cxi. 7.

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apostle used the word "kings," in the plural number; whence we learn, that the Holy Spirit intended this direction for other places and ages, according to the different governments established in providence. All the kings and rulers on earth were at that time strangers or enemies to Christianity; so that no distinction, or exception, in this case, could be intended. These prayers were to be made, in order that the Christians might "lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty;" conscientiously attending on all their duties to God and man; without being molested, either by public calamities or persecutions. This object they were to aim at, and with this "quietness and security" to be satisfied. The disposition to lead a quiet, peaceable, and honest life, submitting to human authority, as far as consistent with godliness, would tend to procure them favour; and they might expect that God would answer their prayers, (so far as was good for them,) by inclining their rulers to tolerate and protect them.

V. 3, 4. The conduct above inculcated was good in itself, and acceptable to God our Saviour, as a fruit of faith and grace, and honourable to his name. For as he has provided for the salvation of mankind, without distinction of rank or nation; and can honourably, and will certainly, save every individual, who comes to him in his appointed way; in this sense, he is willing that all men should be saved; and it is his good pleasure, nay, his express and repeated command, that we should do all in our power to bring them "to the knowledge of the truth." The Gospel should be preached to every creature: we are required to assure all, whom we can address, that the Lord is able and willing to save any sinner who believes: Christ will say to numbers at the last day, "I called, and ye "refused;" "I *would* have gathered you, as a hen "gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would "not." As all men do not in fact "come to the know"ledge of the truth," which God wills in the same sense as "that all men should be saved:" so the difficulty, if there be any, presses equally on Calvinists and Arminians, so called, and even on such as deduce universal actual salvation from this text, and a few similar ones; for they cannot say, "that all men actually come to the "knowledge of the truth." If the clause, therefore, be explained to mean any thing more than the willingness of God to save all that believe, and his command, that we should preach to all men, and pray for all men, without distinction, it would follow, that he willed, or purposed, what he did not actually effect. But it seems equally improper to say, with many expositors, that "all men," signifies 'some of all sorts;' because it is obvious to answer, that it may with equal propriety be said, "he willeth that "all men should be damned;" for doubtless some of all nations, ranks, and orders, will be left to perish in their sins, "whereunto also they were appointed."

V. 5—7. As a further reason, why Christians ought to pray for all men, the apostle observed, that there was one God, the common Creator, Benefactor, and Lord of the whole human species: and as all had apostatized from him, and he had purposes of mercies towards them; so there was also "One Mediator between God and men, "even the man Christ Jesus;" which implies, that there is but one Mediator, and excludes the worship of all other intercessors. Jesus Christ is truly Man: and though the efficacy of his mediation and atonement is derived from the union of his divine nature with the human in his mysterious Person, yet his mediation between God and man is chiefly made by his human nature, in which alone he was capable of suffering and dying. The apostle designed to excite Christians to intercessory prayers; and he draws one argument for this end, from the relation which God himself and the great Mediator bear to those, in behalf of whom these supplications were to be offered. God, to whom they were to be presented, is the One God, the Creator of all men; and the Mediator, through whom they are presented, is the man Christ Jesus, united with us in the bond of one common nature;" "bone of our "bone, and flesh of our flesh." "One God," in this passage, does not denote the Person of the Father *exclusively*, but the Deity: the Manhood therefore of Christ intervenes between a just and holy God and our sinful souls; but then this Manhood is essentially and inseparably united to the Godhead, in the Person of the Son, who thus mediates between God his Father and men his brethren. This provision and appointment has been made and revealed, for the common benefit of the human race, both Jews and Gentiles; that all who will, may come, in this way, to the mercy-seat of a pardoning God, to seek reconciliation to him. This Mediator therefore gave himself "a ransom for all," as "the Lamb of God, who "taketh away the sins of the world;" that by the all-sufficient atonement of his death upon the cross and the redemption there made, a foundation might be laid for the hopes of sinners all over the earth, and that all who believe might actually be saved by it. No pious and considerate man will assert, that Christ so gave himself a ransom for all, as actually to intend the salvation of those who never believe in him; and that he thus failed of his purpose, and suffered in vain. On the other hand, there

8 [b] I will therefore that men [c] pray every where, [d] lifting up holy hands, [e] without wrath [f] and doubting.

9 In like manner also, [g] that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, [h] with shamefacedness and sobriety; [i] not with * broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;

10 But, (which becometh [k] women professing godliness,) [l] with good works.

b v 14. 1 Cor vii. 7 *Gr* Tit. iii. 8. c 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11, 12 Ps. cxxx 1, 2. Lam. iii. 55, 56. Jon. ii. 1, 2 Mal i. 11 Luke xxiii. 42, 43. John iv. 23, 24 Acts xxi 5.——d Job xvi 17 Ps xxvi 6 lxvi 18. cxxxiv. 2. Prov xv. 8. xxi. 27 Is i. 15 lviii. 7–11. Jer. vii. 9. 10 Mal i. 9, 10 Acts x. 2. 4. 31. Jam. iv. 8. 1 John iii 20 22.——e 1 Kings iii 11 Ps xxv. 13. Matt. v. 22–24. 44. vi. 12 14, 15. Mark xi 25. Luke xxiii. 34. Acts vi. 60. 1 Pet. iii. 7.——f Matt. xxi 21. Mark xi. 23, 24 Jam. i. 6–8.——g 1 Pet, iii 3–5.

h Prov vii. 10 Is. iii. 16. Tit ii 3–5 i Gen xxiv. 53. Ex. xxxv. 22, 23. 2 Kings ix. 30 Esth v. 1. Ps xlv. 13, 14 cxlix. 4. Prov. xxxi. 22. Is. iii. 18–24. lxi. 10. Jer ii. 32. iv. 30. Ez xvi. 9–16 Matt. vi. 28, 29. xi. 8——* Or, *plaited.* 1 Pet iii. 3.——k 1 Pet. iii. 3–5 2 Pet. iii 11——l v. 6–10. Prov xxxi 31 Acts ix. 36. 39 Eph. ii. 10. Tit. ii. 14. iii 8. 1 Pet. ii. 12 2 Pet. i. 6–8. Rev. ii 19.

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are but few, of those that limit such expressions to 'some 'of all sorts,' who do not allow the all-sufficiency of Christ's atonement; and admit that all men should be called on to believe in him, and that all who do believe will be saved by him. It is therefore most important, to determine that none will be saved by the ransom of Christ without true faith; that true faith is the gift of God, and the effect of regeneration; that "known unto God are "all his works, from before the foundation of the world;" and that all will certainly be saved, who were given unto Christ, and whom he especially intended to save, when he became the Surety of his people. These propositions are capable of clear scriptural proof; and when they are established, we may leave such expressions, as that here used, to bear in their most obvious import. Indeed, great wisdom and love are shown, in this general way of stating the truths of Christianity, as far more suitable to inquirers and unestablished persons, than a systematical arrangement would be. This ransom, once offered, was to be testified, in due time, to men of every nation: it was therefore incumbent upon every Christian to promote this great design, according to his opportunity and ability. Of this St. Paul was ordained a *herald* and an apostle, (in asserting which, he solemnly appealed to Christ, who had appointed him, as his heart-searching Judge, for the exact truth of what he had advanced;) so that he was now employed as a teacher of the Gentiles, especially in the doctrines and promises of the Gospel, in the nature of faith, and in the faithfulness of God to all his declarations and covenant-engagements, and in every part of his truth and will.

V. 8. According to the authority vested in him, the apostle enjoined, that Christians should "pray every where," according to the directions above given. The expression may indeed include their prayers in the closet, in the family, and in social meetings; but the chapter especially relates to the manner of conducting their public assemblies, in what place soever these were held: "for where "two or three are met together, there," says our Saviour, "I am in the midst of you." (*Marg. Ref.*) 'As the 'apostle is speaking of public prayer, his meaning, I 'suppose, is, that the men, and not the women, were to 'lead the devotion of the assembly.' (12.) (*Macknight.*) The antithesis between τȣς ανδρας, (not ανθρωπȣς) and τας γυναικας, in the next verse, the word itself, the article, and the connexion, "in like manner," combine in establishing this observation. The Gentiles had priestesses, as well as priests, not only to their goddesses, but to their gods also: but the Israelites were not allowed to conform to this practice. In like manner, women must not be ministers or preachers under the Christian dispensation. In order that men might do this with acceptance, they must in reverent adoration lift up "holy hands:" not satisfied with washing their hands, before they worshipped, according to the custom of the Jews, and, indeed, that of many Gentiles, but, taking care to keep them pure from all injustice and the practice of every sin. (*Marg. Ref.*) It was also necessary, that they should avoid all wrath and resentment, either against each other, or against their persecutors, that their prayers and intercessions might be the genuine dictates of enlarged good-will to all men, and not intermingled with any angry passions, whatever provocations might be given them. At the same time, they should not doubt the willingness of God, through Christ, to hear their prayers, notwithstanding all their former sins and present conscious unworthiness; or perplex themselves by vain reasonings or disputations, on the manner in which he would answer them.

V. 9, 10. In order to the proper regulation of religious assemblies among Christians, as well as their general conduct, the apostle furthermore enjoined, in the most decided manner, that the women should adorn themselves with modest apparel, suited to their station in life, and becoming that bashfulness and sobriety of manners, which would be expected from them; not copying the vain fashions of those women, whose attire was intended to render their persons attractive to beholders, and was at once an indication of the levity of their own minds, and suited to excite the passions of others. He required therefore, that they should not adorn themselves with broidered hair, gold, pearls, or expensive garments. This general rule may admit of some exceptions in the case of those whose superior rank occasionally requires it; the appearance of women in the places of worship is specially intended; and the exhortation implied that, whatever garments they wore, they must consider good works as their peculiar ornament, as became "women professing god"liness." Yet he doubtless meant it as a general rule, that Christian women should refuse conformity to the foolish fashions of a vain world in this respect; that they should choose to appear more plain and simple in their attire than others of their rank; that they should not waste time, or run into needless expense, in such empty decorations, but employ both in adorning themselves with good works: that decency, modesty, and sobriety, should be more consulted in their garments and appearance, than elegance and fashion; and finally, that ministers ought to teach these things to their congregations, as of great importance to the honour of the Gospel.—It has been well observed, that foppery and extravagance, as to dress *in men*, are most emphatically condemned by the apostle's silence about them: for this intimated, that surely *they* could be under no temptation to such a childish vanity!—'It is 'worthy to be noted by the women, that this precept 'ought not to be slighted by them, as of little moment, 'seeing it is so carefully inculcated by the two chief apostles,

[m] Gen. iii. 16. Esth. i. 20. 1 Cor. xi. 3. xiv. 34, 35. Eph. v. 22—24. Col. iii. 18. 1 Pet. iii. 1. 5, 6.

11 Let [m] the woman learn in silence with all subjection.

12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.

[n] Gen. i. 27. ii. 7. 18. 22. 1 Cor. xi. 8, 9.

13 For [n] Adam was first formed, then Eve.

[o] Gen. iii. 6. 13. 2 Cor. xi. 3.

14 And Adam was not deceived, [o] but the woman, being deceived, was in the transgression.

[p] Gen. iii. 15. Is. vii. 14. ix. 6. Jer. xxxi. 22. Matt. i. 21—25. Luke ii. 7. 10, 11. Gal. iv. 4, 5.
[q] Gen. iii. 16.
[r] *See on* i. 5.
[s] *See on*, 9. Tit. ii. 12. 1 Pet. iv. 7.

15 Notwithstanding [p] she shall be saved [q] in child-bearing, if they continue [r] in faith, and charity, and holiness, with [s] sobriety.

‘ of the Jew and Gentile; and the contrary is represented as a practice opposite to godliness.’ (*Whitby.*)

V. 11—14. (*Notes*, 1 *Cor*. xi. 2—16. xiv. 34, 35.) It has before been observed that this rule admitted of an exception in the case of those, who spoke by the Spirit of prophecy; and it may here be added, that it only related to public teaching. The women were required to be silent, with all subjection, in their religious assemblies; for the apostle, as Christ's representative, would not suffer women to teach, as that would be like usurping authority over the man; and therefore their willing subjection was to be shown, by silently receiving instruction. For the man was first created, and the woman of him, and for his benefit: so that it would be contrary to the original state of things at the creation, for the woman to usurp authority over the man. Moreover, the man was not deceived in the first instance; but the tempter prevailed against the woman, who was first in the temptation, and the seducer of the man. (*Notes*, &c. *Gen*. iii.) This consideration was suited to teach the women, that they should not affect authority, or presume to be public teachers.

V. 15. The sorrows and pains, attendant on child-bearing, were indeed a peculiar mark of the divine displeasure against the transgression of the first woman, and suited to bring it to the remembrance of her daughters in every age: yet they, who professed the Gospel of Christ, might be comforted by the hope of being supported and preserved through that trying time, and even of deriving benefit from all their sufferings: at least they might be sure, that there was no curse or wrath in it, provided they continued steadfast in the faith, and in love to Christ and his people, with holiness, purity, sobriety, and modesty.—Some suppose the apostle to have meant, that though sin first entered by the woman, whence all the pains and sorrows of child-bearing originated, yet, through those sorrows, One had come into the world, born of a woman, by whom all those would be saved, who continued in the faith: and indeed the original may well bear that interpretation, which is also very ancient. Eve, whom the apostle had just before mentioned, was thus addressed by her offended Creator: “I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception, in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children:” yet the preceding verse implied a promise of salvation through “the Seed of the woman,” for all believers, both men and women. (*Gen*. iii. 15, 16.) Eve herself is supposed to have been saved “through child-bearing,” or, by One descended from her, though the anguish of bearing children was denounced on her, as a peculiar punishment of her atrocious guilt; and thus her sorrow was turned into joy, her curse into a blessing. In like manner, her daughters, though involved with her in the sentence of bringing forth children with sorrow, would also share with her in the same salvation, joy, and blessing, through the promised Seed, if they copied her example of faith and obedience.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

It is a most important, though much neglected, duty, for Christians to pray and return thanks “for all men,” according to the different relations in which they stand to them, and as their circumstances require. Thus they may show their love to those, whom they cannot otherwise serve; and evince that they interest themselves in the happiness of mankind in general. And, not only in public, but in our families and closets, we should pray “for kings, and for all that are in authority;” both as guardians of the public tranquillity, and in respect of their temporal and eternal welfare: this will far more conduce to the continuance of our privileges, in being allowed, without molestation, “to lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty;” than any means, which men of restless spirits can employ. But, whatever effect our conduct in these things may have on our neighbours, it is good and acceptable in the sight of God, our “Saviour.” He hath no pleasure in the death of the “wicked, but that he should repent and live.” It is his will, that all who repent and believe in Christ should be saved: “he commands all men every where to repent,” and believe the Gospel; it is his will and pleasure, that we should use every means of drawing men's attention to the Gospel, that they may “come to the knowledge of the truth.” He is the One God of the whole earth, whom all men ought to worship and serve: and, as all have sinned and deserved wrath, he hath appointed “One Mediator between God and man, even the Man Christ Jesus,” his incarnate Son, “who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” May he ordain and qualify many preachers, like Paul, to teach the nations in truth and verity! For surely we ought to desire, that men should pray every where to God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Holy Spirit, “lifting up pure hands, without wrath and doubting.” In proportion as we learn thus to worship in spirit and truth, with reverence, holy love, pure zeal, and lively faith, we shall find our minds freed from narrow prejudices and resentment, and our benevolence towards all men greatly enlarged; and we shall more emphatically say to our heavenly Father, “Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.”

V. 9—15.

Whatever renders the Gospel respectable, contributes to

CHAP. III.

The office of a bishop is a good work, and the desire of it, as such, should be encouraged, 1. The qualifications required in bishops and deacons; with directions concerning their wives and children, 2—13. The apostle wrote these things to Timothy, (hoping to come to him soon,) to regulate his conduct in the church of God, 14, 15. The great mystery of godliness, 16.

THIS [a] *is* a true saying, if a man desire [b] the office of a [c] bishop, he [d] desireth a good work.

2 A [e] bishop then must be [f] blameless, [g] the husband of one wife, [h] vigilant, sober, * of good behaviour, [i] given to hospitality, [k] apt to teach;

a i 15. iv. 9 2 Tim. ii. 11. Tit. iii. 8
b 2-7. Acts i. 20. Phil i 1. Tit. i 7. 1 Pet. ii. 25.
c Acts xx 28. Heb xii 15. 1 Pet. iv. 15 *Gr.* v. 2.
d Prov xi 30. Luke xv. 10. Rom xi 13 Eph. iv. 12 1 Thes. v. 14. Jam v. 19, 20.
e Tit i. 6—9
f 10. Luke i. 6. Phil. ii. 15.
g iv. 3. v 9. Heb. xiii. 4 —— h Is lvi 10. 1 Pet iv. 7. v 8 —— * Or, *modest.* —— i Rom xii 13 Tit. i. 8 Heb xiii. 2 1 Pet iv. 9. —— k 2 Tim. ii. 24

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its success: and the modest, decent, and sober apparel of "women professing godliness," must therefore have this tendency. They should evince, that they are too much engaged in contemplating spiritual glories, to take pleasure in the vain and unseemly decorations of the triflers around them; that being adorned with good works is their chief distinction; and that they can make a better use of their time and money, than in curiously adjusting their attire, or purchasing costly ornaments. But, alas! in this trifling and expensive age, when almost all vie with their superiors in apparel, till distinction of rank is nearly lost, we too often find those, who come to the places where the word of God is preached, decorated as much beyond what they can properly afford, and in as unbecoming a manner, as they are who frequent the theatre! It would be well, if the professors of serious godliness were *wholly* exempt from this disgraceful vanity; or if they always spent as many hours in visiting the sick and poor, and as much money in relieving their distresses, as they do in uselessly decorating themselves and their children, after a manner unsuitable to their rank in life, and inconsistent with their profession. These are by no means trifles, or *pharsaical* impositions, as some pretend, but *apostolical* injunctions; and it should be considered, that, as raiment was only made needful by sin, so it is peculiarly unsuitable for those, who profess to believe the Bible, to be proud and vain of the very badge of their disgrace. The original creation of the man, and then the woman, and the entrance of sin by the latter, who being deceived was first in the transgression, concur in showing the reasonableness of that subjection, humility, and teachableness, prescribed in scripture to the woman, and the impropriety of her usurping authority over the man. But as the Gospel gives special encouragements to the woman, in respect of those sorrows which the entrance of sin has entailed on her, provided she continue in "faith and love, with holiness and sobriety;" so the consideration of those manifold sorrows, to which the female sex is subjected, should teach men to exercise their authority with the utmost gentleness, tenderness, and affection.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1. It has already been shown, that the word rendered *bishop* was at this time of the same import with that translated *elder*, or *presbyter;* (*Note, Acts* xx. 28:) for the charge, given by Paul to the Ephesian elders, is here supposed to have been subsequent to the writing of this epistle. The same is also proved, by the silence of the apostle concerning any other order than bishops and deacons. Indeed, it is evident, that the selection or appointment of an individual to be overseer of the elders or pastors, though very ancient, and probably apostolical, was not at this time in general use. It had been said, and it was true and worthy of special notice, that if a man desired, or earnestly longed for, the pastoral office, and, from love to Christ, to his flock, and to the souls of men, was ready to forego other prospects, and expose himself to hardships and perils, by devoting himself to that service, he sought to be employed in "a good "work," and his desire ought to be approved and countenanced, provided he was properly qualified.

V. 2. It is manifest that Timothy was supposed to be principally concerned in the choice of the bishops, being the apostle's deputy and representative: and accordingly, instructions are here given him how to fulfil this arduous charge in the proper manner; instructions no doubt intended to be useful in the highest degree, if duly regarded, to all others, in every age and place, on whom the same most important trust devolves. The apostle therefore showed, very particularly, what manner of persons these bishops or elders ought to be; that ambitious and improper desires after the sacred service might be repressed, and likewise that they who had been appointed to it might know how to behave in it. Whatever natural abilities, learning, elocution, or spiritual gifts, any man might possess, he must be considered as ineligible to this office, if he was not of a *blameless* character, and had not avoided scandalous vices, at least since his professed conversion to Christianity. He ought also to be "the husband of one "wife." Christ and the apostles expressly condemned polygamy, as well as divorces, except for adultery, (*Notes, Matt.* xix. 1—9. *Mark* x. 1—12. 1 *Cor.* vii. 1—3;) yet there was no direct command for a man, who had previously taken more wives than one, to put the others away when he embraced the Gospel; and such a requisition might have produced many bad consequences in domestic life, and increased the opposition of the civil powers to the preaching of Christianity. But the rule, that no man, however qualified in other respects, should be admitted into the pastoral office, who had more than one wife, or who had put away one to take another, tended to show the impropriety of polygamy, and divorces on frivolous pretences, and their inconsistency with the Christian dispensation, and concurred with other things to bring it into total disuse in the Christian church; yet without violence and confusion. To argue hence, as it has been done, polygamy was lawful for other Christians, else it would not have been needful to restrict pastors from it, would prove, if it proved any thing, that it was also lawful and

* Or, *Not ready to quarrel, and offer wrong, as one in wine.*

3 * Not [l] given to wine, [m] no striker, not [n] greedy of [o] filthy lucre; but [p] patient; not [q] a brawler, [r] not covetous;

4 One that [s] ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection [t] with all gravity:

5 (For [u] if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of [x] the church of God?)

6 Not † a novice, [y] lest, being lifted up with pride, he fall into [z] the condemnation of the devil.

l Lev. x. 9. Is. v. 11, 12 xxviii 1. 7 lvi. 11, 12. Ez. xliv. 21 Mic. ii. 11. Matt. xxiv. 45—51. Luke xii 42—46. xxi. 34—36 Eph v 18 Tit. i. 7. ii 3.——m 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25. Tit i. 7.——n 8. Prov i. 19. xv. 27 Is. lvi. 11. Jude 11.——o 1 Sam viii 3 Tit. i. 7. 11. 1 Pet v. 2.——p vi 11. Ec. vii. 8. 1 Thes v. 14 2 Tim ii. 24. Rev. i. 9——q Tit iii 2. Jam. iv 1 *Marg*——r 1 Sam. ii 15—17. 2 Kings v. 20—27. Jer. vi. 13 viii 10. Mic. iii 5. 11 Mal i. 10. Matt. xxi. 13 John x. 12 xii 5, 6 Acts viii 19—21 xv. 33. Rom. xvi. 18. 2 Pet. ii. 3. 15. Rev. xviii. 11—13.——s 12. Gen. xviii. 19. Josh. xxiv. 15. Ps. ci. 2—8. Acts x. 2 Tit. i 6.

t Tit. ii. 2. 7. Phil. iv. 8. *Gr.* u 1 Sam. ii. 29, 30 iii. 13 x 15 Acts xx 28. Eph i 22 v. 24. † Or, *one newly come to the faith.* 1 Cor. iii. 1. Heb. v. 12, 13. 1 Pet. ii. 2. y Deut. viii. 14. xvii. 20 2 Kings xiv. 10. 2 Chr. xxvi. 16 xxxii. 25 Prov. xvi 18, 19 xviii. 12. xxix. 23. Is. ii. 12. 1 Cor iv. 6—8. viii. 1. 2 Cor. xii. 7. 1 Pet. v. 5. z Is. xiv. 12-14. Luke x. 18. 2 Pet ii. 4. Jude 6.

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common for them to be drunkards, covetous, brawlers strikers, &c. Some have inferred from this text, that stated pastors ought to be married, as a pre-requisite to their office: but this seems to be a mistake of a general permission, connected with a restriction, for an express command. It is, however, abundantly sufficient to prove, that marriage is entirely consistent with the most sacred functions, and the most exemplary holiness, and to subvert the very basis of the antichristian prohibition of marriage to the clergy, and all its concurrent and consequent mischiefs. Yet some have even endeavoured to infer a part of that system from this clause itself, and have supposed that the apostle meant to prohibit second marriages to the clergy; but this is contrary to the whole tenour of Scripture: it is by no means contained in the meaning of the words, and would certainly bring in a part of those evils, which long experience hath proved inseparable from the general prohibition; for as good reasons may very often be given for marrying a second time, as for marrying at all. The pastor must also be "vigilant," a circumspect and attentive man, one who watches carefully over his flock, capable of discerning dangers at a distance, guarding the people against the artifices of false teachers and the devices of Satan, and prompt to embrace opportunities of usefulness; he must be sober, serious, and temperate; moderate in all his desires and indulgences; "of good behaviour" in all the transactions of life; showing a meek, kind, equitable, faithful, and prudent disposition towards all men. He should likewise be ready, according to his ability, to relieve the poor, to entertain his brethren without grudging, and with evident cheerfulness and satisfaction; especially, he ought to be hospitable to Christians, who were driven from home by persecution, or who in any other way were brought to the place of his residence. He must be ready at teaching, both capable of instructing others, and prompt to embrace every occasion of doing it in public or in private; counting it his business, and making it his delight. 'But now that the 'ancient customs are changed, and inns are every where 'open, in which travellers, for their money, may be as 'well accommodated as in private houses, there is little 'occasion for what the apostle calls *hospitality.*' (*Macknight.*) This is a specimen of the way, in which many learned men, (some perhaps without intending it,) show us, that we have little or nothing to do, either with the *practical, or doctrinal* part of Scripture! I should rather say, 'Now that ancient customs are changed, and bishops have a[illegible] revenues, they are bound to exercise enlarged hospitality to the poor, especially to the inferior clergy, who often have little of that money, which is needful for accommodation at inns; and who, if hospitably entertained by bishops, would feel cordially reconciled to the affluence of such kind superiors, and disposed to receive their pastoral instructions with reverence.' Here let me observe, in particular, that when young men go for ordination or institution, to places where they cannot be accommodated except at an inn, it is incalculable what mischief might be prevented, and what an opening would be made for usefulness, if the bishops would entertain them in their own houses, and take the abundant opportunities, which this would afford, of instructing them respecting the nature and importance of those solemn engagements, into which they are about to enter. The affection and veneration thus excited, in all who are in any degree proper for these sacred services, and the opening thus made for subsequent admonitions and counsels, would repay the expense of it a thousand fold.

V. 3. The person eligible to the office of a bishop must also be free from every measure of intemperance, in the use of wine or strong liquors, which would both be scandalous to him, and unfit him for the important duties of his station; (*Notes, Lev.* x. 1, 2. 9, 10. *Prov.* xxxi. 4, 5;) and he ought to be equally superior to anger, and not liable upon any provocation, however great, to vent the vehemence of his passion, by striking the offender, as was often the practice among worldly men. Nor be greedy of gain, which might lead him to prostitute his ministry for the sake of "filthy lucre;" or to carry on any disgraceful employment, along with his ministry, for the sake of profit. But he must be of a resigned, meek, persevering, and constant spirit; peaceable, forgiving, and calm; not clamorous in disputation, or even in reproving others; nor yet avariciously tenacious of that property, which he had obtained even in the most unexceptionable manner,

V. 4, 5. The bishop or pastor should likewise be able and careful to govern his own household in a discreet and regular manner; maintaining a meek and firm authority over his domestics, and having his children in due subjection, ruling over them in all gravity, and restraining them from all levity and excess; that their appearance, deportment, and attendance on the worship of God, might be an example to others. For if a man were evidently incompetent to govern his own family, and to preserve order and decorum in it, how could it be supposed that he would be found qualified to preside over the Church of God, and to preserve order and harmony among the members of whom it consisted, who were of various dispositions and situations, and generally removed from under his immediate inspection?

7 Moreover, he must have [a] a good report of [b] them which are without; [c] lest he fall into reproach, and [d] the snare of the devil.

8 Likewise *must* [e] the deacons [f] *be* grave, not [g] double-tongued, [h] not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

9 [i] Holding [k] the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

10 And [l] let these also first be proved; then let them use [m] the office of a deacon, [n] being *found* blameless.

a v. 24, 25 1 Sam. ii 24 Acts vi. 3. x. 22 xxii 12. 3 John 12.
b 1 Cor. v 12 Col. iv. 5 1 Thes. iv 12
c v 14 1 Cor. x. 32. 2 Cor vi. 3 viii 21 1 Thes v. 22 Tit ii 5. 8. 1 Pet. iv. 14-16
d vi. 9 2 Tim ii 26
e Acts vi. 3—6. Phil. i 1
f *See on*, t 4.
g Ps. v. 9 xii 2. l. 19 lii 2 Rom iii. 13 Jam iii. 10.
h *See on*, 3.
i *See on*, i 5. 19.
k 16 2 John 9, 10.
l 6 v 22 1 John iv. 1.——m 13. Acts vi 1, 2.——n 2. 1 Cor. i 8. Col i 22. Tit i 6, 7.

11 Even so *must* [o] *their* wives [p] *be* grave, [q] not slanderers, [r] sober, [s] faithful in all things.

12 Let the deacons be [t] the husbands of one wife, ruling their children, and their own houses well.

13 For [u] they that have * used the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves a good [x] degree, and [y] great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

o Lev. xxi 7. 13—15. Ez xliv. 22. Luke i 5, 6.
p *See on*, t 4.
q Ps. xv 3. l 20. ci. 5. Prov x, 18. xxv. 23. Jer. ix. 4. Matt. iv. 1. John vi 70. 2 Tim iii. 3. Tit. ii. 3. *Gr.* Rev. xii 9, 10.
r 2. 1 Thes. v 6—8 2 Tim. iv. 5. Tit, ii 2 *Gr.* 1 Pet v 8.
s *See on*, i. 12. vi. 2
t *See on*, 2. 4, 5
u Matt xxv 21. Luke xvi 10—12 xix 17.——* Or, *ministered.* Matt xx 28. Rom xii 7, 8 1 Cor. xvi. 15 Heb. vi 10 1 Pet iv 10, 11.——x Acts xxi 35. *Gr.*——y Acts vi. 5 8. 15. vii. 1, &c. Phil. i. 14. 1 Thes. ii. 2.

V. 6. It would not be generally expedient to choose a new convert to this office, or an inexperienced person, one but superficially acquainted with human nature and the things of God, lest the distinction of his situation, or the applause bestowed on him, should elate him with pride and ambition, and he should thus fall into a condemnation, similar to that of the devil. It is evident from this, that spiritual pride and ambition constituted the beginning of Satan's apostacy. Some have conjectured that it was revealed to the angels, that the eternal Son would assume a nature inferior to theirs, in which he would rule over them, and be worshipped by them; and that Satan, and the other angels who fell with him, proudly disdained such subjection. But all our conjectures on this subject must be uncertain, and in a measure presumptuous. The pride, however, and ambition of ministers, on account of their office, gifts, popularity, or success, would be of a similar nature to Satan's pride in heaven, and might involve the novice under a similar condemnation. It is evident that some exceptions to this important general rule must have been admitted in the first formation of newly planted churches, in which the special gifts of the Holy Spirit seem to have superseded the necessity of such previous study and experience, as are, in all ordinary cases, indispensable.

V. 7. The person elected to this office must also have a good report, an unblemished character, even among his unconverted neighbours: lest he should fall into reproach, lose his influence, disgrace the Gospel, and be ensnared by Satan into the practice of his former evils, and entangled in the world and sin. Or, "into the snare of the "*false accuser*," who might watch for his halting, to retort his mistakes, as a reproach to the Gospel. (*See* 11. *Gr.*) It would not therefore be generally adviseable to appoint those to the ministry, whose conduct had been remarkably bad, until a competent time had elapsed to evince the reality of their repentance, and to retrieve and re-establish their characters. It is evident, that the apostle did not here at all speak of the several *duties* of ministers; but only of the conduct and character of those whose desires after that office were to be countenanced by Timothy, and by others concerned.

V. 8—13. The deacons were primarily appointed to dispense the charity of the church, and to manage its secular concerns; yet they preached occasionally, or taught in private, or were readers in the public assemblies; or pastors and evangelists were often chosen from among them. (*Notes*, *Acts* vi. viii. 5—40.) Some of the same things were requisite in them as in the pastors. They too must be *grave*, serious, and prudent men; sincere, candid, and consistent in their discourse; not speaking one thing before men's faces, and another behind their backs; neither flattering, slandering, dissembling, nor prevaricating, in any company, or on any occasion; not addicted to much wine, nor greedy of filthy gain, which might tempt them, after the example of Judas, to embezzle the money committed to them, or unfit them for liberally and impartially supplying the wants of the poor. They must also profess and maintain the mysteries of the Christian faith, with a pure conscience and a uniform integrity of conduct, that so they might recommend it to others. It was proper, even in respect of this inferior office, that trial should be made of new converts; that, previous to their admission to it, they might be approved to be men of blameless conversation. The wives also of the deacons, (and much more those of the spiritual pastors,) must be of grave and serious deportment; not addicted to the vanities and dissipations of the world; not slanderers, or prone to circulate disadvantageous reports of their neighbours: (the original is *διαβολους, devils*, 7;) but sober women, temperate in all things, and faithful in the discharge of every relative and religious duty. Nor would it be proper for those, who had previously to their conversion taken more than one wife, or divorced one for the sake of taking another, to exercise the office of a deacon. It was requisite that they also should rule their children and domestics in a regular and exemplary manner. For the faithful discharge of this office would tend to the increase of their gifts and graces, and to render them very bold in professing the faith. They would be much employed among the poor and sick, and such as were imprisoned for the Gospel; and by thus exposing themselves, and giving counsel and encouragement to their suffering brethren, they would be emboldened and habituated to a promptitude of utterance, which would be a *good step* towards their being admitted to the office of pastors or evangelists.—This interpretation has been contested; yet it seems to be the apostle's meaning; and, without adverting to modern habits or controversies, it is evident, that the due discharge of the primitive office of a deacon must tend to qualify men for the ministry; it appears from facts that some deacons became preachers, nor have we reason to think

14 These things write I unto thee, [z] hoping to come unto thee shortly:

15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest [a] know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in [b] the house of God, which is [c] the church of [d] the living God, [e] the pillar and * ground of [f] the truth.

z iv. 13. 1 Cor. xi. 34 xvi 5—7 2 Cor. i. 15—17 1 Thes. ii 18. Philem 22. Heb. xiii. 23. 2 John 12. 3 John 14 a 2. Deut xxxi. 23. 1 Kings ii. 2—4. 1 Chr xxii 13. xxviii. 9. 21 Acts i 2 b Eph ii. 22 2 Tim ii 20 Heb iii. 2—6 1 Pet ii. 5 ——c *See on*, 5.——d iv 10. vi. 16 Deut. v 26. Josh iii. 10 1 Sam. xvii 26. 36. 2 Kings xix 4. Ps xlii. 2. lxxxiv. 2. Jer. x. 10. xxiii. 36. Dan. vi 26. Hos. i 10. Matt. xvi. 16. John vi. 69 Acts xiv. 15. Rom. ix 26. 2 Cor. iii. 3. vi. 16. 1 Thes. i 9 Heb. iii 12 ix 14 xii 22 Rev vii 2——e Jer i. 18 Matt. xvi 18. 19 xviii. 18 Rom. iii 2. Gal ii. 9.——* Or, *stay* ——f 16. John i. 17. xiv. 6. xviii. 37. 2 Cor vi. 7. Gal. iii. 1 Eph. iv 21 Col. ii. 4.

16 And [g] without controversy, great is [h] the mystery of godliness: [i] God was † manifest in the flesh, [k] justified in the Spirit, [l] seen of angels, [m] preached unto the Gentiles, [n] believed on in the world, [o] received up into glory.

g Heb vii. 7 h iii 9. Matt xiii. 11. Rom. xvi. 25. 1 Cor. ii. 7. Eph. i 9. iii. 3—9 vi. 19. Col. ii. 2, 2 Thes ii. 7. Rev xvii. 5 7. i Is. vii 14. ix. 6. Jer xxiii 5, 6. Mic. v 2 Matt. i. 23 John i 1, 2. 14 Acts xx. 28 Rom. viii. 3. ix. 5. 1 Cor xv 47. Gal iv 14 Phil. ii. 6—8. Col. i. 16—18. Heb. i. 3. ii. 9—13. 1 John i 2 Rev. i. 17, 18.——† Gr *manifested*. 1 John iii 5.——k Is. 1, 5—7. Matt. iii. 16. John i. 32, 33 xv 26 xvi. 8, 9. Acts ii. 32—36. Rom. i. 3, 4 1 Pet iii. 18. 1 John v 6—8.——l Ps lxviii. 17, 18. Matt. iv 11. xxviii 2 Mark i. 13 xvi. 5 Luke ii. 10—14 xxii 43 xxiv. 4. John xx. 12 Acts i. 10, 11. Eph. iii. 10 1 Pet i 12——m Luke ii 32 Acts x. 34 xiii 46—48. Rom. x 18. Gal iii. 8. Eph. iii. 5—8. Col i. 27.——n Acts xiv 27. Col i 6 23. Rev vii 9.——o Mark xvi. 19 Luke xxiv 51. John vi. 62. xiii. 3. xvi. 28. xvii 5 Acts i 1—9. Eph. iv. 8—10. Heb. i. 3 viii. 1 xii 2. 1 Pet. iii. 22.

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that any persons were then regularly educated for the pastoral office; but ministers seem to have been always chosen from the most established and best qualified believers, and generally from those that were matured in years and experience. This does not, however, prove, that a regular education may not, in the present state of things, be most expedient.—*Proved.* (10.) 'By publishing their names 'to the church; that if any one hath aught to lay to their 'charge he may show it.' (*Macknight.*)—No doubt this was customary in the primitive church, and productive of many good effects: indeed, the form of it remains to this day. But it does not appear that the original word can admit of this interpretation; for it generally means that trial of persons and of things, which is made by experience and observation.—*Wives* or *women.* Some think, that the wives of deacons and of bishops are not here meant; but *women*, who were selected and appointed by the church to teach young persons of their own sex, who were restrained by local customs from so attending on the instructions of *men*, as to obtain from them an adequate acquaintance with Christianity. It is, however, very doubtful, whether this be the apostle's meaning; and the instruction from the passage as interpreted of the wives of those who performed any public office in the church, is so replete with instruction, that it seems highly worthy of the mention made of it by the apostle.

V. 14, 15. The apostle hoped, when he wrote this, that he should soon be able to return to Ephesus: but matters so turned out, that he never again visited that city; and Timothy, in all probability much sooner than had been intended, went to him into Macedonia. (*Preface.*) In case, however, the apostle should not see Timothy for some time, he wrote this epistle, to show him how he ought to conduct himself, as an evangelist intrusted by him, and by the Saviour, to regulate matters in the family or household of God; even that society of believers, in whom the living God dwelt, as in his holy habitation. These directions were not peculiar to the Ephesians, but would be a rule to Timothy in other churches also, where he might sustain the same office, and perform the same services; and to all others in subsequent ages, who should be employed in a similar manner.—The following words have been variously applied: the church of the living God, by supporting, maintaining, and recommending the truth of revelation, by publicly preaching and professing it, and by the worship and service therein performed, may be considered as the foundation which upholds the edifice, as a pillar that supports and adorns it. This by no means includes the infallibility of any particular church; but merely implies that divine truth is upheld, professed, and maintained in the true church: whilst ungodly men in general, and heretics in particular, oppose, pervert, and undermine it; and so error and ignorance envelope all the rest of the world, as with a dark and dreadful cloud. Some apply it to Timothy and other faithful ministers, (*Gal.* ii. 9:) but this seems to be only a part of the preceding truth; for the profession and suitable conversation of believers as really maintain and recommend the truth, as the minister's labours and doctrines do. Others detach the sentence from this verse, and connect it with the following; as if the apostle had meant, that the doctrine there specified was "the pillar and ground of the truth:" but this construction also seems unnatural, and the first interpretation is most obvious and satisfactory. As the church was appointed to maintain, hold forth, and adorn, the doctrine of God our Saviour, in the midst of a dark and wicked world; so it was very important for Timothy to know how to conduct himself in subserviency to that great design.

V. 16. That mystery of godliness, which the church must maintain, was, without controversy, exceedingly great. It never could have been thought of, if it had not been revealed; it could not be received but by faith; and it must be very imperfectly understood by man in his present state, being connected with infinite and incomprehensible objects. Some persons might on that account deem it less credible; and others attempt to obviate the objection, by explaining away the mysteriousness of it: but the apostle declared it to be beyond all controversy "a great mystery." It must, however, be noted, that it was "the mystery of godli-"ness." The revelation and belief of it were the source of all the pious dispositions and affections in the heart of fallen men, and of all the spiritual worship of God in the world. Had this mystery never been revealed, there would never have been any true godliness among men: none could be found, where this mystery was unknown or rejected; and that abounded, in proportion as it was scripturally proposed and received.—By this mystery, men learn the true character of God, and the way in which sinners may approach and worship him; they discover their real situation, their danger, and their remedy; and thus they are brought to fear, trust, love, worship, obey, and rejoice in God. The substance and centre of this great mystery was this, "God was manifest in the flesh;" the divine nature, in the Person of the co-eternal and co-equal Son and Word of God, was manifested to fallen men, as dwelling in the man Christ Jesus; so that whoever saw, or contemplated by faith, this express Image of the invisible God, saw the

CHAP. IV.

The apostle foretels a great apostacy, and corruption of the Gospel in after times, 1—3. *Every creature of God is good, and to be received with thanksgiving and prayer,* 4, 5. *He directs Timothy, in respect of his doctrine and personal conduct, that he may behave so, as "to "save himself and those that hear him,"* 6—16.

Father also; (*Notes, John* i. 1—18. *Phil.* ii. 5—11. *Col.* i. 15—17.)—Thus sinners became acquainted with, and reconciled to, God. This high character Emmanuel claimed, when on earth; and the unmeasurable unction of the Holy Spirit in his human nature, as evinced by his perfect holiness and stupendous miracles, justified his claim. But the Jewish priests and rulers put him to death, "because "he, being man, made himself God;" and he was further justified by the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on the apostles and disciples, who bare witness to his resurrection, and ascension into heaven. During the whole of these amazing events, "he was seen of angels." These "morn- "ing stars, who sang together," when he called the world into existence, (*Job* xxxviii. 7,) saw their incarnate Lord laid as a babe in a manger, and sang "Glory to God in "the highest, Peace on earth, Good will towards men." They saw him fasting forty days in the wilderness, and tempted by the devil; they witnessed his agonies in the garden: and, in both cases, they were employed to minister unto him. They saw their incarnate Maker expire, amidst the most cruel indignities, on the cross, but with what sensations who can conceive! They witnessed and attended his resurrection and ascension. They now behold his glory, sing his praise, and execute his mandates; and they will at length be his attendants, when he shall come to judge the world. In all this they contemplate, with astonishment, delight, and adoration, the infinite wisdom, justice, holiness, truth, and love of God; and desire to look into these things, as more conspicuous displays of the divine glory than all his other works had exhibited. "God, "manifested in the flesh," had also been preached to the Gentiles, as their Lord and Saviour, which was a great mystery to the Jewish nation. And thus he had been believed on in the world, by many tens of thousands of different nations, who, without the Mosaic law, were become the spiritual and accepted worshippers of JEHOVAH; and the case has been to a great degree the same to this day. This was the effect of his having been "received "up into glory;" and proved, to a demonstration, his exaltation to the mediatorial throne; all power in heaven and earth being given to him, as the Advocate and Intercessor for sinners.—This important text seems to have been obscured and confined in the interpretation given of it, by the attempt of some expositors to reduce the overflowings of the apostle's fervent spirit to their own ideas of method. But the events referred to cannot be reduced to exact order of time, without evidently doing violence to the meaning of the words.—The construction necessarily requires, that the first clause of the passage serve as the nominative case to the subsequent verbs. On the above interpretation the construction is as follows: "God was manifested in the "flesh;" "God manifested in the flesh," was justified by "the Spirit, was seen of angels, &c." But the Socinians, and some others, have laboured to establish another reading, to this effect: "the mystery of godliness, *which* was "manifested in the flesh." According to this reading, it must follow, "which mystery was justified in, or by, the "Spirit;" "which mystery was seen of angels;" "which "mystery was preached unto the Gentiles;" "which "mystery was believed *on* in the world;" "which mystery was received up into glory." The mystery being manifested in the flesh, and the mystery being received up into glory, are not very sensible propositions: but numbers seem to prefer any absurdity to orthodoxy, especially in respect of the person of Emmanuel. Indeed, it is not very consistent with their avowed dislike of mysteries, to personify the word *mystery* in this text, and put it even in the place of God our Saviour. In fact, however, the authority for this emendation does not entitle it to any regard.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

The office of a minister is a laborious, but a good, work: they who desire it as such, from proper motives, do well; and, if duly qualified, they should be encouraged and assisted in obtaining their object. But to desire emolument or authority in the Church, by intruding into this sacred office, without either qualifications suited to its important duties, or any purpose of performing them, from indolence, ambition, and love of filthy lucre, is the vilest of all prostitutions, and merits the deepest condemnation. Let then none, who desire this office, or have entered into it, or who have any concern in admitting others, forget, that nothing can compensate for the want of proper motives, or a blameless conduct, in those who minister in holy things. The pastors of the Lord's flock should be continent, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach, and remote from violent passions, and every kind of covetousness. The more extensive the sphere, and the more conspicuous the station, to which any of them are called, the greater measure of all these holy endowments is requisite: but no man can be a meet person for the pastoral office, in the most obscure situation, who is unwatchful, frivolous, licentious, given to wine, greedy of gain, disposed to furious anger, negligent of moral and relative duties, selfish, averse to hospitality, and unable or unwilling to teach the flock. It would be invidious to contrast this description with the characters of those who have sustained the ministerial office in different ages and parts of the visible Church. No order of men fulfil the duties of their station: but, alas! none have more violated them than nominal ministers. It, however, behooves us to look to ourselves, and those with whom we are concerned. We, who sustain this office, should pray without ceasing to be enabled more fully to transcribe these rules into our lives; and the people should learn to distinguish *mercenaries* from upright disinterested ministers: they should make allowance for human infir-

NOW [a] the Spirit speaketh [b] expressly, that in [c] the latter times some shall [d] depart from the faith, giving heed to [e] seducing spirits, [f] and doctrines of devils;

2 Speaking [g] lies in hypocrisy; having [h] their conscience seared with a hot iron;

3 [i] Forbidding to marry, *and commanding* [k] to abstain from meats, [l] which God hath created to be received [m] with thanksgiving, of them which [n] believe and know the truth.

4 For [o] every creature of God *is* good, [p] and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:

5 For [q] it is sanctified by [r] the word of God and prayer.

a John xvi. 13. Acts xiii. 2. xxviii. 25 1 Cor. xii 11. Rev. ii. 7. 11. 17. 29. iii. 6. 13. 22. b Ez i 3. c Num. xxiv. 14. Deut. iv. 30. xxxii. 29. Is ii. 2. Jer. xlviii 47. xlix. 39. Ez. xxxviii. 16. Dan. x. 14. Hos. iii. 5. Mic. iv. 1. 2 Tim. iii. 1 2 Pet. iii 3. Jude 18.——d Dan. xi. 35. 2 Thes ii 3 2 Tim. iii. 1–3. iv. 4 ——e Gen. iii 3–5. 13 1 Kings xxii 22. 23 2 Chr. xviii. 19—22. 2 Cor. xi. 3. 13–15. 2 Thes ii 9–12. 2 Tim iii. 13 Rev ix. 2–11 xiii. 14 xvi. 14. xvii. 2 23. xix. 20. xx. 2, 3. 8. 10.—— f Dan. xi 35—38. 1 Cor viii. 5, 6 x 20 Col ii. 18. Acts xvii 18 Rev. ix. 20 *Gr.*——g 1 Kings xiii. 18 xxii. 22. Is. ix. 15 Jer. v 31. xxiii. 14. 32. Dan. viii 23- 25 Matt. vii. 15 xxiv 24 Acts xx. 30 Rom xvi 18. Eph iv 14. 2 Tim iii 5. 2 Pet. ii. 1–3. Rev. xvi. 14.——h Rom. i. 28 Eph. iv. 19.——i Dan. xi. 37. 1 Cor. vii. 28. 36–39. Heb. xiii. 4.

k Rom xiv 3. 17. 1 Cor. viii 8. Col. ii. 20–23. Heb xiii. 9. l Gen. i. 29, 30. ix 3. Acts x. 13 —15. 1 Cor. vi. 13. m 4. 1 Sam. ix. 13. Matt. xiv 19. xv. 36. Luke xxiv 30 John vi. 23. Acts xxvii 35. Rom. xiv 6 1 Cor. x. 30, 31. Col. iii. 17. n ii. 4 John viii. 31, 32 2 Thes ii. 13, 14.——o Gen. i. 31. Deut. xxxii 4 ——p Acts xxi 7—9 xv 20, 21. 29. xxi. 25 Rom. xiv. 14. 20. 1 Cor. x 28 25 ——q *See on*, m 3. Luke xi. 41. 1 Cor. vii. 14. Tit i. 15.——r Luke iv. 4.

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mities, which are incident to all: they should help their ministers by their prayers, blessing God for such as are faithful, and supplicating converting grace for such as are evidently the reverse of what they ought to be. It is incumbent upon ministers to rule well their own houses, and to have their children in subjection with all gravity. If they find this too difficult for them, "how shall they "take care of the Church of God?" The folly, ostentation, conformity to the world, extravagance, or ungodliness, of a minister's family, will surely lessen his own influence, and prevent his usefulness, as well as his comfort. It is also very wrong for novices, however eminent for abilities and gifts, to be pushed forward prematurely into this arduous work. This hath ruined many promising young men, by puffing them up with pride, and so casting them into the condemnation of the devil. The honour of the Gospel also is greatly concerned in the good report of ministers amongst those that are without. And Satan finds various advantages against those who lose their reputation, and incur the reproach of the enemies of the Gospel.

V. 8—16.

Not only bishops and elders, but all concerned in the Church of the living God, should be grave, sincere, upright, candid, temperate, and disinterested; those especially to whom money is intrusted, and who have the charge of relieving the poor: for to rob them is one of the very worst kinds of dishonesty. The mystery of faith will never appear respectable among men, except it be held in a pure conscience. Professed Christians should therefore be proved, and found blameless, before they are admitted to any office in the Church. Time spent in preparation and probation will not be lost; and a precipitate zeal is not one of the prescribed qualifications for the ministry. All who are connected with persons in public stations in the church should be exemplary in their whole appearance and deportment. The wives of ministers and deacons should be grave and sober, no slanderers, but faithful in all things. *They* should choose such wives; and their wives should be reminded to study and practise these rules, and to assist and concur in ruling their children and households well. They who have acted faithfully and diligently in inferior stations, are best qualified for more important services; especially when, by enduring hardship and facing danger, they have attained to great boldness in the faith of Christ. These things should be frequently meditated upon and prayed over by all persons concerned; that they may know how they ought to behave in the Church of the living God, according to the relations in which they stand to him, to his saints, and to the world, that they may hold forth and adorn the doctrine of truth, as pillars and supporters of it. This will be despised, or revered, in great measure, according to the conduct of professors; which will be greatly influenced by that of ministers, their families, and connexions. The importance of these things is therefore unspeakable; and our watchfulness ought to correspond to it. Whilst numbers want a religion without mystery, (which they who worship the incomprehensible God cannot possibly have,) and whilst many seem to make the very truths of the Gospel a mystery of ungodliness, let us glory in the incontrovertibly "great mystery "of godliness," and show the sanctifying efficacy of it in our lives. Let us remember that "God was manifested in the "flesh," to take away our sins; "to destroy the works "of the devil; to redeem us from all iniquity, and to "purify us unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of "good works:" and let us recollect, that the doctrine of his mysterious Person and Redemption must be justified by the fruits of the Spirit, brought forth in our lives. Let us learn to contemplate his antecedent glory, his voluntary humiliation, his subsequent exaltation, and his future coming to judgment; till we hate sin, despise the world, are transformed into his image, filled with his love, and prepared to join the worship of his holy angels; and let us still pray, that he may be preached to all the nations on earth, and believed on in all parts of the world, and so wait till he shall please to receive us to his glory.

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1—5. To stir up Timothy, and others by him, to adhere steadfastly to the "Great Mys- "tery of Godliness," the apostle declared, that the Holy Spirit spake, in the most express and decisive manner, not only by Daniel, and others of the ancient prophets, but to him by immediate revelation, and perhaps to several of his brethren, (*Marg. Ref.*) concerning some in the latter days, under the Christian dispensation, or in after times, that would apostatize from the true faith of the Gospel. This apostacy would be effected by men's hearkening to false teachers, who would be influenced by seducing spirits; and thus they would embrace doctrines of devils or demons, and adopt such notions about the souls of the dead, as would introduce the worship of saints as intercessors, and of angels as spirits superior to men, though inferior to God. This was a species of idolatry, like that of the heathens in worshipping their departed monarchs, legislators, and benefactors, as demons, or a

6 If [g] thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be [t] a good minister of Jesus Christ, [u] nourished up in the words of faith and of [x] good doctrine, whereunto [y] thou hast attained.

7 But [z] refuse profane and old wives' fables, and [a] exercise thyself *rather* unto godliness.

8 For [b] bodily exercise profiteth [*] little; but [c] godliness is profitable unto all things, [d] having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

9 This [e] is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation.

10 For [f] therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, [g] because we trust in [h] the living God, who is [i] the Saviour of all men, [k] especially of them that believe.

[g] Acts xx. 31. 35. Rom. xv 15. 1 Cor. iv. 17 2 Tim. i. 6 ii. 14. 2 Pet. i. 12—15. iii. 1, 2 Jude 5 [t] Matt xiii. 52. 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2 2 Cor iii. 6 vi. 4 Eph. vi. 21. Col. iv 7. 1 Thes. iii. 2 2 Tim. ii. 15 [u] Jer. xv 16 Eph. iv 15, 16 Col ii. 19. iii 16 2 Tim iii. 14—17 [x] i. 10 iv. 16 vi. 3. Ps. xix. 7. *Marg.* Prov iv. 2. John vii. 16 17. 2 Tim. iv. 3. Tit ii. 1. 7—10 2 John 9.——[y] Phil. iii. 16. 2 Tim iii 14.——[z] i. 4. vi. 20. 2 Tim ii. 16 23. iv. 4 Tit. i. 14 iii. 9——[a] i 4. ii. 10. iii 16 vi. 11 Acts xxiv. 16. 2 Tim. iii. 12. Tit ii. 12 Heb. v 14. 2 Pet i. 5—8.——[b] 1 Sam xv 22. Ps. l. 7—15. Is. i. 11—16. lviii. 3—5. Jer. vi. 20. Am. v. 21—24. 1 Cor. viii. 8. Col. ii. 21—23. Heb. xiii. 9.

[*] Or, *for a little time.* Heb. ix. 9, 10.

[c] vi 6 Job xxii 2. Tit iii. 8 [d] Deut xxviii. 1—14 Job v 19—26. Ps. xxxvii. 3, 4. 16—19. 29. lxxxiv. 11. xci. 10—16 cxii. 1—3. cxxviii. 1—6. Prov. iii. 16—18. Ec viii. 12. Is. iii. 10 xxxii 17, 18. xxxiii. 16. lxv. 13, 14. Matt. v. 3—12. vi 33. xix. 29. Mark x. 29. 30. Luke xii. 31, 32. Rom. viii 28. 1 Cor. iii. 22. 2 Pet. i. 3, 4 1 John ii. 25. Rev. iii. 12. 21. [e] *See on,* i 15.——[f] 1 Cor. iv. 9—13. 2 Cor. iv. 8—10. vi. 3—10 xi. 23—27 2 Tim. ii. 9, 10 iii. 10—12. Heb. xi. 26. xiii. 13. 1 Pet. iv. 14, 15 ——[g] vi 17 Ps. xxxvii. 40 lii 8. lxxxiv. 12. cxviii. 8. Is xii. 2. l. 10. Jer. xvii. 7. Dan iii. 28 Nah i 7. Matt. xxvii. 43 Rom. xv. 12, 13. 1 Pet i. 21.——[h] *See on,* iii. 15.——[i] *See on.* ii. 4. 6. Ps. xxxvi. 6 Is xlv. 21; 22. 1 John i. 29. iii. 15—17. 1 John ii. 2. iv. 14.——[k] John v 24 John v. 10—13.

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middle order of beings between God and men. And, as devils are the real objects of all worship paid to mere creatures, so this delusion would tend to gratify the ambition of these apostate spirits. (*Notes,* 1 *Cor.* x. 19—22. *Col.* ii. 18.) These doctrines and practices would be supported *by the hypocrisy of liars,* who would invent a variety of legends, impose on men with pretended miracles and revelations, cheat them by legendary tales, and so carry on an infamous traffic by forgery and imposture, under the pretext of great sanctity, to the aggrandizing of themselves and the deluding of the credulous multitude. Nor would these men feel remorse for their lies and forgeries, as the habit of villany, under the mask of extraordinary piety, would cauterize their consciences, and render them entirely callous; even as the external skin becomes unfeeling by being frequently seared with a hot iron. To maintain their usurpations over men's minds, and to fix a large body in their interest, by detaching them from other connexions, as well as to amuse mankind by the appearance of uncommon sanctity, they would discourage, and even forbid marriage, as if it were an unholy estate, and unfit for devout persons: they would deny this liberty to numbers, especially to the clergy, by means of which all kinds of abominations would be introduced and connived at. They would also enjoin their abstinence from this and the other kind of meat, either entirely, or on particular days and seasons; by this likewise they would keep up their authority over men's consciences, and impose upon the multitude with apparent devotion, whilst they perpetrated all kinds of iniquities, as the Pharisees had done before them. (*Notes, Matt.* xxiii.) But, indeed, God had created every kind of wholesome food for the benefit of man, and allowed Christians the use of it all, indiscriminately, at all times and seasons, without restriction; and therefore any of his creatures might be received with thanksgiving by those who believed the truth, and so far understood it as to know their Christian liberty. For all his creatures being in themselves good, and serving the purposes for which he made them, nothing was to be refused as unclean, provided it was received with thankfulness, as the permission of God's word, a temperate use of it according to his precepts, and prayer for a blessing upon it, sanctified it to the believer's use, and to fit him for the Lord's service. Every smatterer in ecclesiastical history must know what apostacy and corruption of Christianity most entirely accorded to this prediction. The Judaizing teachers, and the Gnostics and others, contended indeed for some of these superstitions; the mystery of iniquity in these respects also did even then work; but it was reserved for the Church of Rome fully to prove the truth of the scriptures, by accomplishing these predictions in their most detestable enormities. (2 *Thes.* ii.) It has often been shown, in what manner the errors of the Judaizing teachers and the traditions of the Pharisees, on the one hand, and the speculations of the heathen philosophers, on the other, corrupted the pure doctrine of Christianity in the primitive times. But it should not be forgotten, that in subsequent ages, especially in the Roman Church, the mythology of the Pagans, and the writings of the poets, helped to introduce still further corruptions. For what are the nuns of popery, but the vestal virgins of the Romans engrafted on Christianity? Saints and angels, as mediators, answer to the demi-gods and heroes of the Pagans; and the numerous processions, and festivals, and the method of observing them, answer, with surprising exactness, to those described in Homer and Virgil, especially in the latter. Indeed, it appears to me that a learned man, who had leisure to compare all the pompous and fascinating outward services, in the Church of Rome especially, though not there exclusively, with the Greek and Latin poets, might form, I had almost said, a Rubric and a ritual from the latter. At least, I have never, for many years, opened Virgil to read a few pages, but I have met with some things, which cogently reminded me of the popish processions and festivals. The third verse contains 'one of the boldest ellipses in the New Testament, where a word is to be understood contrary to that 'which is before expressed: but some of the most celebrated classical writers, and particularly Horace and 'Cicero, take the same liberty.' (*Doddridge. Blackwall.*) The passage undeniably demands this construction, and all the ancient expositions and versions supply the ellipsis in the same manner, or to the same meaning. (*Note, Acts* xv. 19—21.)

V. 6—10. Timothy was directed to attend to these precautions himself, and also to put his brethren in remembrance of them, that they might be upon their guard against every specious delusion. Thus he would be a good minister of Christ, and act as became one who had been fully instructed in the words of truth and good doctrine, and who had digested them well, and turned them into spiritual nourishment: as he had been trained up in these

11 These things [l] command and teach.

12 [m] Let [m] no man despise thy youth; but [n] be thou an example of the believers, [o] in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

13 Till [p] I come, give attendance [q] to reading, [r] to exhortation, [s] to doctrine.

14 [t] Neglect not the gift that is in thee, [u] which was given thee by prophecy, [x] with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

15 [y] Meditate upon these things, [z] give thyself wholly to them; [a] that thy profiting may appear * to all.

16 [b] Take heed unto thyself, and [c] unto thy doctrine; [d] continue in them: for in doing this [e] thou shalt both save thyself, and [f] them that hear thee.

vi. 2 2 Tim. iv. 2 Tit. ii. 15 iii. 8.
m Matt. xviii. 10. 1 Cor. xvi. 10, 11 2 Tim. ii. 22.
n 1 Cor. xi. 1 1 Thes. i. 6. ii. 10. 2 Thes. iii. 7, 8. Tit. ii. 7. 1 Pet. v. 3.
o 2 Cor. vi. 4—17. Phil. iv. 8. 2 Tim. ii. 22. Jam. iii. 13 17. 2 Pet. i. 5—8.
p See on, iii. 14, 15.
q Deut. xvii. 19. Josh. i. 8. Ps. i. 2, 3. cxix. 97—104. Prov. ii. 4. 5. Matt. xiii. 51, 52. John v. 39. Acts vi. 4. xvii. 11. 2 Tim. ii. 15—17.
r Rom. xii. 8. 1 Cor. xiv. 3. Tit. ii. 15. ——— s 6. 16. 1 Cor. xiv. 6. 26. 2 Tim. iv. 2.
t Matt. xxv. 14—30. Luke xix. 12—26. Rom. xii. 6—8. 1 Thes. v. 19. 2 Tim. i. 6. 1 Pet. iv. 9—11. ——— u i. 18.
x v. 22. Acts vi. 6. xiii. 3. 2 Tim. i. 6.
y Josh. i. 8. Ps. i. 2. xix. 14. xlix. 3. lxiii. 6. lxxvii. 12. civ. 34. cv. 5. cxix. 15. 23. 48. 97. 99. 148. cxliii. 5.
z Acts vi. 4. 1 Cor. xvi. 15. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. viii. 5. Tit. ii. 14.
a 6. Matt. v. 16. Phil. ii. 15, 16.
* Or, *in all things.*
b 1 Chr. xxviii. 10. 2 Chr. xix. 6. Mark xiii. 9. Luke xxi. 34. Acts xx. 28. 1 Cor. iii. 10, 11. Col. iv. 17. 2 Tim. iv. 2. Tit. ii. 7. 15. Heb. xii. 15. 2 John 8. ——— c 6. i. 3. Rom. xvi. 17. Eph. iv. 14. Tit. ii 7. Heb. xiii. 9. 2 John 9. ——— d Acts vi. 4. xxvi. 22. Rom. ii. 7. 2 Tim. iii. 14. Tit. i. 9. ——— e Ez. iii. 18—21. xxxiii. 7—9. Acts xx. 26, 27. 1 Cor. ix. 27.
f Is. lv. 11. Jer. xxiii. 22. Rom. x. 10—14. xi. 14. 1 Cor. ix. 22. 1 Thes. ii. 16. 19, 20. 2 Tim. ii. 10. Philem. 19. Jam. v. 20.

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things, and indeed had made great proficiency in them. But he ought steadily to reject the impious fables and foolish traditions of the Jewish deceivers and others, who perverted the Gospel; which were no better than the stories, with which the weakest and most ignorant of women, when almost superannuated, used to amuse children. He ought, therefore, to treat such follies with the neglect which they merited, and to exercise himself, by daily study, meditation, and practice, in every part of godliness; as consisting of a proper temper of mind and conduct of life towards God; and as obtained by sinners, through the believing contemplation of, and dependence on, "the great mystery of godliness." In this he must daily make progress himself, and this he ought to inculcate on others. For no diligence in mere externals, however laborious, self-denying, or exact, could be of much use to any man. Even the Mosaic ceremonies had little profited the Israelites in general, nor could they much avail the Jewish Christians; and human inventions must be still more unprofitable and vain. But godliness, according to the principles and rules of the Gospel, was profitable unto all things: it benefited the man himself, his connexions, the Church, and society. The promises of temporal prosperity to Israel, as annexed to their national obedience, were indeed no longer in force; and godliness might expose a Christian to many outward losses and persecutions; nor were any promises of wealth, prosperity, or long life, given by the Gospel: yet the new covenant engaged to bestow on believers such spiritual peace, and such abundant supports and consolations, and they were under such a peculiar care and protection of providence, that godliness might well be said to have the promise both of this life, and of that which is to come. (*Marg. Ref.*) This was therefore to be considered as a faithful saying, worthy of universal acceptation: for, in dependence on these promises, in experience of their accomplishment, and in promoting godliness among mankind, the apostle and his brethren both laboured without wearying, and suffered reproach without fainting; because they trusted in the living God, who is *the Preserver* of all men, in respect of their lives and temporal concerns; and who will therefore take especial care of believers, as interested in his covenanted blessings. Or who is the Saviour of sinners, whether Jews or Gentiles, and of mankind in general; so that none are rejected when they apply for his salvation; of which believers are already made partakers by special grace.

V. 11—16. Timothy was here required to enforce on the consciences of the people, the practice of all those things in which godliness consists, and to teach them the nature, obligation, motives, and encouragements of it: and, as he was younger than men generally were, to whom such important services were allotted, and probably than several of the elders at Ephesus; it would be peculiarly incumbent upon him to act with such sedateness and wisdom, as might deprive every one of any pretence for despising his person or admonitions on that account. It behooved him therefore to be an example to the whole company of believers, by a steadfast and consistent adherence to the word of the Gospel, in his profession and preaching; by a pious, pure, and edifying conversation; by love to the Lord, his people, and all men; by spirituality, and all the fruits of the Holy Spirit; by a lively exercise of faith in the mercy, promise, and providence of God, amidst all hardships and perils; and by purity, avoiding whatever might excite suspicion, in respect of those youthful lusts by which so many were contaminated. "Till the apostle came to "him," (which he hoped to do, though it turned out otherwise,) let him devote his time to the study of the scriptures, or in reading any other books which could add to his fund of profitable knowledge; and to exhorting and instructing the people in sound doctrine. As he had been endued with excellent gifts, which were conferred upon him, according to the prophecies of inspired men repecting him, when he was solemnly ordained to be a minister and an evangelist, by the imposition of the hands of the elders, as well as those of the apostles, let him not neglect to exercise and improve those gifts: for some who received those gifts were thus negligent; nay, they made a bad use of them, and perhaps were deprived of them on that account. Let him therefore assiduously and carefully meditate on these things, and well consider the various important duties to which he was called. Let him "give "himself wholly to them," or be "entirely in them;" making them the one great business and pleasure of his life, and cordially devoting all his time and abilities to this important service; that so his growth in wisdom and ministerial endowments, and in holiness, might be manifest to all around him. And as he was placed amidst various snares and difficulties, and had the same deceitful heart as others had; so he ought to take special heed "unto himself," to the state of his soul, his own growth in grace, and his motives, temper, and conduct in every thing: he ought also to look well to his doctrine, that it might be scriptural, clear, evangelical, and practical;

CHAP. V.

Directions how to admonish elder and younger persons, men and women, 1, 2: *concerning the widows who were provided for, or employed, by the church; the conduct of Christians towards relations; and what was expedient for younger widows,* 3—16. *The honour to be shown to diligent rulers and teachers,* 17, 18. *How Timothy should behave towards accused elders and offenders,* 19, 20. *A solemn charge to faithfulness and impartiality in ordaining pastors,* 21, 22. *Counsel to Timothy concerning his health,* 23. *The character of some is more easily known than that of others,* 24, 25.

well-stated, explained, defended, and applied. And whatever trials or discouragements he might meet with, let him persevere steadfastly in this course; and he would thus ensure his own salvation, help forward that of other believers and be the instrument of conversion to many of those who attended on his ministry.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—5.

The scriptures are arranged with such consummate wisdom, that the apostacies of those who give heed to seducing spirits, and teach the doctrine of devils, introducing idolatry and various corruptions into the Church, on the most frivolous pretences, turn to a testimony to every humble believer; who, reading that the Spirit spoke expressly of these things long before, is thus most fully convinced of the divine authority of the sacred oracles.—They who allow themselves "to speak lies in hypo-" crisy," for their secular purposes, will gradually become callous in impiety and iniquity, as if their consciences were seared with a hot iron: so that no desperate infidels or profligates will be found so destitute of feeling and remorse, as the sanctified impostor; nor ought we to deem any enormity incredible, when properly authenticated to have been committed by men of this description. Those false teachers, who most neglect the commandments of God, and allow themselves and others in the most atrocious violations of moral and relative duties, are most prompt to forbid as evil, what God hath pronounced innocent and honourable; and to command that as a duty, which he hath left indifferent. But the law of the Lord is exceedingly broad; and we shall find abundant exercise for watchfulness, diligence, self-denial, and mortification of the flesh, in attending to all its holy requirements, without being laid under further restrictions, or tasked to imaginary duties, as if we had done *all his will*, and wanted more employment! We should therefore be upon our guard against such impositions, on whatever pretence they are enforced; and whilst we follow after purity, and exercise temperance in all things, according to the will of God, let us disregard such as judge us in those things which he hath allowed. Whilst we are satisfied that every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, let us remember, that all should be received with thanksgiving by them who believe and know the truth; that even the divine allowance will not sanctify an intemperate, inexpedient, extravagant, or unthankful use of the creatures; and that nothing will be good to us, except we seek by prayer the Lord's blessing on our enjoyment of it.

V. 6—16.

They who would approve themselves to be faithful ministers, must put the brethren in remembrance of all those things which Christ and his apostles delivered to the Church; and whatever other studies or accomplishments may be supposed requisite in those intended for the ministry, it is *above all* necessary, that they "be nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine;" and that they well digest that knowledge of the scripture to which they have attained. Instead of amusing ourselves and others with ingenious fancies and curious speculations, or with enforcing human inventions and superstitions, by imaginary or fallacious explanations of their origin, meaning, and benefit, which are often "profane and old wives' fa-" bles," we should exercise ourselves, and instruct others, in the substantial duties of godliness. This hath, at all times, the promise both of this world and of the next; and our present solid satisfaction, (as well as our eternal happiness,) is inseparably connected with it; but all else is vanity and vexation of spirit. This faithful saying is worthy of universal acceptation: apostles, evangelists, and martyrs, have laboured, endured reproach, and faced death in all its terrors, in support of it, because they trusted in the living God; who, being the Preserver of all men, and the Saviour of the world, will surely take especial care of those that believe, and cause all things to work together for their eternal good. It behooves all who command and teach these things, to take heed that no man despise them: but this is especially incumbent on young ministers, when called into conspicuous situations; for they will be narrowly observed, and many will be ready to deem them unfit for their arduous services, especially when they are called to instruct or admonish their seniors and superiors. Ministers should also be careful to confirm and elucidate their instructions by their example, and thus to lead forward believers to steadfastness in the faith, holiness of conversation, fervent love, spirituality, fidelity, integrity, and purity. Their time should be employed in reading and meditating on the scriptures, in acquiring religious knowledge, and in communicating it by the public and private duties of their ministry. This will leave them no leisure for dissipated pleasures, trifling visits, or idle conversation, and but little for amusing and merely ornamental studies. That measure of endowment which God hath given them for the work, to which they were set apart, and to which they solemnly devoted themselves, when ordained by the laying on of the hands of the pastors of the church, must not be neglected or left to decrease by disuse, but must be diligently exercised and improved. Alas! we cannot but reflect with grief of heart, that so few of those called ministers seem so much as to

[a] REBUKE not [b] an elder, but [c] entreat *him* as a father, *and* the younger men [d] as brethren;

2 The [e] elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, [f] with all purity.

3 [g] Honour [h] widows that are widows [i] indeed.

4 But if any widow have children or [k] nephews, let them [l] learn first to shew * piety at home, and [m] to requite their parents: for that is [n] good and acceptable before God.

a 19, 20 Lev. xix. 32. Deut. xxxiii. 9 Gal ii. 11–14. b 17. Acts xiv. 23. xv. 4 6 xx. 17 Tit i 5, 6 Jam. v. 14. 1 Pet v. 1. 2 John 1. 3 John 1. Rev. iv. 4 c Rom. xiii. 7 Gal. vi 1. 2 Tim. ii 24, 25. Philem 9, 10. Jam. iii 17. 1 Pet. v. 5, 6. d Matt xviii 15–17. xxiii. 8. e 3. Matt. xii. 50. John xix 26, 27 f iv. 12. Phil. iv. 8. 1 Thes v 22 2 Tim. ii. 22 g 2. 17. Ex. xx. 12. Matt xv 6. 1 Thes. ii 6 1 Pet ii. 17. iii 7.——h 9. Deut. x. 18. xiv. 29. xvi. 11. 14. xxvii. 19. Job xxix. 13. xxxi. 16. Ps lxviii. 5 xciv. 6. cxlvi 9. Jer. xlix 11. Matt. xxiii. 14. Luke vii. 12. Acts vi. 1. ix. 39. Jam i. 27 ——i 4, 5. 9–11. 16 Luke ii. 37. John i 47 ——k Judg. xii 14 *Marg.* Job xviii. 19 Is. xiv. 22 ——l 1 Sam xxii. 2, 3 Prov. xxxi. 28. Luke ii. 51. John xix 26, 27.——* Or, *kindness.* Matt. xv 4–6 Mark vii. 11–13.——m Gen. xlv. 10, 11. xlvii. 12 28. Ruth ii. 2 18. Eph vi. 1–3.——n *See on,* ii. 3.

5 Now she that is [o] a widow indeed, [p] and desolate, [q] trusteth in God, and [r] continueth in supplications and prayers night and day.

6 But [s] she that liveth † in pleasure is dead while she liveth.

7 And [u] these things give in charge, that they may be blameless.

8 But if any provide not for his own, [x] and specially for those of his own ‡ house, [y] he hath denied the faith, [z] and is worse than an infidel.

o 3. Ruth i. 5. 12. 20, 21. p Is. iii. 26 xlix. 21. liv. 1. Lam. i 13. q Ruth ii. 12. Ps. xciv. Is xii. 2. 1. 10. 1 Cor. vii. 32 1 Pet. iii. 5. r *See on,* Luke ii. 37 xviii. 1. 7. Eph. vi. 18. s 1 Sam. xxv. 6. Job xxi. 11–15. Ps. lxxiii 5–7. Is xxii. 13. Am. vi. 5. 6. Luke xii. 19 xv. 13. xvi. 19. Jam. v. 5. Rev. xviii. 7. † Or, *delicately.* Deut xxviii 54. 56 1 Sam. xv. 32. Prov. xxix. 21. Is. xlvii 1. Jer. vi. 2. Lam iv. 5 Luke vii. 25.——t Matt viii. 22. Luke xv 24. 32. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. Eph ii. 1. 5. v. 14 Col. ii. 13 Rev. iii 1.——u 1. 3. iv. 11. vi. 17. 2 Tim. iv 4 Tit. i. 13. ii. 15——x Gen. xxx. 30. Is lviii. 7. Matt. vii. 11. Luke xi. 11–13. 2 Cor. xii. 14. Gal vi. 10.——‡ Or, *kindred. See on,* 4.——y 2 Tim. iii. 5. Tit i. 16. Rev. ii 13. iii. 8.——z Matt. xviii. 17 Luke xii. 47, 48. John xv. 22 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16. vi. 15.

have ever seriously read these directions! and that their method of spending their time, the subjects of their studies, the objects of their pursuits, and the business and pleasure of their lives, form a perfect contrast to what they ought to be! But may the Lord have mercy upon each of us, and write these admonitions in our inmost souls! May we meditate continually on them! May our thoughts and affections be engrossed by them! May we "give ourselves "wholly unto them, that our profiting may appear unto "all men!" Let every minister, then, hear the apostle call upon him to "take heed to himself," as one that must give account; to look to it, that he experience the power of the Gospel in his own soul, and bring forth the fruits of it in his life; that his motives, temper, words, and works, be pure and evangelical; that his doctrine be scriptural; that he "declare the whole counsel of God;" and that he manifest his truth to every man's conscience, as in the sight of his heart-searching Judge. And let every one, who hath thus begun his ministry, persevere in this holy living and faithful preaching; however despised, reviled, opposed, or discouraged, he may be: for in so doing, he shall both save his own soul, and those of his attentive hearers; whilst blind guides and mercenary teachers can only expect to go before their deluded followers into the pit of everlasting destruction.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1, 2. The connexion of the word translated "an elder," in this place, has induced expositors in general to understand it of senior Christians, as well as of pastors. It must likewise be supposed that the apostle spake of such faults, as resulted from infirmity, and were not openly scandalous; or the counsel here given cannot be reconciled with a subsequent injunction. (*Note,* 19, 20.) As Timothy was young, it was peculiarly incumbent on him to avoid harshness, in animadverting on the misconduct of aged Christians or ministers: he ought not therefore to rebuke them with severity, or in apparent anger; but to entreat them to act with greater circumspection, and endeavour modestly to convince them of the impropriety and bad effects of the mistakes into which they had been betrayed: even as a son, placed in authority, would address an honoured parent who had not acted with due regard to his character and situation. In reproving young men or ministers, it would be proper to speak with great meekness and affection, and to admonish them as brethren. The elder women he must counsel and caution, as dutiful sons in such stations would their mothers; and he should behave towards the younger women with that kind of regard and affection which is borne to sisters; and with all purity, that nothing contrary to the strictest decorum might attend his ministerial converse with them.

V. 3, 4. The apostle next directed, that the aged widows, who were really destitute, should be honourably treated and provided for. But, if any widow had "children or *grand-children,*" who were capable of relieving her, they ought to be required, as a duty of the first importance, to show piety, or a respectful and grateful affection, "at home;" requiting the tender, laborious, and expensive care of their parents towards them, in infancy and childhood, by providing for them in old age: for that was good in itself, a debt due to them, and an acceptable service to God, even in preference to any other charitable work.

V. 5, 6. The "widow indeed," whom the apostle peculiarly intended, was one who was desolate, having neither children nor relations, able to maintain her; and being destitute of the means of procuring a decent subsistence: at the same time she trusted in God to provide for her, and used no improper methods of obtaining a support; but devoted herself to his service, in continual prayers and supplications, stated and occasional, public and private, and even by night as well as by day; taking great delight in devotion, and employing herself very much in supplicating God, in behalf of her fellow Christians and all around her. (*Note, Luke* ii. 37.) But any one, who lived a delicate, luxurious, dissipated life, and perhaps chose to continue unmarried, that she might have less restraint in this self-indulgent course, must be considered as dead in sin, and only alive to worldly pleasure, (*Marg. Ref.*) so that no honourable attention was due to her from the church.

V. 7, 8. These things Timothy must give in charge to the pastors and deacons; that the body of professing Christians at Ephesus might be preserved blameless; that no encouragement might be given, even by means of their

9 Let not [a] a widow be * taken into the number [b] under threescore years old, [c] having been the wife of one man;

10 Well [d] reported of for [e] good works; [f] if she have brought up children, [g] if she have lodged strangers, if she have [h] washed the saints' feet, [i] if she have relieved the afflicted, [k] if she have diligently followed every good work.

11 But [l] the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun [m] to wax wanton against Christ, [n] they will marry;

12 Having [o] damnation, because they have cast off [p] their first faith.

a See on. 3. 4.
* Or. *chosen.*
b 11. 14 Luke ii. 36. 37.
c iii 2. 12. 1 Cor. vii. 10. 11. 39 40
d iii 7 Acts v. 3. x. 22 xxii. 12. 3 John 12.
e 25 ii. 10. vi. 18 Matt. v. 16. Acts ix. 36. Eph. ii. 10. 2 Tim iii. 17 Tit. ii. 7. iii. 8 14. Heb x 24. xiii. 21 1 Pet. ii. 12.——f 2 Tim. i 5 iii. 15.——g Acts xvi. 14, 15 Rom. xii. 13 Heb. xiii 2 1 Pet iv 9 ——h Gen. xviii 4. xix. 2. Luke vii. 38 44 John xiii. 5—15.——i Lev. xxv. 35. Is. i. 17. Acts ix. 39
k Ps. cxix. 4 Col i. 10. 2 Tim. ii. 21. Tit ii. 14. iii. 1. 8. *Gr.*
l 9 14.
m Deut xxxii. 15. Is. iii. 16 Hos. xiii 6 Jam. v. 5 2 Pet ii 18.
n 14. iv. 3. 1 Cor. vii 39, 40.
o 1 Cor xi. 34. Jam. iii. 1 1 Pet. iv 17. *Gr.*
p Gal. i 6. Rev. ii. 4, 5.

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benevolence to such persons as were a scandal to them.—But if any man refused to provide for his own near relations, especially for his wife, children, and household, or for his aged parents, through sloth, covetousness, extravagance, or self-indulgence, he should be considered as having renounced the faith, by manifestly and habitually refusing to obey Christ; nay, as acting more disgracefully and unreasonably than an unbeliever would do in such circumstances. The heathen, in general, considered children as bound to support their aged parents; and considered the neglect of this duty as *infamous*, and fit only to be mentioned along with the most scandalous vices.—(*Marg. Ref.*) The manner in which many covetous persons grievously pervert this text must not pass unnoticed: while they evidently violate the duties of piety, equity, and charity, as well as that of providing for their indigent relations; yea, while they bring up their children, and maintain their families, in a manner utterly unsuitable to their circumstances, from eagerness to amass riches; they often quote this verse, in vindication of their sordid avarice, and imagine that the apostle commanded men to neglect all other duties, in order to enrich their children! (16.) 'Some plead these words, to justify, or to excuse, 'their sordid parsimony and want of charity:—whereas, 'they plainly respect the provision which children should 'make for their parents; and not that which parents should 'make for their children.' (*Whitby.*)

V. 9—12. The apostle could not here mean, that no widows were to be *relieved* by the Church, who were under sixty years of age: for the distresses of younger widows, as well as of other poor persons, might be very urgent.—He is, therefore, generally supposed to refer to a certain number of widows, who were discharged from all secular cares, and maintained by the Church; of whom such as were able acted as deaconesses, to visit sick and poor women, and to administer relief and counsel to them; to instruct young women, and perhaps children; or to attend on such other concerns of the church, its ministers, and pious strangers, as lay within their province. Though no command is given for such an order of persons in the church; (for many things of this kind were left discretionary, and to be determined according to circumstances;) yet they might frequently be useful, if properly selected and regulated. In this view the propriety of the rule here given is apparent. As the apostle counsels the younger widows to marry, it cannot be imagined that he would exclude them, when grown old, from the number here intended, if otherwise qualified, merely because they had followed his counsel. By "the wife of one man," therefore, the apostle did not intend to exclude such as had married a second time, which the Scripture no where disallows. But shameful and astonishing irregularities, in this respect, were common among the heathen women: they frequently left their husbands to live with other men, and then sometimes returned to them again; they often designedly gave them just cause to divorce them, that they might take other husbands; nay, they sometimes did what was equivalent to divorcing their husbands: nor were these things deemed scandalous; at least, not in that degree which they would be at present. If then any woman had formerly conformed to these corrupt customs, it would not be consistent with the credit of Christianity to admit her into this select number of devoted widows, though no other objection lay against her; for it must exclusively consist of those who had lived virtuously and honourably in the married state. (iii. 2. 12.)—Some expositors think that they who had married again, after being divorced, were intended: but there is not the least intimation in scripture, that the divorced should be restrained from marrying again, even if justly put away, and surely, then, not when unjustly divorced.—They must also be such women as had an established character for good works since they were converted. Those were to be preferred who had charitably educated the children of their poor relatives or neighbours, or who had faithfully done their duty towards their own children; who, when in more prosperous circumstances, had hospitably entertained strangers in their houses; who had willingly stooped to the office of washing the feet of the saints, when wearied with travelling; and who had, from love to Christ, readily relieved the afflicted, and diligently attended to every good work. These widows, when grown old and left desolate, were the proper persons for this service.—But Timothy was directed to reject the application of younger widows; for experience showed that their avowed purpose, of no more entering into the married state, was not to be depended on. After a time, when their grief on account of their former loss had subsided, various circumstances might induce them to marry again: and as their admission into the number of devoted widows implied an engagement to the contrary, and probably was attended by some promise to this effect; so their violation of it might be called "a waxing wanton against "Christ," leading them to be unfaithful to him, for the sake of some earthly object. Thus their engagement would serve to their condemnation, by occasioning their violation of that fidelity to Christ which they had previously promised: the church would see it necessary to censure them, and their sin would expose them to condemnation, if not repented of. They might perhaps be tempted to apostatize from the faith, by marrying heathens: and this seems to have been the case with some of this description. For Christians, probably, would not be disposed to marry those

13 And withal they learn [q] *to be* idle, [r] wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also, and [s] busy-bodies, [t] speaking things which they ought not.

14 [u] I will therefore that [x] the younger women marry, bear children, [y] guide the house, [z] give none occasion to the adversary [*] to speak reproachfully;

15 For some [a] are already turned aside after Satan.

16 If any man or woman that believeth have widows, [b] let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are [c] widows indeed.

q Prov. xxxi. 27. 2 Thes. iii. 6—11
r Lev. xix. 16. Prov. xx. 19 Luke x. 7 Acts xx. 20.
s 2 Thes. iii. 11 1 Pet iv. 15
t Acts xx. 30. Tit. i. 11 Jam. iii 10
u *See on*, ii 8.
x 11. iv. 3. 1 Cor. vii. 8, 9. Heb. xiii. 4
y Gen. xviii. 6. 9. Prov. xiv. 1. xxxi. 27—29. Tit ii. 5. *Gr*
z vi 1. 2 Sam xiii 4. Dan. vi. 4 Rom. xiv. 13. 2 Cor. xi. 12 Tit. ii. 5 8 1 Pet. iv. 14, 15
* Gr. *for their railing.* Luke xxiii. 35—41
a Phil. iii. 21. 22 2 Tim i 15. ii. 18. iv. 10. 2 Pet ii 2 20 22 iii. 16, 1 John ii. 19. Jude 4, 5. Rev. xii. 9.——b *See on*, 4. 8.——c *See on*, 3

17 Let [d] the elders that [e] rule well [f] be counted worthy of [g] double honour, especially they who [h] labour in the [i] word and doctrine.

18 For [k] the scripture saith, [l] Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn: and, [m] The labourer *is* worthy of his reward.

19 Against an elder [n] receive not an accusation, but † before [o] two or three witnesses.

20 Them that sin, [p] rebuke before all, [q] that others also may fear.

d *See on*, b. 1.
e iii. 5 Matt. xxiv. 45. Luke xii. 42. Rom. xii. 8. 1 Thes. v. 12, 13. Heb. xiii. 7. 17. 24
f *See on*, 3.—Acts xxviii. 10. Rom. xv. 27. 1 Cor. ix. 5—14. Gal vi. 6. Phil. ii. 29.
g 2 Kings ii. 9. Is. xl. 2 Jer. xvi. 18. xvii. 18. Zech. ix. 12.
h iv. 10 Matt. ix. 37, 38. Luke x. 1, 2. 7. John iv. 38. Acts xx 35. Rom. xvi. 12. 1 Cor. iii. 9. xv. 10. xvi. 16. 2 Cor. vi 1. Phil. ii. 16 iv. 3. 2 Tim ii. 6.——i *See on*, iv 6. 16. 2 Tim iv. 2.——k Rom. iv. 3 ix. 17. x 11 xi 2. Gal iii. 8. Jam. iv. 5 ——l Deut. xxv. 4. 1 Cor. xi. 9, 10.——m Lev. xix. 13 Deut xxiv. 14, 15. Matt. x. 10. Luke x. 7.——n John xviii. 29. Acts xxiv. 2—13 xxv. 16. Tit. i. 6.
† Or, *under*.——o Deut. xvii. 6. xix. 15. 18, 19. Matt. xviii. 16. John viii. 17. 2 Cor. xiii. 1 Heb. x. 28.——p Gal. ii. 11—14 2 Tim. iv. 2. Tit. i. 13.——q i 20. Deut. xiii. 11. xiv. 13. xix. 20 xxi. 21. Acts v. 5. 11. xix. 17.

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who had entered into this number; and if their inclinations led them to marry, their situation might expose them peculiarly to this temptation. The original is, "They will "incline," or choose, "to marry."

V. 13—15. It might likewise be feared, and experience had shown there was danger, lest younger widows, being early freed from the employments of domestic life, and having much leisure, should neglect to spend it in devotion and the duties of their station; and so contract habits of idleness, and waste their hours in sauntering from house to house, as trifling visitants; tattling and gossipping about the news of the day, and intermeddling with other people's affairs, spreading slanders, and speaking many things of a mischievous and improper nature. (2 *Thes.* iii. 11.) We should not suppose the apostle meant, that all the younger widows, who were employed in this service, acted in this manner; but it was an evil incident to that practice, and formed a sufficient reason for excluding them. He therefore determined that it was better to leave them at liberty to marry, if they chose it and circumstances admitted, that they might be occupied in the useful duties of wives and mothers, and in domestic business; that so no occasion might be given to any adversaries of the Gospel to speak reproachfully of it, through the misconduct of such as professed to be peculiarly devoted to the service of Christ. For indeed, some younger widows, being improperly admitted into this number, had turned aside to follow the suggestions of Satan, had married unbelieving husbands, and so relapsed into idolatry. 'The converting 'men to the Christian faith, being the "turning them "from Satan unto God," 'The casting off the faith 'may well be styled, "the turning aside after Satan."' (*Whitby.*) The apostle's determination, that no widow under sixty years of age should be admitted into this select number of devoted women, lest their useless lives and misconduct should occasion scandal, concludes with peculiar force against all vows of virginity, taken by young persons, under pretence of more strict religion than can be practised in the married state: and, indeed, the silence of the apostle concerning women who had never been married, in this connexion, is very expressive. But the pastors of the church, before many ages had elapsed, abundantly made up this deficiency!

V. 16. In closing this subject, the apostle required every believer, man or woman, that was able, to relieve widows belonging to their families, and others who were destitute, that the church might not be burdened with them, or prevented from relieving such as were entirely indigent and friendless. 'In the opinion of Estius, this precept 'extended to the proprietors of slaves, and bound them to 'maintain their slaves, when they became incapable of 'labour.' (*Macknight.*) The spirit of it, no doubt, extends to servants of every kind, who have spent their strength in our service, as far as we are able to support them.

V. 17, 18. Many expositors infer from these verses, that there were ruling elders in the church, who did not preach; others do not allow the inference; and, in general, *ruling* and *teaching* are united. (*Marg. Ref.*) Indeed, as double honour chiefly relates to a more plentiful and decent maintenance, it is improbable that mere rulers, who would not be greatly taken off from their secular business, should be thus maintained at the expense of their brethren. To preside in the affairs of the church, and to preach the word, (even the doctrine of Christ,) constitute the outlines of the pastoral office; the direction seems therefore to mean, that they who ruled most prudently, faithfully, and diligently, and were most laborious in their ministry, should be most respected and best provided for: especially they who were most unwearied in preaching and private exhortation; as the exercise of authority was more suited to the natural disposition of the human heart. (*Notes*, 1 *Cor.* ix. 4—14.) *Labourer*, &c. 'This, as well as 'what goeth before, is affirmed by the apostle to be said in 'the scripture; yet it is no where written in the Jewish 'scriptures. It is found only, (*Matt.* x. 10. *Luke* x. 7.) 'The apostle must therefore have read either Matthew's or 'Luke's Gospel, before he wrote this epistle. And seeing 'he quotes this saying as scripture, and represents it as of 'equal authority with the writings of Moses: it is a proof, 'not only of the early publication of the Gospels, but of 'their authenticity, as divinely inspired writings.' (*Macknight.*) (*Notes*, 1 *Thes.* v. 27. 2 *Pet.* iii. 16.)

21 I [r] charge *thee* before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and [s] the elect angels, [t] that thou observe these things, * without [u] preferring one before another, doing nothing by [x] partiality.

22 [y] Lay hands [z] suddenly on no man, [a] neither be partaker of other men's sins: [b] keep thyself pure.

23 Drink no longer water, [c] but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities.

24 Some men's [d] sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some *men* they follow after.

25 Likewise also [e] the good works *of some* are manifest before-hand; and they that are otherwise [f] cannot be hid.

[r] vi. 13. 1 Thess. v. 27 2 Tim ii. 14. iv. 1

[s] Matt. xvi. 27 xxv. 41. 2 Pet. ii. 4 Jude 6. Rev. xii. 7—9 xiv. 10.

[t] Ps. cvii. 43. cxix 43. Matt. xxviii. 20.

* Or, *without prejudice.*

[u] Lev. xix. 15 Deut. xxxiii 9. Prov. xviii 5. Luke xx. 21. Acts xv. 37, 38. 2 Cor v. 16.——[x] Mal. ii 9. Jam. ii. 1—4 iii 17.

[y] iv 14 Acts vi 6. xiii. 3. 2 Tim. i 6. Heb. vi 2.——[z] iii. 6. 10 Josh ix. 14. 2 Tim. ii 2. Tit. i. 5—9.——[a] Eph. v. 11. 2 John 11. Rev. xviii 4.——[b] iv. 12. Acts xviii. 6 xx. 26

[c] iii. 3. iv. 4. Lev. x. 9—11 Ps. civ. 15 Prov xxxi. 4—7. Ez xliv. 21 Eph v. 18. Tit i. 7. ii. 3

[d] Jer ii 34. Acts i. 16—20. v. 1—11 viii. 18. Gal. v 19-21. 2 Tim. iv. 10. 2 Pet. ii 10, 21

[e] iii 7 Matt. v. 16. Acts ix. 36. x. 22. xvi 1—3. xxii. 12. Gal. v. 22, 23. Phil. i. 11.

[f] Ps. xxxvii. 5, 6. Matt. vi. 3—6 Luke xi.

V. 19, 20. The character of an elder, or pastor, was of great importance; it would therefore be improper, not only to condemn him, but even to receive an accusation against him, except it was attested by two or three credible witnesses. Many might be disposed to revile those faithful ministers, whose doctrine and reproofs had offended them; and indeed, the grand enmity of "the accuser of "the brethren," and of all his servants, would be excited against them. It was therefore highly reasonable, that no accusation, tending to bring the conduct of an elder to a public investigation, and thus to endanger his character, should be regarded, if supported only by one solitary testimony; which his denial of the crime would at least counterbalance. But in respect of those who were evidently guilty of any scandalous offence, whether elders or others, Timothy, as presiding in the Church, was required to rebuke them before all their brethren; not only in order to their being made ashamed and brought to repentance; but that others might fear the same censure, and so be excited to greater circumspection.

V. 21, 22. The apostle here most solemnly charged Timothy, as in the presence of God and the Lord Jesus Christ; and as he hoped to join the company of the elect angels, who had been preserved and confirmed in holiness, when many of their company apostatized and ruined themselves; who then witnessed his conduct, and would attend, when he should give an account of it to his sovereign Judge; that he observed these things with the utmost care and exactness, whatever opposition and trials he might incur; and that in all these regulations he should take care not to prefer one man to another, through any carnal affection, attachment, connexion, or obligations: and that he should manifest no partiality, either in censuring offenders, or ordaining elders, or in any other part of his important service. In ordaining elders, especially, he must be careful not to act in a hasty manner; but take time to examine into men's characters, principles, motives, and endowments, that he might not be induced to lay hands on improper persons, by importunity employed in their behalf. He would need great care, in this immensely important concern, to avoid being partaker of other men's sins, and becoming answerable in part, at least, for the crimes of those who thus intruded into that sacred function, to the dishonour of God, the great detriment of the church, and the ruin of immortal souls: for even an obliging and easy temper might betray him into much criminality, from which he must by all means keep himself pure. It is manifest, that Timothy is here, and elsewhere, supposed to possess great authority in the Ephesian church, both in superintending the elders already ordained, and in ordaining others. It is also allowed that he was an extraordinary person, especially appointed by the apostle to this service; but there is no proof, that he conferred miraculous powers by the imposition of his hands, as the apostles did. We cannot indeed by any means infer the *divine right* of episcopacy, from the authority exercised by Timothy, Titus, and other evangelists; yet it is highly probable, at least, that it was very early found expedient, and conducive to peace, to have a stated presiding inspector, of approved wisdom and piety, who might superintend the pastors and the affairs of a few neighbouring churches, as moderator and censor; and be peculiarly attended to in the appointment of church-officers. Hence a moderate episcopacy was very early, probably even while some of the apostles lived, generally prevalent in the church: indeed, this seems to have taken place between the time, when St. Paul gave his admirable parting charge to the elders or bishops of Ephesus, and the time when St. John, from our Lord's own mouth, wrote epistles to the angels of the seven churches in Asia. And after all the abuses, usurpations, controversies, and prejudices, that have since been introduced, probably the time will ere long arrive, when experience will convince pious men of different persuasions, that something of this kind, properly conferred, limited, and exercised, would prove a suitable remedy to those multiplied divisions, which so weaken and disgrace religious societies, that in doctrine, worship, and practice, are in all other respects unexceptionable.

V. 23. This verse is a remarkable instance of the apostle's neglect of exact method in penning his epistles. It occurred to his mind, when reflecting on Timothy's manifold cares and labours, that his frequent indispositions might be increased by his too great abstemiousness; to the prevention of his usefulness, and the shortening of his days. He therefore broke in upon his subject, to counsel him not to drink water any longer, at least as his only liquor; but to use a little wine, to strengthen his stomach, and preserve his health. We may hence form an estimate of the exact temperance practised by these laborious servants of Christ, who so zealously pleaded the cause of Christian liberty, who placed no dependence on such matters, and who never prescribed their own conduct as a rule for other men!

V. 24, 25. In respect of the choice and ordination of ministers, it might further be observed, that some men's crimes were so notorious, and so easily proved, that they lay open before-hand, and anticipated the judgment which was to be formed of their conduct and pretensions. In other cases they followed after; so that diligent and impartial investigation would be requisite, in order to detect

CHAP. VI.

The duty of servants to unbelieving, and believing, masters, 1, 2. *Timothy must shun those, as corrupters of the Gospel, who teach contrary to the apostle's doctrine,* 3—5. *The advantage of godliness with contentment,* 6—8. *The mischiefs arising from the love of money,* 9, 10. *The apostle exhorts Timothy to flee from these evils; to follow after righteousness, &c. and to fight the good fight of faith,* 11, 12; *and most solemnly charges him to be faithful till the coming of Christ,* 13, 14. *He ascribes glory to the eternal God,* 15, 16. *Timothy must charge the rich to avoid pride, and confidence in wealth; and to abound in liberality, as seeking a treasure in heaven, against the time to come,* 18, 19; *and he must adhere to the faith, avoiding profane and vain controversies,* 20, 21.

them. In like manner, some persons, applying for admission into the public service of the church, had a sufficient testimonial in their known and abundant good works, which were manifest before any peculiar inquiry was made; and when this was not the case, yet, upon due investigation, Timothy and others might become acquainted with them: so that, in most instances, an impartial attention to the business, without any respect of persons, would enable them to know who were, and who were not, eligible to public stations. 'I speak not of men, whose good or bad works 'are manifest before-hand: for they without further ex-'amination may be admitted; or are to be rejected: but 'those whose vices, or good works, are latent. For they, 'after examination and inquiry, cannot be long hid. And 'so, if thou be not hasty in laying on of hands, thou may-'est timely discover them. Or thou wilt not be partaker 'with the sinner, having done as much as was in thy pow-'er to discover them.' (*Whitby.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

There is a respect due to the aged, which must not be withheld by their juniors, when placed in authority over them, or even on account of incidental faults. Every thing harsh and assuming must be improper, in the conduct of young ministers towards their seniors, as it would be in the conduct of a son to his parents. Indeed, admonitions are generally most efficacious, whether to old or young, when meekness and affection unite with firmness and faithfulness. The greatest caution and purity are requisite in the conduct of ministers, (especially while in the prime of life,) as to their most needful converse with the younger women in their congregations; that all occasion, appearance, and suspicion of evil may be prevented. —It is an indispensable duty, for children and grand-children to requite the kindness of their aged parents; this is good and acceptable with God; nor are more distant relations exempt from a measure of the same obligation, when they can afford it; that neither the church, the parish, nor the public, may be charged; but that the contributions, raised in any way, may be applied to such as are really destitute. But if any professor of the Gospel, through sloth, improvidence, selfishness, or other corrupt principle, wilfully neglect, or refuse to provide for, his near relatives, he is, in the apostle's judgment, virtually a denier of the faith, and even worse than his neighbours who do not pretend to believe the doctrines of grace. And may we not, by parity of reason, infer, that they who neglect to instruct their household, and to do what they can for the salvation of their relatives, act altogether inconsistently with the Christian profession? Aged widows and others of good character, who are left destitute in the decline of life, ought to be honoured as well as supported. It seems the intent of these scriptures to teach us, that every religious society should, as far as it is able, make provision for persons of this description, and not leave them to sordid penury, or to the tender mercies of the wicked, in their old age. But then this provision should be limited to such as "trust in God, and devote themselves to his service, in "prayer and supplication night and day;" at least to such, as give evidence that they are of a widely different character from those, "who live in pleasure, being dead whilst "they live." Alas! what numbers are there of this description among nominal Christians, even to the latest period of life! And how much does the same leaven work among professors of the Gospel! These things we must give in charge, that the church may be preserved blameless; or, at least, that we may deliver our own souls.

V. 9—16.

Every one, who is brought forth into notoriety in the church, should, as much as possible, be free from scandal; and many are proper objects of charity, who ought not to be employed in public services. They who in domestic life have shown most diligence, humility, compassion, benevolence, love to the people of God, and readiness for every good work, are most likely to fill up leisure time profitably, and to be faithful in whatever is intrusted to them. It is not sufficient to determine what would be best in itself, of things not absolutely obligatory or unlawful: the state of human nature, and facts, must be attended to, that it may be known what is most generally expedient. It might have seemed plausible to admit the young widows, or other young women, to such a service in the church, as implied an entire devoting of themselves to religion for the rest of their days; yet the apostle, not only with the wisdom derived from deep reflection and extensive observation, but under the influence of the divine Spirit, decided otherwise. He knew that this would expose them to temptation, and lead many into sin; that it would tend to ensnare some of them into improper marriages, and even occasion their apostacy and ruin; that it would give others of them a habit of indolence, sauntering, slandering, intruding into matters not belonging to

LET as many [a] servants as are under the yoke, [b] count their own masters worthy of all honour, [c] that the name of God and *his* doctrine be not blasphemed:

2 And they that have [d] believing masters, [e] let them not despise *them*, [f] because they are brethren; but rather do *them* service, [g] because they are * faithful and beloved, [h] partakers of the benefit. [i] These things teach and exhort.

3 If [k] any man teach otherwise, and consent not [l] to wholesome words, *even* [m] the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to [n] the doctrine which is according to godliness;

4 [o] He is † proud, knowing nothing, but ‡ doting [p] about questions and strifes of words, [q] whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,

5 § Perverse disputings of [r] men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, [s] supposing that gain is godliness: [t] from such withdraw thyself.

a Deut. xxviii. 48. Is. xlvii. 6. lviii. 6 Matt. xi. 29. 30. Acts xv. 10 1 Cor. vii. 21, 23. Gal. v. 1. b Gen xvi. 9. xxiv. 2. 12 27. 35, &c. 2 Kings v. 2, 3. 13. Mal. i. 6 Acts x. 7. 22. Eph. vi. 5—8. Col iii. 22—25 Tit. ii. 9. 1 Pet. ii. 17—20. v. 14. c Gen. xiii. 7, 8 2 Sam. xii. 14. Neh ix. 5. Is lii. 5. Ez. xxxvi. 20. 23. Luke xvii. 1. Rom. ii. 24. 1 Cor. x. 32. Tit ii. 5. 8. 10. 1 Pet ii. 12. iii. 16.——d Col. iv 1. Philem. 10—16.——e Gen xvi 4, 5. Num. xvi. 3. Matt. vi. 24. 2 Pet. ii. 10 Jude 8.——f v 1. Matt. xxiii. 8. xxv. 40. Rom. viii 29. Gal. iii. 26—29. Col. iii. 11.——g Gal. v. 6. Eph. i 1. 15. Col. i 2. 4. iii. 12. 2 Thes. i 3 Philem 5—7——* Or, *believing*.——h Joel ii. 28. Rom. xi. 17 Eph. iii. 6. Heb. iii. 1. 14. 1 Pet v. 1.——i iv. 11. Tit ii. 1. 15 iii 8.——k i. 3 6. Rom. xvi 17. Gal. i. 6, 7 l i. 10. 2 Tim. i. 13. iv. 3. Tit. i. 9. ii. 1, 2 *Gr*. Prov. xv. 4 Tit. iii. 8.

m Matt. xvii. 21. xxviii. 20. 1 Thes. iv. 1, 2. 6. n iv. 7. 8 Tit. i. 1. ii. 11—14 2 Pet. i. 3—7. o i. 7. iii. 6 Prov. xiii. 7. xxv. 14. xxvi. 12. Acts viii. 9. 21—23. Rom. xii. 16 1 Cor. iii. 18. viii. 1, 2. Gal. vi. 3. Col. ii. 18. 2 Thes. ii. 4. 2 Tim. iii 4. 2 Pet. ii 12. 18. Jude 10. 16. Rev. iii. 17. † Or, *a fool*. ‡ Or, *sick*. p i. 4 2 Tim. ii. 23.——q Is. lviii. 4. Acts xv. 2 Rom. ii. 8. xiii 13. xiv. 1. 1 Cor. iii. 3. xi. 16. 18 2 Cor. xi. 20. Gal v. 15. 20, 21. 26 Phil. i. 15 ii. 3. 14. Tit. iii. 9 Jam. i. 19, 20. iii. 14—18. iv. 1, 2 5, 6. 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2——§ Or, *Gallings one of another*. i. 6.——r Matt. vii. 17—20. xii. 33. John iii. 19—21. Eph. iv. 17—19. 2 Thes. ii. 8—11. 2 Tim iii. 8. Tit. i. 15, 16. Heb. iii. 12, 13. 2 John 8—10——s 6. iii. 3. 8. 2 Kings v. 20—27. Is. lvi 11. Jer v. 3. vi. 13. viii. 10. Ez xxxiii. 31 Matt. xxi. 13 xxiii. 14. Acts viii. 18—20. xix 24—28. 2 Pet. ii. 3. 15. Jude 11. Rev. xviii. 3. 13.——t Rom. xvi. 17, 18. 2 Thes. iii. 6. 2 Tim. iii 5.

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them, and improper conversation: and that it would, therefore, be generally better for them to be employed in the duties of the married state, and in the cares of a family; that this would give less occasion to the enemies of the Gospel to speak reproachfully, and Satan less opportunity of prevailing against them. And immense numbers, in every age, have shown their total ignorance of human nature, and have done incalculable mischief, by attempting to improve on his plan, or rather to subvert it.

V. 17—25.

The office of a minister is honourable to all, those alone excepted who are a disgrace to their office; but the most prudent, faithful, and diligent, especially the most laborious in the word and doctrine, ought to be most honoured and best provided for. The reverse proportion indeed seems generally to be adopted in this matter; but the Lord will provide for his faithful servants, whatever method men may follow in disposing of their favours. It may be expected that the impartial public reprover will be exposed to the attacks of malicious calumniators: and though his faults should not be connived at, yet accusations against him ought not to be regarded, except well authenticated: but they who give public offence by their crimes, should be rebuked publicly, that others may be put upon their guard. All, who are employed in important services in the church, should consider themselves as charged by the apostle, "before God and the Lord Jesus "Christ, and the elect angels, to observe those things, "without preferring one before another." The neglect of this rule, in the exercise of ecclesiastical authority, has given its opponents one of their best arguments against it. So much hath been done out of carnal respects, and by partiality to relatives, friends, and connexions, in admitting men into the ministry, appointing them to livings, and conniving at their crimes, that the exercise of all authority of this kind has been considered as unlawful.—How far those concerned in ecclesiastical matters are culpable, in respect of "laying hands suddenly" on improper persons, without due inquiry and circumspection, or from complaisance to superiors or friends, and how far this rule is observed, or violated, in all its extent, every man's conscience must determine for himself, till Christ shall come to take an account of his servants. But it is certain that immense criminality must rest somewhere, as the multitude of ignorant, slothful, ambitious, avaricious, immoral, and heretical clergymen, who remain uncensured, throughout this land, and in almost every part of the visible church, most manifestly proves. There must somewhere be those who are, in this respect, "partakers of other men's sins;" and it must require great care and conscientiousness for any one absolutely to keep himself pure.—It is extremely difficult, under any form of church-government, to conduct every particular in such a manner as to "do nothing by partiality:" this will require circumspection, firmness, intrepidity, disinterested zeal, and the meekness of wisdom; and these cannot be obtained without much fervent prayer. These things, however, must be carefully observed by those who would not be partakers of other men's sins; as every person concerned must feel in proportion to his conscientiousness. But they who honestly desire to do their duty, will generally be directed in it: some men's sins will be discovered at once, going before to judgment; others require more diligent search; whilst the good works of others are manifest; and they that are otherwise may yet be known upon due inquiry: so that a sufficient judgment may generally be formed for the regulation of men's conduct, if their minds be free from prejudice and partiality. Finally, let us observe, that eminent grace will connect the strictest temperance with the most fervent zeal for the liberty of the Gospel; that it is the duty of every one to use proper means for the preservation of his health and life, as a debt which he owes to the church, the community, and his family; and that they who are frequently infirm, who labour abundantly in important services, and whose earnestness in spiritual things induces a disregard to animal indulgence, should follow the advice of those who give them proper directions for a due regard to their health.

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1—5. (*Notes, Eph.* vi. 5—8. *Col.* iii. 22—25.) The apostle next directed, that Christians, who were under the yoke of slavery, should quietly attend to the duties of their lowly situation; counting their own masters entitled to all that respect, fidelity, and obedience, which that superior relation demanded; and not supposing

6 But [u] godliness with [x] contentment is great gain.

7 For [y] we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is* [z] certain we can carry nothing out.

8 And [a] having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.

9 But [b] they that will be rich, fall into temptation and [c] a snare, and *into* [d] many foolish and hurtful lusts, [e] which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10 For [f] the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some [g] coveted after, they have * erred from the faith, [h] and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

u *See on*, iv. 8. Ps xxxvii 16 lxxxiv. 11 Prov iii. 13—18 viii 18—21. xv. 16 xvi 8. Matt vi 32, 33. Luke xii 31, 32. Rom. v. 3—5 viii 28. 2 Cor iv. 17, 18. v. 1. Phil. : 21.
x 8. Ex. ii. 21. Luke iii. 14. Phil iv. 11—13.
y Job i. 21. Ec. v 15, 16
z Ps. xlix 17 Luke xii. 20 21. xvi. 22, 23 ——a Gen xxviii. 20 xlviii. 15. Deut. ii. 7 viii. 3, 4. Prov. xxvii. 23—27 xxx 8, 9. Ec. ii. 24—26 iii. 12, 13. Matt. vi 11. 25 33. Heb. xiii. 5, 6 ——b Gen xiii. 10—13. Num xxii. 17—19. Josh. vii. 21. 2 Kings v. 20—27. Prov. xv 27. xx. 21. xxi. 6. xxii 16 xxviii. 20—22 Is v. 8. Hos xii 7, 8 Am. viii. 4—6. Zech. xi. 5. Matt. xiii. 22. xix. 22. xxvi 15 Jam v. 1—4 2 Pet. ii. 15, 16. Jude 11
c iii. 7. Deut vii. 25. Ps xi. 6. Prov. i 17—19. Luke xxi 35. 2 Tim. ii 26
d Mark iv. 19. Eph iv 22. 1 John i 15—17
e Num xxxi. 8. Josh. vii 24—26. Matt xxvii. 3—5. Acts v 4, 5. viii. 20. 2 Pet. ii. 3.
f Gen. xxiv 23, 24. xxxviii. 16. Ex. xxiii 7, 8. Deut xvi. 19. xxviii. 4, 5. 18. Judg. xvii. 10, 11 xviii. 19, 20. 29—31. 2 Sam. iv. 10, 11. Prov i 19. Is. i. 23 lvi. 11. Jer. v. 27. 28. Ez. xiii 19. xvi. 33. xxii. 12. Mic. iii. 11. vii 3, 4. Mal. i. 10. Matt xxiii. 14. Acts i 16—19. Tit i. 11. Rev. xviii. 13.
g 21 2 Tim. iv. 10. Jude 11. Rev. ii. 14, 15. ——* Or, *been seduced.* ——h Gen. xix. 14. 26 31, &c. 2 Kings v 27. Ps. xxxii. 10. Prov. i. 31. 2 Pet. ii. 7, 8.

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that their religious knowledge, privileges, or liberty, gave them a right to despise their heathen masters, to disobey their lawful commands, or to expose their faults to their neighbours. This they ought to attend to, that the name of God might not be blasphemed, and his truth and worship reviled, among the Gentiles, by means of the failure of Christian servants in acknowledged duties. And such of them as enjoyed the privilege of believing masters, ought by no means to despise them, or withhold from them due respect and obedience; because they were brethren in Christ, and so upon a level in respect of religious privileges: but rather to do them service, with double diligence and cheerfulness, because of their faith in Christ and their interest in his love, as partakers of the inestimable benefit of his free salvation. This shows, that Christian masters were not required to set their slaves at liberty; though they were instructed to behave towards them in such a manner as would greatly lessen the evils of slavery. It would have excited much confusion, awakened the jealousy of the civil powers, and greatly retarded the progress of Christianity, had this been expressly required by the apostles; though the principles both of the law and the Gospel, when carried to their consequences, will infallibly abolish slavery. These things Timothy was directed to teach and enforce as matters of the greatest importance: and if any persons taught otherwise, and consented not to such salutary words, which were indeed the words of Christ speaking by him, and an essential part of the doctrine according to godliness, he should be considered as a self-conceited ignorant man, who, being puffed up with an opinion of his own abilities, was ambitious of distinction and applause, though entirely unacquainted with the real nature and tendency of the Gospel. It is not absolutely certain to what set of men the apostle referred: but as many of the Jews deemed it unlawful to submit to heathen governors, so it is probable the Judaizing teachers inculcated that the worshippers of God ought not to obey heathen masters: and so paid their court to servants, by persuading them that they ought to assert their liberty. But there might be others also who disregarded and despised these practical instructions, while their attention was taken up with curious and nice speculations and distinctions. Such persons, however, were to be considered as doting or *raving*, (like men in the delirium of a fever,) about hard questions and disputes of words, names, forms, or notions, which had no connexion with the power of godliness: nay, on the contrary, they tended to excite envy and competition between one and another, angry contests for victory and pre-eminence, mutual revilings and calumnies, injurious suspicions and jealousies, and absurd, obstinate, and violent controversies, between men of corrupt and carnal minds, who were destitute of the real knowledge of the truth and its sanctifying efficacy, and who only sought their own secular advantage, supposing religion to be valuable, in proportion as it tended to enrich them, as if gain and godliness had been but two names for the same thing! Thus they wanted to persuade the Christian servants, that the recovery of their liberty was to be considered as a Christian privilege, of great value, which they ought to claim, whatever the consequence might be: and, from the same principle, they sought worldly lucre by their religious profession, and as their leading object. From such men Timothy was exhorted to withdraw himself; and neither have acquaintance with them, nor spend his time in disputing against them. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6—10. The proposition before mentioned, "that "gain is godliness," might be reversed, and thus contain a most important truth. Godliness, connected with a contented mind, was indeed very great gain, (*Note*, iv. 8. *Phil.* iv. 10—13;) as it tended to a man's present comfort and everlasting benefit, whatever his outward circumstances were. For men brought nothing into the world with them, but were born helpless and destitute, except as providence supplied all their wants: and it was most certain, that no man could take any thing along with him when he left the world. So that a subsistence during his journey was the utmost that any one could have of earthly things; and a very mean and scanty provision would answer that end, as well as a more luxurious and abundant one, and occasion less temptation and sin. In a short time all these things would be finally done with; whereas godliness would soon terminate in eternal felicity. Having therefore food and raiment, (or covering,) including both raiment and habitation, and things barely needful for the present, we ought to be contented and satisfied with them, without indulging any desire of acquiring greater affluence, or of being exempted from hard labour and mean fare: for discontent in a lowly situation, commonly produced a determination to be rich if possible, and led men out of the plain path of honest industry and prudent economy, in dependence on the providence, and obedience to the commandment, of God. It was indeed evident from facts, they who *would* at any rate be rich, gave Satan the opportunity of tempting and ensnaring them into such actions, as could not consist with godliness or a good conscience; urging them to use dishonest means of increasing their gains, and a variety of fraudulent practices: it betrayed

11 But thou, [i] O man of God, [k] flee these things; [l] and follow after [m] righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

12 [n] Fight the good fight of faith, [o] lay hold on eternal life, [p] whereunto thou art also called, and [q] hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

13 I [r] give thee charge in the sight of God, [s] who quickeneth all things, and *before* Christ Jesus, [t] who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good * confession;

14 That thou [u] keep *this* commandment [x] without spot, [y] unrebukeable, [z] until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ;

15 Which in his times he shall shew, [a] *who is* the blessed and only Potentate, [b] the King of kings, and Lord of lords:

i 26. Deut xxxiii. 1. 1 Sam. ii. 27. ix 6. 1 Kings xiii. 1 26 xvii. 18. 24. xx. 23. 2 Kings i 9. 13 v. 20. xxiii. 17. 1 Chr. xxiii. 14 2 Chr viii 14 Neh. xii. 24 36. Jer. xxxv 4. 2 Tim. iii. 17

k 1 Cor vi. 18. x. 14 2 Tim. ii. 22.

l v. 10 Deut. xvi. 20. Ps xxiv. 14 xxxviii. 20 Is li 1. Rom xiv 19. 1 Cor xiv. 1. 2 Tim ii 22 Heb. xii. 14. 1 Pet. iii 11.——m iv. 12 Gal v 22, 23 Phil iv 8. 9 Tit. ii. 11, 12. 2 Pet i. 5-7.——n i. 18. Zech. x. 5 1 Cor ix. 25, 26 2 Cor. vi. 7 x. 3-5 Eph vi. 10-18. 1 Thes. v 8, 9.——o 19. Ps. lxiii 8 Prov iii 18. Cant iii. 4. Phil. iii. 12, 13 Heb. iii. 14. vi. 18. 1 John ii. 25. Rev iii. 3.——p Rom. viii 28-30. ix. 23, 24. Col iii. 15. 1 Thes ii 12. 2 Thes ii. 14. 2 Tim i. 9. 1 Pet. iii. 9. v. 10——q 13. Deut. xxvi. 3. 17-19 Is. xliv. 5. Luke xii. 8, 9 Rom x 9, 10——r *See on*, v. 21.

s Deut. xxxii 39 1 Sam. ii. 6 John v. 21. 26 xi 25, 26. xiv 6 Acts xvii 25 Rev. xxi. 6. xxii 1.

t Matt xxvii. 11, John xviii 36, 37 xix 11. Rev. i. 5. iii. 14.

* Or, *profession*.

u 20 iv 11-16. 1 Chr xxviii 9, 10 20 Col iv. 17.

x Cant iv 7. Eph. v. 27. Heb ix. 14. 1 Pet i. 19. 2 Pet. iii 14.

y Phil. ii 15. Col. i 22. Jude 24.

z 1 Cor i 8. Phil. i. 6. 10. 1 Thes. iii. 13 v. 23 2 Thes ii. 1 2 Tim. iv. 1. Tit ii 13. Heb ix. 28. 1 Pet i. 7 1 John iii. 2 Rev. i 7——a *See on* i 11. 17. Ps. xlvii. 2. lxxxiii. 18. Jer. x. 10 xlvi. 18. Dan. ii. 44-47. iv 34. Matt vi. 13——b Prov. viii 15. Rev. xvii 14. xix. 16.

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them into such a multiplicity of employments and hurry of business, as left no time or inclination for spiritual religion; and it led them into such connexions and companies, as tended to draw them still further into sin and folly. Thus they were brought under the power of "many foolish and hurtful lusts," even "the lust of the "flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life," which mocked their expectations, and proved most injurious to themselves and others, till they were plunged into inevitable ruin and eternal perdition; as men are drawn in by the vortex of a whirlpool, when they venture too near it, and so are swallowed up and drowned, without any possibility of escape. When once "the love of money" is allowed to rule in the heart, it becomes the prolific root of all kinds of evil. Impostures, frauds, lies, thefts, robberies, oppressions, murders, ungodliness, hypocrisy, apostacy, contention, law-suits, wars, cruelty, pride, luxury, sensuality, and penurious avarice, are some of the noxious weeds, of which it daily produces a most abundant increase, according to the different constitutions, habits, and circumstances of mankind. Every species of impiety, iniquity, and vice, in one way or another, grows from it; and a large proportion of the miseries, as well as the crimes, of mankind originate from the same source. And while some professed Christians, even in the apostle's days, had coveted riches, they had been seduced into apostacy, or led to corrupt the faith, or to act grossly inconsistent with it: and thus, "they had pierced themselves through," as with wounds made by a sword, in every part of the body; so that even those who were not finally ruined, were filled with many sorrows, and must endure the most exquisite anguish, in consequence of their folly. All this would have been avoided, if they had been contented with food and raiment, and watched and prayed against the desire of being rich. It is not to be supposed, that the apostle meant to establish, as an universal proposition, that every *kind* and every *act* of wickedness grew from the love of money, as from their only root; for, doubtless, many *kinds* and innumerable *acts* of wickedness spring from other roots, which have scarcely any connexion with the love of money. But whoever well considers what influence the desire of riches, (not only to hoard them, but to purchase with them the gratification of pride, ambition, sensual inclinations, and even revenge,) has on the conduct of mankind, will readily see, that, as a general truth, there is sufficient ground to aver, that the love of money is the root of all evil. The abandoned prostitute Judas who sold his Lord, the traitor who sells his country, and the mercenary teacher of religion, combine in saying, "What "will ye give me?" It was the remark of a corrupt, but able statesman in this nation, that 'every man has his 'price;' and it is in some sense true of every man, who is a lover of money, of pleasure, or of worldly honour, more than a lover of God. The ambitious conquerors and destroyers of mankind have always loved money, as the means of accomplishing their object; and have extorted it from those in their power, with the most entire disregard to justice, truth, and mercy. Nor did any of them ever desire to revenge himself, or remove a rival, by assassination, or perjury, but some wretch could be found disposed by love of money to perpetrate the villany. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11, 12. According to the language of the Old Testament, concerning the ancient prophets, the apostle addressed Timothy as a "Man of God," one devoted to God, and employed by him as his messenger to mankind: and he exhorted him to flee, without delay or looking back, to the utmost distance from this destructive whirlpool, in which such numbers were swallowed up: and to follow after more entire conformity to the perfect rule of universal righteousness, by an upright faithful conduct towards all men; a proper temper and behaviour towards God in every thing: a lively faith in Christ and the divine promises in him, as well as faithfulness in his stewardship; love to the Lord, to his brethren, and mankind; patience under sufferings, and meekness amidst injuries and provocation. Thus let him fight, with consecrated armour, "the good fight of faith;" maintaining the honourable and profitable conflict against sin, the world, and Satan, to which the Gospel animated him: let him contend earnestly for the prize, by faith, and self-denying obedience; by mortifying sin, by resisting temptation, by enduring hardship and persecution, and by using every means of weakening the kingdom of Satan, and advancing that of Christ in the world. After this manner let him press forward with all earnestness, till he laid hold in actual possession of eternal life; unto which he, (as well as the apostle,) had been called by the special grace of God; and had, in consequence, made an honourable profession of the truth before many witnesses, at his baptism, when ordained to the ministry, and especially in his subsequent labours and sufferings as a preacher of the Gospel.

16 Who [c] only hath immortality, [d] dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; [e] whom no man hath seen, or can see: [f] to whom *be* honour and power everlasting. Amen.

17 [g] Charge them that are [h] rich in this world, [i] that they be not high-minded, nor [k] trust in * uncertain riches, [l] but in [m] the living God, [n] who giveth us [o] richly all things to enjoy;

18 That [p] they do good, that they be [q] rich in good works, [r] ready to distribute, † willing to communicate;

19 [s] Laying up in store for themselves a good [t] foundation against [u] the time to come, that they may [x] lay hold on eternal life.

[c] *See on* i. 17. Ex iii 14. Deut xxxii 40. Ps. xc 2. Is. lvii 15. John viii. 58. Heb. xiii 8. Rev. i. 8. 17, 18.

[d] Ps. civ 2. Hab. iii. 4. 1 John i. 5. Rev xxi 23. xxii 5.

[e] Ex xxxiii. 20. John i. 18 vi. 46. xiv. 9. Col. i. 15

[f] *See on* i. 17.—Rom. xvi. 25—27. Eph. iii. 21.———[g] *See on* 13 i. 3 v. 21 ———[h] Gen xiii. 2. Job i. 1—3 Matt xix. 23 xxvii 57 Luke xix 2 9. 10 ————[i] Deut vi. 10—12 vi i 17. xxxii. 15. 2 Chr. xxvi. 16. xxxii. 25, 26. Ps x. 3 4. lxxiii. 5—9. Prov. xxx 9. Jer. ii. 31. Ez xvi 49 50. 56. Dan iv 30. v. 19—23. Hos. xiii. 6. Hab. i. 15, 16 Rom. xi. 20 Jam. i. 9, 10. Rev. xviii. 6, 7.———[k] Job xxxi. 24, 25. Ps lii 7 lxii. 10 Prov. xi 28. Jer. ix 23, 24 Mark x. 24. Luke xii. 15—21. Eph v. 5.————* Gr. *the uncertainty of riches.* Prov. xxiii. 5. xxvii. 24. Ec. v. 13, 14.

[l] Ps lxii 3. lxxxiv. 11, 12. cxviii 8, 9. Jer. xvii. 7, 8.

[m] *See on* iii 15. 1 Thes. i. 9

[n] Ps. civ. 28. Matt. vi 32. Acts xiv. 17. xvii. 25

[o] Col iii. 16. Tit. iii 6. *Marg.*

[p] 2 Chr. xxiv 16. Ps. xxxvii 3 Ec. iii. 12 Luke vi. 33, 34 Acts x. 33. Gal. vi. 10 Heb. xiii. 16. 1 Pet. iii. 11. 3 John 11.——[q] v. 10. Luke xii 21 Acts ix. 36 Tit. ii 14. iii. 8.——[r] Deut. xv. 7. 11. Ps. cxii. 9. Prov xi. 24, 25. Ec. xi 1, 2, 6 Is. xxxii. 8. lviii. 7 Luke vi. 35. xiv. 12—14. Acts ii. 44, 45 iv. 34—37. xi 29. Rom. xii. 8. 1 Cor. xvi. 2. 2 Cor. viii. 1, 2, 9. 12. ix. 6—15. Phil iv 18, 19. Heb. xiii. 16. 1 John iii. 17.——† Or, *sociable.*——[s] Ps. xvii. 14. Matt vi. 19—21. x. 41, 42 xix. 21 xxv 34—41. Luke xii 33. xvi 9. xviii. 22. Gal. vi. 8, 9.————[t] Prov. x. 25. Luke vi. 48, 49. Gal v. 6. Eph. iii. 17. 2 Tim. ii. 19. [u] Prov. xxxi. 25 Luke xvi 9. 25.——[x] *See on* v. 12. 1 Pet. i. 4.

V. 13—16. To confirm Timothy in the purpose of persevering amidst his various trials and perils, the apostle solemnly charged him, as "in the sight of God, who "quickeneth all things," (or giveth life to all,) and could therefore preserve his life, however exposed, and would certainly raise him again to immortal glory, if he laid it down in his cause: and "before Jesus Christ," who had boldly borne witness to the truth, and avowed himself the Son of God and the King of Israel, in the presence of Pilate, when he knew that he should be crucified for maintaining that claim; who required his servants thus constantly to confess him before men; and who had promised to own them that did so, before his Father and the holy angels: as in the sight of God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, he charged him to keep the commandment before given, or the trust committed to him, without the spot or blemish of any miscarriage, neglect, or unfaithfulness, from fear of man or love of the world; that he might be "unrebukeable;" that his brethren might see nothing to reprove in him, that the world might have nothing to say against him, and that his Lord might welcome him as a good and faithful servant. In this let him persevere, till "the appearing of the Lord Jesus;" which, in his appointed season, he would display in the sight of the whole world, who was, "the blessed," or most happy, "and only Potentate," possessed of absolute, universal, and eternal dominion, "the King of kings, and Lord of "lords," from whom all power and authority were derived and delegated; (*Matt.* vi. 13;) who alone possessed immortality in and of himself, having underived, unalienable, and unchangeable existence, perfection, and felicity; who inhabited the "light itself," being surrounded with such resplendent glories, that no man could possibly approach to him, (except as revealed to sinners in and by his incarnate Son;) whom no man ever did or ever can see with his bodily eyes, being a Spirit, and the object of intellectual vision alone; to whom honour and power everlasting ought to be ascribed by all intelligent creatures. Amen. The Godhead itself seems to be here intended and adored, without distinction of persons; of which all these things are properly spoken, whether the Person of the Father, of the Son, or of the Holy Spirit, be mentioned. But the invisible God is revealed to us only in and through the human nature of Christ, as the only-begotten Son of the Father: and this display of the divine glory will be rendered most illustrious, when Christ shall be seen as man, exercising all the power, authority, and perfections of God, by the whole assembled universe. (*Notes, Matt.* xxv. 31—46. *John* i. 18.) "Without spot," 'in respect of the commandment itself, and "unblameable," 'in respect of thy performance of it; which will contribute to preserve the good confession in the world, "till the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.' (*Macknight.*) This is true and important, and indeed implied: but the apostle constantly, in his exhortations, referred to the appearing of Christ; not to establish as a doctrine, that it was near, in respect of time; but to inculcate a continual readiness for it, and an habitual regard to it, in the whole conduct of Christians, to the very close of life.

V. 17—19. A few rich persons had, it seems, embraced the Gospel at Ephesus; and, as wealth is a comparative thing, some such must be found in other places.—But Timothy, and other ministers, might be tempted to pay them undue deference; and it would require much firmness and impartiality to give them proper counsel, caution, and instruction. He was therefore peculiarly directed, in the most plain, authoritative, and solemn manner, to warn them against the danger to which they were exposed, and to enjoin on them the peculiar duty of their station. He must "charge those that were "rich in "this world," (which was perfectly distinct from being "rich towards God,") that they should not be puffed up by affluence, and superiority of circumstances above their brethren; as if this implied more wisdom or excellency, or conferred on them higher privileges, ensured them more regard from God, entitled them to pre-eminent authority in the church, exempted them from censure or reproof, or authorized them to neglect or contemn others: and that they should not confide in their riches; as if they could make them safe or happy, increase their present comfort, give them any permanent advantage, or promote their eternal felicity. For riches were *uncertain*, liable to be torn from them, often proving the cause of distress, temptation and sin, speedily to be left at death, and to be given an account of at the day of judgment. (*Notes, Matt.* vi. 19—24. xix. 16—26. *Luke* xii. 13—21. xvi.) Timothy must therefore charge the rich, as well as the poor, "to trust in the living God," both for present safety, support and comfort, and for eternal happiness; remembering that he gave them bountifully all the things which they enjoyed. They ought therefore to acknowledge him as the Author of their abundance; it was all given them in his wisdom, and revocable at his will, and could only be profitable to them, when used to his glory. They must

20 [y] O Timothy, [z] keep that which is committed to thy trust, [a] avoiding profane *and* vain babblings, and [b] oppositions of science falsely so called;

21 Which some professing, [c] have erred concerning the faith. [d] Grace *be* with thee. [e] Amen.

y 11. 2 Tim. ii. 1.
z 14. i. 11. Rom iii 2. 2 Thes i. 4. ii. 15 2 Tim i. 13, 14. iii. 14. Tit. i. 9. Rev. iii. 3 ——a 4, 5 i. 4 6. iv. 7. 2 Tim ii 14—16. 23. Tit. i 14. iii. 9 ——b Acts xvii 18. 21. Rom. i. 22. 1 Cor. i 19—23. ii. 6. iii. 19. Col. ii. 8, 18.
c *See on*, g. 10. i. 6. 19. 2 Tim. ii. 18. Heb. iii. 10—12.
d *See on*, Rom. i. 7. xvi 20. 24. 2 Tim. iv. 22. Tit iii. Heb. xiii. 25 ——e *See on*, o. Matt. vi. 13.

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therefore be enjoined, by the authority of God himself, to do good with their riches, and to deem this their duty and happiness, instead of avariciously hoarding, or luxuriously wasting them. By relieving the wants of the indigent, and largely contributing to the support and comfort of their poor brethren, they must aim to be rich in good works, the genuine fruits of faith and love. They must be prompt and liberal in distributing their wealth to proper objects, and for valuable purposes; as the husbandman scatters his seed without grudging, in hopes of a future harvest. Thus they would treasure up *for themselves* the true riches, (not for their heirs, or they knew not whom, as misers do their idolized wealth,) and lay a good foundation for their hope and comfort, in the approaching season of affliction and death; showing their faith in Christ, (the Rock of salvation,) by the unequivocal fruits of love and obedience: that so they too might lay hold on eternal life in actual possession, when the self-indulgent, the covetous, and ungodly rich men around them, would "lift up their eyes in hell, being in torments."

V. 20, 21. The apostle, considering the snares and temptations, the allurements and terrors, which Timothy had to guard against and overcome, in order to the faithful execution of his ministry; and reflecting also on the various species of false religion, which many artfully substituted instead of the humbling, holy Gospel of Christ; again most affectionately and earnestly called upon him to keep inviolable, without shrinking or wavering, the ministry, or stewardship, with which he had been intrusted. And he charged him to shun the profane aud vain babblings of those, who wanted to impose the foolish and trifling traditions and observances of the Jewish scribes, as well as the rites of the Mosaic law, upon Christians; and the "oppositions of science," or knowledge, "falsely so "called," such as the *Gnostics*, or knowing ones, *afterwards* corrupted the Gospel with. These speculations were borrowed from the vain philosophy of the Gentiles; and, being distorted and mutilated to suit their purpose, they introduced them into Christianity, to render it more congenial to the heart of man, and especially to gratify their fondness for disputation, and their pride of superior penetration and acuteness. Thus one corrupt system of pretended knowledge was opposed to another, jangling controversies were multiplied and perpetuated, the truth was obscured and overlooked, and the wildest absurdities were substituted in its place. Some, even then, having been seduced into these speculations, had erred from the faith into fatal heresies; and the evil was likely to increase. Having therefore, given Timothy this warning, the apostle closed this most instructive epistle with his usual salutation.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—5.

It is most important to the honour of the Gospel, that professed Christians duly perform their various relative duties; and that "servants count their own masters worthy "of all honour," even though they be unbelievers. Their condition, indeed, in this favoured land of liberty, allows them to change one situation for another; but the precepts of scripture do not at all permit them to behave with disrespect to the persons, or disregard to the lawful commands, of those whom they serve; nor yet to return affronting answers, or to speak of their master's faults to others without cause; but rather to weep over and pray for them in secret, when they are ungodly and unreasonable. Alas! how grievously are the name and Gospel of God blasphemed through those servants, who love to discourse and dispute about doctrines and sermons in families averse to them, and then behave with impertinence in their places, if not with sloth, dishonesty, and unfaithfulness! Thus thousands are fatally prejudiced against the Gospel. Nay, this matter is so little attended to, that many masters, who would be glad to have believers in their families, and to behave to them like brethren, as far as it is consistent with domestic subordination, are often wearied out, and tempted to prefer servants who know not the Gospel, because of the misconduct of those who profess it. Indeed, some servants, whose sincerity is unimpeached, through a lamentable mistake, suppose equality in religious privileges to imply equality in the family: and thus they act as if they despised their believing masters and their authority, giving them rude answers, or neglecting their business, or doing it in their own way, as if this was a part of their Christian liberty; whereas they ought to honour and serve them, with the greater diligence and alacrity; because "they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit." No doubt there are violations of duty equally inexcusable, committed by those who stand in the opposite relation: and professors of the Gospel are accessory to believing servants choosing to live in irreligious families, by behaving in an unchristian manner to such as have come among them, expecting better treatment. Ministers are bound to teach and enforce the duties of all ranks and orders to men, in the church and community; and if any one teach otherwise, and speak contemptuously of these exhortations, and consent not to salutary words, which are, indeed, the words of our Lord, and a part of the doctrine according to godliness, he ought to be deemed a proud man, who knoweth nothing, (whatever his gifts and profession may be;) and he should be pitied, and shunned as a distempered man, who is infected by the love of abstract "questions, and "strifes about words; whereof cometh envy, contention, "revilings, evil surmises, and perverse disputings." This is manifest from daily observation; to these things men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, are peculiarly addicted; especially when they can make them subservient to their emolument and reputation, being disposed to think that the best religion, by which they can get the most money. Instead of engaging in controversy with such mercenary, self-wise, and ignorant wranglers, who will not consent even to the apostle's words, or to those of Christ himself, we should withdraw, and thus protest against them, and leave them to dispute by themselves or with one another.

V. 6—12.

We should always remember, "that godliness with contentment is great gain." As we brought nothing with us into the world, and can carry nothing out, let us trust him that hath hitherto provided for us, to supply our wants during the remnant of our pilgrimage. Having food and raiment, we should daily beg of God that we may be contented with it, and that he would keep us from every degree and kind of covetousness. We cannot look about us at all, without perceiving that "they who will be "rich fall into temptation, are entangled in a snare, and "are overcome by many foolish and hurtful lusts, which "drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of "money is the root of all" kinds of "evil," in every part of the earth: and even among professors of the Gospel, we often see piety, charity, mercy, equity, sincerity, temperance, and humility, laid like so many bleeding sacrifices on the altar of Mammon; while men's own souls, and those of their ill educated children, are destroyed, to gratify the malignant demon! Many hopeful persons, by allowing themselves to covet something greater, more elegant, or affluent, have erred from the faith, have made shipwreck of their profession, or have turned out mere thorny-ground hearers; and others have pierced themselves through with many sorrows, to the embittering of the whole of their future lives. No words can express, no description reach, the numberless and horrid evils that continually flow from this source; especially in a day of outward prosperity, extensive commerce, vast expense, and loose profession! But "what is a man profited, if he gain the whole "world, and lose his own soul?" Let every Christian flee from this destructive lust; let the men of God especially avoid every appearance of the love of filthy lucre, or improvident expense: let us, on the contrary, "follow "after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meek-"ness," with that assiduity and earnestness, with which worldly men pursue their perishing riches: let us fight the noble and profitable fight of faith, and thus lay hold on eternal life, to which we also are called; and strive to act consistently with that good profession, which (in our ministry at least,) we have made of the truth, before many witnesses, who will all at last testify against us, if we forsake Christ from love of this present world.

V. 13—21.

The apostle charges us also, "as in the sight of God, "who quickeneth all things, and of Christ Jesus, who "before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession, that "we keep the commandment of God without spot, and "unrebukeable, till the appearing of Jesus Christ." Let none suppose that our Lord delayeth his coming: in his own times he will be manifested, as "the effulgency of "the divine glory, the Image of the invisible God." This will be brought to pass by "the blessed and only Poten-"tate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only "hath immortality, dwelling in inaccessible light," and invisible to human eyes. That we may be presented faultless before the divine Redeemer's presence with exceeding joy, receive the crown of immortal glory, and be admitted to the beatific vision, it behooves us now to be faithful, watchful, sober, diligent, and disinterested. Thus honouring our God here, and desiring to ascribe to him glory and power to eternity, he will honour us at last, before the assembled universe. Ministers are required, especially, to point out to rich men their peculiar dangers and duties; because they are numerous and important. Whilst *nature* prompts us to desire connexion with them, it produces a reluctancy to that part of duty which relates to them. Even modesty, timidity, gratitude, or supposed prudence, may warp us in this matter: a false apprehension of what may conduce to their best interest, that of our religious society, or of the Church at large, and a fear of prejudicing and offending them, and so losing the opportunity of doing good to them or by them, may easily mislead us in this great concern: not to speak of the dread of their frown, and the credit and advantage of their friendship, both which are very ensnaring to the ministers of the Gospel. But we must break through all these obstacles, if we would be faithful stewards and vigilant watchmen, and deliver our own souls. We must charge them in the name of God not to be high-minded, nor to trust in their uncertain riches, or idolize them; and not to seek happiness from them, but from the "living God, who giveth us all "things richly to enjoy." We must show them the danger to which they are exposed, of being betrayed into pride, avarice, ambition, self-indulgence, and the love of outward splendour. We must point out to them the proper use and improvement of their wealth; charging them to do good, to be "rich in good works, ready to distribute, "willing to communicate:" we must call on them to provide against the time to come, when it will be said to them, "Give an account of thy stewardship, for thou "shalt be no longer steward." We must exhort them so to use present advantages, that they may lay up for themselves a better treasure, and ensure a good hope, and know themselves to have a firm foundation in a dying hour, that they may lay hold on eternal life. But who is sufficient for these things? Or who can give such charges with energy, that is not himself evidently superior to the love of wealth, or any thing that wealth can purchase? May the Lord help us all to keep these things, which are committed to our trust, to avoid profane and vain babblings, disputations, philosophy, and oppositions of science, falsely so called; by which so many are drawn away from the preaching of, and believing dependence on, a crucified Saviour: and may the grace of the Lord Jesus be with all his faithful ministers and people every where, and at all times! Amen.

THE
SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO
TIMOTHY.

The apostle was evidently a prisoner at Rome, when he wrote this epistle; but some suppose that it was written during his first imprisonment, as the epistles to the Ephesians, the Philippians, the Colossians, Philemon, and the Hebrews were: others, however, are of opinion, that it was written when he was imprisoned a second time, and not long before he suffered martyrdom; and this appears to me by far the most satisfactory. The ancients, from these words, "I am ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand," (iv. 6.) *do generally conclude, that this was the last of his epistles. And truly the words are not well capable of any other sense: for he says expressly, "I am now offered, and the time of my dissolution is instant. I have finished my course." Whereas he not only expected to be delivered from his first bonds, but says expressly, "I know that I shall abide, &c."* (Phil. i. 25, 26. Philem. 22. Heb. xiii. 23.) '*In his first bonds, he was* in libera custodia, *in his own hired house.*' (Acts xxviii. 30, 31.) '*His bonds were known in Cæsar's palace, and to all others. Here he is* in areta custodia: *so 'that Onesiphorus was forced to "inquire more diligently after him, that he might find him out." Again 'he said before, "Many of the brethren, being encouraged by my bonds, were bold to speak the word "without fear."* (Phil. i. 14.) *Here "all men forsake him."* (Whitby.) *Timothy was with Paul, when he wrote to the Colossians, to the Philippians, to Philemon, and to the Hebrews.* (Phil. i. 1. Col. i. 1. Philem. 1. Heb. xiii. 23.) *Mark was also with him, and joined in saluting the Colossians: but both were absent when this epistle was written. Should it be argued, that they came to him* before *he wrote the other epistles: what can be said concerning Demas? For he was with the apostle when he wrote to the Colossians, but had forsaken him when he wrote this epistle.* (iv. 10. Col. iv. 14.) *The supposition, that Timothy and Mark had come to the apostle, before he wrote the other epistles, implies that this was written a considerable time* before *those: but the supposition, that Demas had repented, and returned to the apostle, when he wrote to the Colossians, implies, that this epistle was written some time* after. *Yet, these contradictory suppositions must both be admitted, to support the opinion, that this epistle was written during the apostle's first imprisonment. Indeed, the language used in it, implies that the apostle considered himself, as one who had finished his ministerial labours, and after a severe imprisonment, perhaps for some time, was about to close his testimony by martyrdom.* (Notes, i. 15—18. iv. 5—9.) *It is also questioned where Timothy was, when the apostle wrote to him. It is generally thought that he resided at Ephesus; and indeed this is probable, though not certain.* (Compare ii. 16—18 iv. 15. with 1 Tim. i. 20.—See Notes iv. 9—12. 19—22.) *The scope of the epistle evidently was to animate Timothy to endure persecutions with courage and constancy; to caution him and others against false teachers and corrupt professors of Christianity; the increase of whom, the apostle predicted in most energetic language; and to direct and animate him in fulfilling his ministry, and in following after holiness. 'The apostle had been for some time under close confinement at Rome, at the mercy of a cruel 'and capricious tyrant. He had seen himself deserted by his friends in his greatest extremity, and had 'nothing before him, but the certain prospect of being called to suffer death, in the same cause to which 'he had devoted his life. In this situation, how does he behave? Does he seem to look back with concern 'on his past conduct; or to regret the sacrifice he had made of his worldly interests? Can we discover 'any thing, that betrays a secret consciousness of guilt, or even a suspicion of the* weakness *of his cause? —'On the contrary, upon the most calm and deliberate survey, he expresses an entire satisfaction in 'reflecting on the part he had acted; and earnestly recommends it to his beloved pupil, to follow his 'example in maintaining the glorious cause, even at the hazard of his life. He appears throughout the 'epistle to have felt a strong conviction of the truth of those principles he had embraced; and glories in 'the sufferings he had endured in support of them; triumphing in the full assurance of being approved 'by his great Master, and of receiving at his hands a crown of distinguished lustre.'* (Doddridge.)

CHAP. I.

The apostle affectionately salutes Timothy, with thanksgiving and prayer on his account, 1—3: and expresses a great desire of seeing him, 4; remembering his faith, and that of his grandmother and mother, 5. He exhorts him to stir up the gift of God which was in him, 6. He charges him not to be ashamed of the divine testimony, or of him the Lord's prisoner; but to prepare for suffering, as having been saved and called by special grace, according to the blessed tenour of the Gospel, 7—10. Of this, Paul had been made an apostle; for which cause he suffered, without being either ashamed or afraid, as he knew the power of Him in whom he trusted, 11, 12. He exhorts him to steadfastness and faithfulness, 13, 14; shows that those of Asia had turned from him, 15; and commends the diligent and courageous kindness of Onesiphorus; praying fervently that he and his family might find mercy from God, at the last day, 16—18.

PAUL, [a] an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, according to [b] the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus;

2 To [c] Timothy, *my* dearly beloved son: [d] Grace, mercy, *and* peace, from God the Father, and Christ Jesus our Lord.

3 [e] I thank God, [f] whom I serve from *my* forefathers [g] with pure conscience, [h] that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers [i] night and day;

4 Greatly [k] desiring to see thee, [l] being mindful of thy tears, that I may be [m] filled with joy;

5 When [n] I call to remembrance the [o] unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and [p] thy mother Eunice; and [q] I am persuaded that in thee also.

6 Wherefore [r] I put thee in remembrance, [s] that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee, [t] by the putting on of my hands.

7 For God hath not given us [u] the spirit of fear; [x] but of power, and [y] of love, and of [z] a sound mind.

8 Be not thou therefore [a] ashamed of [b] the testimony of our Lord, nor of me

a *See on* Rom. i. 1. 2 Cor. i 1.
b John v 24. 39, 40. vi 40 54. x. 28. xvii. 3. Rom. v. 21 vi. 23 2 Cor i. 20 Eph iii 6 Tit i. 2. Heb. ix. 15 2 Pet. i. 3, 4. 1 John. ii. 25. v. 11–13.

c *See on.* 1 Tim. i. 2.— Rom. xii. 19. Phil iv. 1.
d *See on* Rom i 7.
e *See on* Rom. i. 8. Eph. i. 16
f 5. iii. 15. Acts xxii. 3 xxiv 14. xxvi. 4.
g Acts xxiii. 1. xxiv. 16. Rom. i. 9. ix 1 2 Cor i. 12. 1 Tim. i. 5. 19. Heb xiii. 18.
h *See on* Rom. i 9. 1 Thes i. 2 iii. 10.
i *See on*, Luke ii. 37.
k iv 9 21. Rom. i. 11. xv. 30—32. Phil i. 8. ii. 26. 1 Thes ii. 17—20. iii. 1.
l Acts xx. 19. 31. 37, 38. Rev. vii. 17. xxi 4
m Ps. cxxvi 5. Is. lxi. 3. Jer. xxxi. 13 John xvi. 22. 24 1 John i. 4.
n Ps lxxvii 6
o Ps. xvii 1. xviii. 44. lxvi 3. lxxxi 15. *Marg.* Jer. iii 10. John i. 47 2 Cor. vi. 6. 1 Tim. i. 5. 1 Pet i. 22.
p Ps lxxii 10. lxxxvi. 16. cxvi. 16 Acts xvi 1.
q 12. Acts xxvi. 26. Rom. iv 21. viii 38 xiv 5. 14. xv. 14. Heb. vi 9 xi 13
r ii. 14 Is. xliii. 26 1 Tim. iv. 6. 2 Pet i 12. iii. 1 Jude 5.
s iv 2. Ex. xxxv. 26. xxxvi 2. Matt. xxv 15.&c. Luke xix 13. Rom. xii 6--8. 1 Thes. v. 19. 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11.
t Acts viii 17, 18. xix 6. 1 Tim. iv. 14. Heb. vi 2.
u Acts xx 24. xxi. 13 Rom. viii. 15 Heb. ii. 15 1 John iv 18.
x Mic. iii. 8 Zech iv 6. Luke x 19. xxiv. 49 Acts i. 8. vi 8 ix. 22. x. 38. 1 Cor. ii. 4.
y Rom. v. 5 Gal. v. 22. Col. i 8 1 Pet i 22.
z Ps. cxix. 80 Prov. ii 7. viii. 14. Luke viii. 35. xv. 17. Acts xxvi. 11 25. 2 Cor. v. 13, 14
a 12 Ps. cxix. 46 Is. li. 7 Mark viii 38 Luke ix. 26. Acts v. 41. Rom. i 16 ix. 33 Eph iii 13 1 Pet. iv. 14.
b Ps xix 7. Is. viii. 20 John xv 27 xix. 35. Eph. iii. 13. 1 Tim. ii. 6. 1 John iv. 14. v. 11, 12. Rev. i. 2. xii 11. xix. 10.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1. The Gospel, intrusted to the apostle by the sovereign will of God, according to the promise of life and salvation made to fallen man, through the predicted Messiah, from the beginning: all these predictions were fulfilled in Christ, and then the promise of life was sent to Jews and Gentiles without distinction. 'Thus he 'shows, that the Gospel is not new; but the very thing 'which God promised by the prophets. I would again 'and again admonish the reader, not to pass over the 'superscriptions to the epistles of Paul in a slight man'ner; as he uses, in them, with a sort of inimitable 'brevity, to embrace the sum of the mystery of the 'Gospel: so that, while these are preserved, the church 'possesses that which she may oppose to all heretics.' (*Beza.*)

V. 2. (*Marg. Ref. Note,* 1 *Tim.* 1, 2.)

V. 3—5. The apostle returned hearty thanks, on Timothy's account, to the one living and true God, whom he worshipped, after the manner of his pious progenitors in successive ages, from Abraham to that time; or according to the revelations of a Saviour vouchsafed to them. For indeed they all looked forward to the Messiah, and served God with a believing regard to him; though their descendents had rejected and crucified him, and now persecuted those who believed in him. The apostle had indeed formerly been a leader of these persecutors: but his conscience was now purged from dead works by the atoning blood of Christ, and made tender and well informed by divine grace; so that he served God conscientiously and cheerfully, with spiritual worship and believing obedience. He was especially thankful, that he was enabled continually to remember Timothy in his fervent and frequent prayers, by night and by day; being mindful of the tears which he shed, as expressive of his love and sorrow when they last separated; and longing greatly for another interview, which he was assured would fill his own heart with joy and satisfaction. This persuasion arose from his recollection of the unfeigned faith which Timothy's whole conduct had manifested to dwell in him, and to influence and sanctify his heart. This was the same precious faith that had first been communicated to his grandmother Lois, and to his mother Eunice. These pious women seem to have "waited for the consolation of "Israel," before they heard the Gospel, and thus were prepared to receive it: having diligently given Timothy a religious education, it greatly conduced to his being made partaker of the same faith, as the apostle was fully persuaded concerning him. (*Note,* iii. 14—17.) It is not unlikely, that Timothy accompanied the apostle to Miletus, and parted with him there, accompanying the Ephesian elders when they returned to Ephesus.

[c] his prisoner: but [d] be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel, [e] according to the power of God;

9 Who [f] hath saved us, and [g] called *us* with an holy calling, [h] not according to our works, but [i] according to his own purpose and grace, [k] which was given us in Christ Jesus, [l] before the world began;

10 But is [m] now made manifest by the appearing of [n] our Saviour Jesus Christ, [o] who hath [p] abolished death, [q] and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel:

c 16 ii. 9. *See on* Eph. iii 1. iv. 1 d ii 3. 11, 12 iv. 5 Rom. viii 17, 18 36 1 Cor iv 9—13 2 Cor xi 23—27. Phil. iii. 10 Col. i. 24 1 Thes. iii 4. 1 Pet iv. 13—15 Rev i. 9 xii 11. e iv. 17 Rom xvi. 25 2 Cor. vi 7. xii. 9, 10 Phil. iv. 13. Col i. 11. 1 Pet. i 5. Jude 24 ——f Acts ii. 47. 1 Cor. i. 18 Eph ii. 5. 8. 1 Tim. i. 1. Tit iii 4. 5 ——g Rom viii 30 ix 24. 1 Thes iv. 7, 2 Thes ii 13, 14 Heb iii. 1. 1 Pet i. 15. 16. ii 9. 20, 21.——h Rom iii. 20. ix 11. xi 5 6 Eph ii 9 Tit iii 5 i Is xiv 26, 27. Matt. xi. 25, 26 Luke x. 21. Rom. viii. 28. Eph i 9. 11.——k John vi. 37 x. 28, 29. xvii 9. 1 Cor iii. 21, 22. Eph i 3

l John xvii. 24. Acts xv. 18. Rom xvi. 25. Eph i. 4. iii. 11 Tit. i. 2. Rev xiii. 8. xvii. 8. m Is. xxv. 7 lx. 2, 3. Luke ii. 31. 32 Rom. xvi. 26. Eph i. 9 Col i. 26 27. Tit. i 3. ii. 11. 1 Pet. i 20, 21. 1 John i 2.——n Is xliii 3 xlv. 15 21. Luke ii. 11. John iv. 42. Acts v 31. xiii. 23 Tit i 4 ii. 13. iii. 4 2 Pet i. 1. 11 ii. 20 iii 2. 18. 1 John iv. 14. ——o Is. xxv 8 Hos xiii 14 John xi 25 26 1 Cor xv. 54, 55 Heb ii. 14. 15 Rev xx. 14.——p Luke xiii. 7 Rom iii. 31. vi. 6 Gal v. 4 *Gr* ———q 1 John v 29. 40. xiv 6 xx 31 Rom ii 7. v. 17, 18. 1 Cor. xv. 52 2 Cor. v 4. 2 Pet. i. 3 1 John i. 2 Rev. ii. 7. xxii. 1, 2. 14. 17 —Luke xi 36. John i 9. 1 Cor iv. 5. Eph i. 18. Heb x. 32 Rev xviii 1. *Gr.*

V. 6—8. (*Note*, 1 *Tim.* iv. 14.) The spiritual gifts conferred by the laying on of the apostle's hands, probably at Timothy's ordination, ought to be exercised in the performance of the ministry intrusted to him. The apostle therefore reminded him to "stir up the gift of God that "was in him," by meditation, prayer, and diligence, as the fire is stirred, and so made to glow, when fuel hath been laid upon it. Thus love, zeal, and compassion for souls, being brought into vigorous exercise, he would be animated to improve his talents, and fulfil his ministry with ardour and effect. For the Holy Spirit, whom God had given them, as established believers, was not the Author of a timid and cowardly disposition, or of slavish and discouraging fears; but, as the Spirit of adoption, he inspired their hearts with holy courage and confidence, gave vigour and energy to their spiritual affections, and endued them with strength for service or suffering: while love to Christ, his people, and all mankind, animated them to self-denying and perilous labours; and a sound mind, a sober judgment, and heavenly wisdom, led them to choose the noblest ends, and to pursue them in the persevering use of the most prudent and effectual means. So that the spirit of a lively Christian was that of courage, firmness, zeal, and consistency of conduct, in the midst of persecutions and temptations. Timothy was, therefore, exhorted not to be ashamed of that testimony which he had borne to the Lord Jesus, among those who reviled and derided him: nay, he must not hesitate to avow himself the fellow-labourer and dutiful son in the faith of Paul, the despised and imprisoned apostle of Christ. On the contrary, he ought willingly to become a partaker of those afflictions, which were to be endured for the Gospel, depending for support, protection, and comfort under them, "on the power of God," which would certainly be exerted in his behalf.

V. 9. The Lord, indeed, had already saved both the apostle and his son Timothy; or brought them into a state of safety: having "called them with a *holy* calling;" as the Holy Spirit, by whom they were converted, was the Author of all holiness in the hearts of believers, and as the Gospel, through which they were called, was in all things of a holy tendency. This had not been "according to "their works;" for if God had dealt with them by that rule, they must have been left under condemnation: but it was "according to his purpose," of special love, and "his grace, which was given them in Christ before the "world began;" that is, his purpose of giving them grace in and through Christ Jesus, which was engaged to him as the appointed Surety of his chosen people, "from eternal "ages." Various ways of setting aside the obvious meaning of the verse, as implying *personal election* from the beginning, or "before eternal ages," (which is the most literal translation,) have been proposed: but, none of them can be maintained, as it appears to me, without supposing that all they, who live and die impenitent and unbelieving, may be said to be "saved and called with a "holy calling;" because a Saviour was promised from the beginning of the world. Indeed, "the purpose of God" is mentioned, as *the reason* why they, rather than others, were thus saved and called.

V. 10. This eternal purpose of God, respecting the calling and saving of sinners by grace given them in his Son, was at length made manifest by his appearance in human nature; when, through his righteousness, atonement, resurrection, ascension, and mediation, he abolished the reign and power of death, and deprived him of his sting and terror, in respect of all believers, who might through him face that dreaded enemy, in his most tremendous form, with comfort and confidence; being assured of the immediate entrance of their souls into glory, and a future triumphant resurrection of their bodies from the grave. By the publication of the Gospel, likewise, he had brought life, spiritual and eternal, and a state of immortal felicity, as attainable by sinners, into full light; and had given the most explicit declaration of the nature, certainty, and method of obtaining that future happiness. Whatever notions the Gentiles had of the soul's immortality, they knew nothing of the way in which eternal life might be attained by sinners; they were wholly ignorant of the meaning annexed to the words, "life and immortality," in scripture: their speculations served only for amusement or disputation, being blended with error and fable, involved in obscurity and uncertainty, and utterly inefficacious on their practice. The Jews indeed had a revelation in the Old Testament, both of a future state and the resurrection of the body. But it was far less full and explicit than in the New Testament; it was chiefly confined to one small nation; and it was very imperfectly understood and believed even by them. So that whatever had been conjectured, or believed, previous to the coming of Christ, concerning a future state, it might properly be said, that "he had brought life and immortality to light by the "Gospel:" the doctrine respecting it was placed in the most convincing and interesting light; every proper question about it was satisfactorily resolved: and the whole was suited to answer the most important practical purposes. Indeed, after all modern improvements and metaphysical demonstrations, all influential belief of the immortality of the soul, and a future state of retribution, rests wholly on divine revelation; as well as that of the

11 Whereunto [r] I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

12 For [s] the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless [t] I am not ashamed, [u] for I know whom I have * believed, and [x] am persuaded that [y] he is able to [z] keep that [a] which I have committed unto him, [b] against that day.

r Acts ix. 15. Eph. iii 7, 8.—*See on* 1 Tim. i 7
s 8. ii 9 iii. 10—12 iv 16, 17 Acts ix. 16 xiii. 46 50 xiv. 5, 6. xxi. 27 — 31. xxii. 21 — 24 Eph. iii. 1—8. 1 Thes ii 16.
t 8. Ps. xxv. 2. Is 1 7. liv 4 Acts xxi. 13 Rom i. 16. v 4, 5 ix 33 Phil. i 20 Heb. xii 2. 1 Pet iv 16
u Ps ix 10 lvi 9. Phil. iii 8. 10.——* Or, *trusted*. Is. xii. 2. Nah. i. 7. Matt xii. 21. Rom. xv. 12, 13. Eph. i. 12, 13 1 Pet i 20 21 ——x *See on* q 5.——y John x. 28—30. Phil. iii. 21. Heb. ii. 18. vii 25.——z John vi. 39, 40. 44 xvii 11. 12. 15 1 Pet. i. 5 Jude 24.——a Ps. xxxi 5 Luke xxiii. 46 Acts vii 59. 1 Pet. iv. 19.——b 18. iv. 8 Matt. vii. 22 xxiv. 36. Luke x. 12. 1 Thes. v. 4.

13 [c] Hold fast [d] the form of sound words, [e] which thou hast heard of me, [f] in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

14 That [g] good thing which was committed unto thee, keep [h] by the Holy Ghost [i] which dwelleth in us.

15 ¶ This thou knowest, [k] that all they which are in Asia [l] be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.

c 14 iii. 14. Prov. iii. 18. 21 iv. 4. —8. 13. xxiii 23. Phil. i. 27. 1 Thes. v. 21. Heb. iii 6. iv. 14. x. 23. Jude 3 Rev. ii. 25. iii. 3. 11.
d Prov. viii. 14 Rom. ii. 20. vi. 17. 1 Tim. i. 10. vi. 3. Tit. ii. 1. 8.
e ii 2. Phil. iv. 9.
f *See on* Col. i. 4. 1 Tim. i. 14.
g ii. 2. Luke xvi. 11. Rom. iii. 2. 1 Cor. ix. 17. 2 Cor. v. 19, 20. Gal. ii. 7. Col. iv. 17 1 Tim. i 11. vi. 20.——h Rom viii. 13. Eph. v. 18. 1 Thes. v. 19. 1 Pet. i. 22.——i John xiv. 17. Rom. viii. 11. 1 Cor. iii. 16. vi. 19. 2 Cor vi. 16. Eph. ii. 22.——k Acts xvi. 6. xix. 10. 27. 31. xx. 16. 1 Cor. xvi. 19.——l iv. 10. 16. Phil ii 21.

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resurrection of the body, and the way of a sinner's acceptance. If indeed it could be demonstrated that the soul is naturally capable of immortality, yet it cannot be proved, except from immediate revelation, that almighty God will not terminate its existence, especially as it is forfeited by sin; or that he will not make every sinner miserable in his immortality: and it serves to enhance our value for the oracles of God, when we clearly perceive the insufficiency of the oracles of reason in the most important concerns.

V. 11, 12. St. Paul had been constituted a preacher, and an apostle, of the Gospel before described, that he might instruct the Gentiles in the way to immortal life and happiness: but instead of receiving honour and affluence, as a recompense for his labours, he suffered all kinds of injuries, and was then in prison as a criminal, in continual expectation of an ignominious death. He was not, however, in the least ashamed of having engaged and spent so many years in the service of that Saviour, whom men thus despised: for he knew, by faith, divine teaching, and happy experience, the power, faithfulness, and love of him, in whom he had believed: and, as he could not doubt of his compassion and kindness, so he was fully persuaded of his authority and ability to take care of him in all events. He had intrusted his life, his soul, and his eternal interests, into his hands, as a precious deposit. He had discovered especially the value and danger of his immortal soul; he had been convinced that none else could effectually deliver and secure it through the trials of life and death; and that Jesus both could and would: he had therefore long before, and by renewed and constant application to him from time to time ever since, intrusted it in his hands by faith and prayer; to be washed, justified, and sanctified, and at last to be produced complete in holiness, and meet for glory. What he might pass through by the way, he knew not; but he was persuaded, that Christ was fully able to keep the precious deposit to that day, to which he continually had respect, as the grand accomplishment of all his hopes; when his beloved Lord would again appear in glorious majesty to judge the world. His most important interests, therefore, being thus secured beyond the reach of all enemies, he was prepared to endure ignominy, pain, and death, without shrinking; hoping to commit his departing soul into his Saviour's hands, even as Jesus himself had commended his spirit into those of his heavenly Father. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13, 14. After the above animating declaration of his own experience in the midst of sufferings, and the prospect of a violent death, the apostle exhorted his beloved Timothy to hold fast, in a steadfast profession and by faithful preaching, "the form of sound words," the substance of evangelical truth, which he had heard of him; and of which he perhaps had given him some compendious epitome. This he must do in the exercise of faith and love, by which the soul has communion with Christ, and receives communications from him, and so holds the truth in a vital and efficacious manner; and he must thus guard himself, and others, against the innovations, which false teachers were introducing by unsound and specious words. That good thing, the ministerial charge, or the Gospel committed to his stewardship, he was exhorted thus to keep, observe, and fulfil, without turning aside from it on any account: but he must do this "by the Holy Ghost, which dwelt in them;" in dependence on his sacred influences, sought by constant prayer, and by compliance with them; 'adhering closely to the words and phrases, in which the apostle had taught the doctrines of the Gospel. The teachers in modern times, who, in explaining the articles of the Christian faith, use phrases different from the scripture-phraseology, would do well to attend to this apostolical injunction.' (*Macknight.*)

V. 15. The caution above given was the more needful for Timothy, as he must have heard that all they who were in Asia had turned away from him. Some understand this of those ministers and Christians, who had been natives of Asia professing Christianity, and with the apostle at Rome, but who had shamefully deserted him in the season of his greatest danger. Others suppose the apostle to mean, that the churches in Asia, (or that district of which Ephesus was the metropolis,) had withdrawn their regard from him, being perverted by heretical teachers. Some indeed interpret it of the Judaizing teachers; but they who had always openly opposed the apostle could not be said to be turned away from him. These, however, and other false teachers, probably had succeeded to alienate many of the apostle's converts. Yet the first interpretation seems to be the true one. The expression, "Thou knowest," may only mean, 'No doubt thou hast heard;' and to mention two individuals, of whom better hopes had been formed to Timothy, while resident in Asia, and witnessing the defection of many churches, seems wholly unnatural.

16 The [m] Lord give mercy unto [n] the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft [o] refreshed me, [p] and was not ashamed of [q] my chain;

17 But when he was in Rome, [r] he sought me out very diligently, and found *me*.

18 The Lord grant unto him [s] that he may find [t] mercy of the Lord [u] in that day: and in how many things he [x] ministered unto me at [y] Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

m 18. Neh. v. 19. xiii. 14. 22 31. Ps. xviii 25 xxxvii 26 Matt. v. 7 x 41. 42 xxv. 35–40. 2 Cor. viii. 12–14 Heb. vi. 10. x 34.
n iv. 19
o 1 Cor. xvi 18 Philem. 7. 20.——p *See on* 8.——q Acts xxviii. 20. Eph. vi. 20. *Marg.*——r Acts xxviii. 30, 31.

s *See on*, 16—1 Kings xvii 20.
t Ps cxxx 3, 4. Luke i 72. 78. Rom. iii. 23, 24. ix. 15–23. Eph. ii 3 1 Pet. i. 10.
u *See on* q. 12.
x Luke viii. 3 2 Cor ix. i. Heb. vi 10.
y iv. 12. Acts xix. 1. 1 Cor. xvi 8. 1 Tim. i. 3 Rev. ii. 1.

V. 16—18. Onesiphorus was, no doubt, an exception to what had before been said concerning those of Asia; and it is probable he resided at Ephesus; where his family then was, while he was at Rome, at a distance from them. The apostle therefore prayed for them separately: for Onesiphorus, by his company and assistance, had greatly refreshed and enlivened his spirits, and had not been ashamed of being known to be his friend when he wore a chain, as many others had been. He had bestowed much pains to find out the place of St. Paul's confinement, and had at last succeeded. This shows that the apostle's imprisonment was more close and severe than before; so that Christians in general scarcely knew where he was, and were afraid to inquire after him. (*Marg. Ref.*) He therefore prayed, that Onesiphorus might find mercy in the day of Christ: for Timothy knew in how many things he had served him at Ephesus, and ministered to his wants; and he had now proved the genuine constancy of his affection. The eager manner in which the Papists catch at the unfounded notion, that Onesiphorus was dead, because the apostle prayed separately for his household, and yet that he afterwards prayed for him also, shows how entirely destitute their practice of praying for the dead is of scriptural proof; and how glad they would be to meet with some countenance for it in the word of God, if that could be done.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

The promise of eternal life to sinners, who believe in Jesus Christ, is the leading subject in the preaching of those ministers, who are employed "according to the will "of God:" and though outward dispensations vary, yet his real people have in every age substantially the same religion, and serve God, after the manner of their forefathers and predecessors, with a pure conscience; being partakers of the same "grace, mercy, and peace, from "God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ." The tears of loving Christian friends, when separated at the call of duty, make way for their fervent prayers for each other; their earnest desires of meeting again on earth, lead to the cheerful hope of a blessed re-union in heaven, and the fulness of joy to which they will then be admitted; and their remembrance of the clear evidences of unfeigned faith, which they have witnessed in each other, excite their thanksgivings to God for his grace bestowed upon them. The pious instructions and fervent prayers of believing parents, are often the means of conversion to their children; yet such as enjoy this advantage should be reminded, that they will derive no benefit from the unfeigned faith of the nearest relations, unless the same dwell in them also. We ought to remind those of whom we have the best opinion, "to stir up the gift of God that is in "them," and to occupy with it in the duties of the stations allotted them. The new nature communicated in regeneration tends to liberty, and victory over the fear of man; and of those reproaches, contumelies, and injuries, which may be expected in the path of duty: whenever, therefore, we find our hearts discouraged, our hands weakened, or our earnestness in the work of the Lord abated, we should ascribe it to the remains of unbelief and a carnal mind, and to the temptations of Satan; and we should strive more fervently in prayer for supplies of the Spirit of Christ, to invigorate our faith and hope, to "shed abroad "the love of God in our hearts," to animate us with zeal and holy affections, and to produce in us a sound mind and heavenly wisdom. (*Note, Phil.* i. 9—11.) Then we shall not be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, but glory in it, even among his most scornful enemies; we shall not hesitate to join ourselves to his most despised and persecuted servants; and we shall willingly become partakers of the afflictions of the Gospel, in dependence on the power of God to support and comfort us. In proportion as "the Spirit witnesseth with our spirits, that we "are the children of God," and we know, "that he hath "saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his purpose and "grace given us in Christ, before the world began;" we shall feel ourselves constrained by love to devote ourselves and all our talents to his glory; thus we shall manifest the holy nature of our calling, and of that doctrine, which is so much opposed and abused by the pride and carnality of the human heart.

V. 10—18.

We should bless the Lord continually for the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, for what he hath done and suffered to abolish death, and for his Gospel, by which he hath brought life and immortality to light. As we have such decisive assurance of a future state, such full information concerning the nature of it, and so clear a prospect of immortal felicity, by faith in Him, "who is the Resur-"rection and the Life," let us give the more diligence in making our personal interest in his salvation sure to our souls; and let such of us, as are appointed to publish these important tidings to mankind, and to instruct the nations in the truths of Christ, prepare for sufferings, knowing that his most honoured servants have always been most conformed to him in this respect. If then we be despised and persecuted for "this cause," let us not give place either to fear or shame; for he, in whom we have believed, is able to bear us out, and to keep us safe to that day, when he shall appear to perfect our felicity. The hope of the meanest real Christian, rests on the same basis with that of the greatest apostle. He too hath learned the value and danger of his soul, and his eternal interests; he intrusts

CHAP. II.

Timothy is exhorted to courage, diligence, fidelity, and self-denying patience, as the good soldier of Christ, 1—6; *in remembrance of Christ,* 7, 8; *in imitation of the apostle's example,* 9, 10; *and in assured faith and hope,* 11—13. *He must warn the flock against false teachers, and vain controversies; studying "rightly to divide the word of truth,"* 14—16. *The pernicious effects of the error of Hymeneus and Philetus,* 17, 18: *yet "the foundation of God stands sure," and all called Christians should depart from iniquity,* 19. *Some are vessels of honour, others of dishonour; but Timothy should seek to be the former,* 20, 21. *He is taught what to flee, and what to follow after,* 22; *to shun disputatious questions; and to instruct opposers with meekness, in hopes of recovering them,* 23—26.

THOU therefore, [a] my son, [b] be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

2 And [c] the things that thou hast heard of me * among [d] many witnesses, [e] the same commit thou to [f] faithful men, [g] who shall be able to teach others also.

3 Thou therefore [h] endure hardness, as [i] a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

4 No man [k] that warreth, [l] entangleth himself with the affairs of *this* life; [m] that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

5 And if a man also [n] strive for masteries, *yet* [o] is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.

6 The [p] husbandman † that laboureth, must be first partaker of the fruits.

7 [q] Consider what I say; [r] and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

a i. 2—*See on* 1 Tim i. 2. 18. i. 7. Hag ii 4. *See on* 1 Cor. xvi. 13. 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10. Eph. vi 10. Phil iv. 13. 2 Pet. iii. 18

c i. 13. iii. 10. 14. * Or. *by* d 1 Tim. iv. 14. vi. 12. e *See on*, i. 14. 1 Tim. i. 18. v. 22 f Num xii. 7. 1 Sam. ii. 25. Neh. vii. 2. Ps. ci 6 Prov. xiii. 17 Jer. xxiii. 28. Matt. xxiv. 45. Luke xii. 42. xvi 10—12. 1 Cor iv 2. Col. i. 7. 1 Tim. i 12. Heb. ii. 17. iii 2, 3. Rev. ii 10—13. g 24, 25. Ezra vii. 10 25 Mal. ii. 7. Matt xiii. 52. 1 Tim. iii 2—8 iv. 6. Tit. i. 5—9. h. 10. i 8. iii 11. iv. 5. 1 Cor. xiii. 7. 2 Cor. i. 6 Heb vi. 15. x. 32. xi. 27. xii 2, 3. Jam. i. 12. i 2 Cor x. 3—5. Eph. vi. 11—18. —*See on* 1 Tim. i. 18.——k Deut. xx. 5—7 Luke ix 59—62.——l iv. 10 Luke viii. 14. 1 Tim. vi 9—12 2 Pet. ii. 20 ——m 1 Cor vii. 22, 23. 2 Cor. v. 9. 1 Thes. ii. 4 ——n Luke xiii. 24. 1 Cor. ix. 24—27. Phil. i. 15. Col. i. 29 Heb xii. 4.——o iv. 7 8. Heb. ii 7. 9. Jam. i. 12 1 Pet. v. 4. Rev. ii. 10. iii. 11. iv. 4 10 ——p Is. xxviii. 24—26 Matt. ix. 37, 38. xx 1. xxi. 33—41. Luke x. 2. John iv. 35—38. 1 Cor. iii. 6—9. ix. 7—11.——† Or, *labouring first, must be partaker of the fruits.* 1 Cor. ix 23 Heb. x. 36 ——q Deut. iv. 39. xxxii 29. Ps. lxiv. 9. Prov xxiv. 32. Is i. 3. v. 12. Luke ix. 44 Phil iv 8. Heb iii 1. vii. 4. xii 3. xiii. 7. r Gen. xli. 38, 39. Ex. xxxvi. 1. 2 Num. xxvii 16, 11. 1 Chr xxii 12. xxix 19 2 Chr. i 8—12 Ps cxix 73 125 144. cxliii. 8, 9. Prov ii. 3—6. Is. xxviii. 26 Dan. i. 17. Luke xxi 15. xxiv 47. John xiv 26. xvi. 13. Acts vii. 10. 1 Cor. xii. 8. Eph. i. 17, 18. Col. i. 9. Jam. i. 5. iii. 15. 17. 1 John v. 20.

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them, by daily faith and prayer, in the Redeemer's hands, as the only security with which he can be satisfied. He too hath believed in him, and hath some experience of his power, truth, and compassion; the answers which he hath received to his prayers, and the change that hath been wrought in his soul, increase and confirm his confidence; and thus he is "persuaded that the Lord Jesus will preserve him unto his heavenly kingdom," whatever dangers, trials, and enemies, he may meet with in his way thither. In order to possess this good hope, we must adhere steadfastly to the form of sound words, which the apostles have taught us; not only rejecting new notions, but new expressions; which are often employed to exalt one part of religion, by drawing the attention from others of equal importance. We must also be careful to hold even an orthodox creed, "in faith and love which are in "Christ Jesus:" this, as well as ministerial faithfulness, must be attempted "by the holy Spirit which dwelleth "in us;" and will never be performed by those who trust in their own hearts and lean to their own understandings. We need not wonder that self-wisdom, and a contempt of the influences of the Holy Spirit, united with a dislike to the humbling truths of the Gospel, and to bearing the cross for Christ's sake, should turn so many in these latter ages from regarding the writings of the apostles, as similar causes turned many from them, when the apostles were living, and confirming their authority and doctrine by the most undeniable miracles! But if others choose to follow the example of Phygellus and Hermogenes; let us copy that of Onesiphorus, by seeking out, refreshing, and ministering to the afflicted servants of Christ; not being ashamed of their poverty or disgrace, though laid in dungeons or work-houses; and doing them all the good we can with a constant affection for the Lord's sake. Then shall we have an interest in their prevailing prayers; we may hope for the mercy of God upon our families; and may rest assured of "finding mercy of the Lord in that "day," when we shall most know its unspeakable value. And let those, who are thus comforted and relieved by their brethren, not be backward to acknowledge their obligations, nor negligent in praying for them, and all their connexions.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. The apostle next exhorted his beloved son Timothy, to be bold and vigorous in preaching "the grace that was in Christ" for sinners, or to be strong in dependence on the grace of Christ. In order to continue and spread the knowledge of the Gospel among men, he directed him to commit those doctrines, which he had heard from him concerning the Lord Jesus, and his atonement, resurrection, ascension, intercession, and salvation, in the presence of many witnesses, (or *by* many witnesses, who all concurred in attesting them,) "to faithful men, "who might be able to teach others also." This does not indeed prove, that the people had no concern in the appointment of their own pastors, or of ministers to preach the Gospel in dark places; but it shows that Timothy had a superintending authority; and was empowered to take heed that none should be appointed, except faithful men, able to instruct others also. It can scarcely be supposed that there was any competition at that time. The apostles, and those sent by them, would, doubtless, select the most suitable persons, and the people would cordially acquiesce in their choice. The communication of divine truth to mankind, by a succession of witnesses, from age to age, was thus effectually provided for.

8 [s] Remember that [t] Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was [u] raised from the dead, [x] according to my Gospel:

9 Wherein [y] I suffer trouble, [z] as an evil-doer, *even* unto bonds: [a] but the word of God is not bound.

10 Therefore, [b] I endure all things [c] for the elect's sakes, that they may also [d] obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, [e] with eternal glory.

11 *It is* [f] a faithful saying: [g] For if we be dead with *him*, [h] we shall also live with *him*:

12 If [i] we suffer, we shall also reign with *him*; [k] if we deny *him*, he also will deny us:

13 If we believe not, [l] *yet* he abideth faithful; [m] he cannot deny himself.

14 Of these things [n] put *them* in remembrance, [o] charging *them* before the Lord, [p] that they strive not about words [q] to no profit, *but* to [r] the subverting of the hearers.

15 [s] Study to shew thyself [t] approved unto God, [u] a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, [x] rightly dividing the word of truth.

16 But [y] shun profane *and* vain bab-

s Heb. xii. 2 3.
t *See on* Matt. i. 1. Acts ii. 30. xiii 23 Rom. i. 3 4 — Rev. v 5
u *See on* Luke xxiv. 16 Acts ii. 24 1 Cor xv. 11—20
x Rom. ii 16 xvi 26. 2. Thes ii. 14. 1 Tim. i 11. ii. 7.
y *See on* i 8 12. 16.
z 1 Pet. ii. 12. 14 iii 16. iv. 15.
a Acts xxviii 31. Eph vi. 19 20. Phil. i. 12—14. 2 Thes iii 1.
b *See on* 3. — Eph. iii. 13
c Matt xxiv 22 24. 31. John xi. 52. xvii 9 1 Cor ix. 22. 2 Cor iv. 15 Col i. 24.
d Prov viii. 35 John xvii 24 1 Thes. v 9 1 Tim i 13 14. 1 Pet ii 10. — e Rom. ii. 7 ix. 23 2 Cor. iv. 17 Col i 27 2 Thes ii 14 1 Pet v 10 — f *See on* 1 Tim. i. 15. iii. 1. — Tit. iii 8 — g Rom. vi. 5 8 2 Cor iv 10. Gal ii. 19, 20. Col. iii 3, 4.
h John xiv 19 2 Cor. xiii 4 1 Thes. iv. 17. v. 10. — i Matt. xix. 28, 29. Acts xiv 22. Rom. viii. 17 Phil. i. 28 2 Thes i 4—8. 1 Pet. iv. 13—16. Rev. i. 6. 9. v. 10. xx. 4. 6.

k Prov. xxx. 9, Matt x. 33. xxvi. 35. 75. Mark viii. 38. Luke ix. 26. xii. 9 1 John ii. 22, 23. Jude 4. Rev. ii 13 iii. 8.
l Is xxv. 1 Matt xxiv. 35 Rom. iii. 3. ix. 6, 1 Thes. v 24. 2 Thes. iii. 3.
m Num. xxiii 19. Tit. i 2. Heb. vi 18.
n *See on* i. 6.
o iv. 1. Eph. iv. 17. 1 Thes. iv. 1, 2 Thes iii 9. 2 Tim. v 21. vi. 13
p 16. 23 24 Rom. xiv. 1. 1 Tim. i 4. 6. vi 4, 5 Tit. iii. 9—11.
q 1 Sam xii. 21, Jer. ii 8 11 vii. 8. xvi. 19. xxiii 32. Hab ii. 18 Matt xxi. 26. 1 Tim iv. 8. Heb. xiii 9. — r Jer xxiii 36. Acts xviii. 10. xv 24 Gal. i. 7. Tit. iii 11. — s Heb. iv 11. 2 Pet i. 10, 15 iii 14 *Gr* — t Acts ii. 22. Rom. xiv. 18. xvi. 10. 2 Cor v. 9. 10, x. 18. Gal. i. 10. 1 Thes. ii. 4. — u Matt xiii 52. 2 Cor. iii. 6 vi 3. 4. 1 Tim. iv. 6 12—16. — x Mark iv. 33. Luke xii 42. John xxi 15—17. Acts xx. 20. 27. 1 Cor. ii. 6. iii. 1 2 2 Cor. iv. 2. 1 Thes. v. 14. Heb. v. 11—14. — y 14. 1 Tim. iv. 7. vi. 20. Tit i. 14. iii. 9

V. 3—7. Timothy was again called on to consider himself as the good soldier of Christ. Having enlisted under his banner, he was bound to follow him, and obey his orders; he must be ready to expose his life in the cause of the Gospel, and at all hazards to endeavour to promote it. As therefore soldiers, in actual service, must expect toil and hardships, as well as danger, so he ought to be prepared for sufferings and difficulties of every kind. And as no man, who engaged in the military life, entangled himself with the management of husbandry, or commerce, but left these employments to others, that he might be wholly at liberty to please the commander under whom he served, and so to obtain preferment and honour; so Timothy must not engage in any secular business, or any of the affairs of life, so as to interfere with his pleasing Christ, who had chosen him to be his soldier, and was able abundantly to make up all losses to him. It is plain from Paul's own example, that ministers may, on some occasions, earn their bread by labour; but this widely differs from seeking to grow rich by trade, or such employments as engross the mind and time, and introduce ministers into such connexions, and involve them in so many pecuniary engagements, as greatly endanger their own characters and the honour of the Gospel. The original word means *negotiations*, rather than *affairs*. In the public games, also, the man who strove for mastery was not crowned victor, unless the contest had been managed according to prescribed rules; it therefore behooved Timothy and his brethren to regulate their diligence and earnestness by the word of God, otherwise they could not expect the conqueror's crown. And as the husbandman must *first labour*, before he partakes of the fruits of the field, so they must *first* diligently and patiently execute their ministry, before they received the gracious recompense. This is the most obvious construction and meaning of the verse; but it may signify, that the labouring husbandman must *first* be supported by the fruits of the earth, or he cannot perform his work; nor can the office of the ministry be duly exercised, except by those who live on Christ themselves, as well as preach him to others. Timothy ought therefore well to consider these illustrations; for thus the Lord would give him understanding in respect of all things pertaining to his work and circumstances. Thus it may be explained; though our version renders it as a prayer for him.

V. 8—13. Amidst all dangers and sufferings, it behooved Timothy to "remember Jesus Christ," the promised Saviour, "of the seed of David, who had been "raised from the dead." This seems the proper translation; for Timothy was not only called on to remember, and preach to others, the resurrection of Jesus, but all the sufferings which preceded this great event, and his conduct under them. (*Notes, Heb.* xii. 1—3.) This could not fail to suggest proper motives and encouragements to perseverance and constancy. For preaching that Gospel, which related to these great events, St. Paul was then suffering trouble as a malefactor, even unto bonds, and in prison; yet as the word of God was not bound, but was successfully preached by numbers, he was well satisfied, nay, he exulted with joy. For he willingly endured all things that he was called to suffer, from love to the elect of God; and in order to be an instrument in bringing those to complete deliverance from all evil, and the enjoyment of eternal glory, for whom Christ had shed his precious blood. Thus he at once sought their salvation and his own: for it was a faithful saying, (probably in frequent use among Christians) that if they were indeed dead with Christ, to sin and the world, and ready to die for his Gospel, they would assuredly live with him in that glory, which he entered on after his crucifixion and resurrection; if they denied him from dread of sufferings and death, or any other carnal motive, and persisted in this denial, Christ would also deny them, and leave them to perish with his enemies; if they dared not to rely on his word, would not credit his testimony, or were unfaithful to him, they would ruin themselves; but he would still abide faithful to his covenant-engagements to his true disciples, and true to his word of executing vengeance on unbelievers. For he could not deny himself, or act contrary to his word, and his own essential and divine perfections, out of partial favour or weak compassion; so that it behooved them all to "hold fast the "beginning of their confidence steadfast to the end."

blings; [z] for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

17 And [a] their word will eat as doth a * canker: of whom are [b] Hymeneus and Philetus;

18 Who [c] concerning the truth have erred, saying, [d] That the resurrection is past already; and [e] overthrow the faith of some.

19 Nevertheless, [f] the foundation of God [g] standeth † sure, [h] having this seal, [i] The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, [k] Let every one that nameth the name of Christ, [l] depart from iniquity.

20 But [m] in a great house there are not only [n] vessels of gold, and of silver, but also of wood, and of earth; [o] and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

21 If a man therefore [p] purge himself from these, he shall be [q] a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and [r] meet for the master's use, *and* [s] prepared unto every good work.

z iii. 13. Ezra x 10 Hos xii. 1 1 Cor. v. 6. xv 33. 2 Thes ii. 7, 8 Tit i. 11. Heb. xii 15. 2 Pet. ii 2. 18. Rev. xiii. 3 14

a Nah iii. 15. Jam v. 3

* Or, *gangrene.*

b 1 Tim. i 20.

c Matt xxii 29 1 Tim. i 19 vi. 10 21 Heb iii 10. Jam. v. 19.

d 1 Cor xv. 12 Col iii 1.

e 14. Matt xv 13 Luke viii 13. xxii. 31, 32 Acts v. 39 1 Cor. xi. 19. 1 John ii. 19.

f Prov. x 25. Is. xiv. 32 xxviii. 16. Matt. vii. 25. Luke vi 48. 1 Cor iii 10, 11 Eph ii. 20 1 Tim vi. 19 Heb. xi 10 Rev. xxi 14.——g Matt xxiv 24. Mark xiii. 22 Rom. viii 31—35 ix. 11 Heb. vi. 18, 19.——† Or, *steady* Ps. cxii. 6 cxxv. 1. 2.——h Hag. ii 23. Zech iii 9. iv. 7—9. Eph. iv. 30 ——i Num. xvi 5. Ps. i. 6 xxxvii. 18 28. Nah i 7. Matt. vii. 23 Luke xiii 27. John x. 14. 28—30. xiii. 18. Rom. viii. 28. xi. 2. 1 Cor. viii. 3. Gal. iv. 9. Rev. xvii. 8.

k Num. vi. 27. Is. lxiii. 19. lxv. 15. Matt. xxviii. 19. Acts ix. 14. xi. 26. xv. 17. Rom. xv 9. 20. 1 Cor. i. 2. Eph iii. 15. Rev. ii. 13. iii. 8. xxii. 4.

l Job xxviii. 28. Ps xxxiv 14. xxxvii. 27. Prov. iii. 7. Rom. xii. 9 2 Cor. vii. 1. Eph. iv. 17—32. v. 1—11. Col. iii 5—8. Tit. ii. 11—14. 1 Pet. i. 13—19. 2 Pet. i. 4—10. iii. 14. 1 John iii 7—10.

m 1 Cor. iii. 9. 16, 17. Eph. ii. 22. 1 Tim. iii. 15. Heb. iii. 2—6 1 Pet. ii. 5.——n Ex. xxvii. 3. Ezra i. 6 vi. 5. Lam. iv. 2. Dan. v 2. iii. 26, 27. 2 Cor. iv. 7.——o Rom ix 21—23.——p Is i 25. iii 11. Mal. iii. 3. 1 Cor. v. 7 2 Cor. vii. 1. 1 Pet i. 22 1 John iii. 3.——q 20. Ps. cxix. 9. 1 Pet i. 7.——r Acts ix. 15.——s iii. 17. Eph. ii. 10. Tit. iii. 1. 8. 14.

V. 14—18. Timothy was directed to remind Christians, and ministers, of the important practical truths before stated; and to charge them most solemnly, as in the presence of the Lord, not to strive and dispute about words, and such frivolous matters, as the love of controversy magnified into important distinctions. These disputes could answer no good purpose; but, on the contrary, they tended to subvert the hearers; perplexing them about empty speculations, feeding their self-conceit and contempt of others, and drawing them off from the simplicity of faith and obedience. At the same time, Timothy was enjoined studiously to endeavour to approve himself, in the sight of God, in all his conduct and ministrations; he was reminded to bestow pains, that he might perform his ministerial services as a workman who knew how to go about his business, and needed not to be ashamed of his performances, or afraid of having them most accurately examined. In preaching the Gospel, he must "rightly "divide the word of truth;" giving to every person his proper portion, according to his state, character, and circumstances. In this expression, the apostle is supposed by some to allude to the skill used by the priests, in cutting in pieces the victims, and dividing them according to the legal prescriptions; and by others, to refer to the conduct of those, who carve for a large company, and are peculiarly careful that no one wants what is suitable for him. To this conduct he was required to adhere: and to avoid the "profane and vain babblings," to which many paid undue attention: for, however frivolous they seemed, yet the apostle foresaw that they would increase, and produce more ungodliness among men professing Christianity. For the words of such perverters of the truth, being of a poisonous nature, would imperceptibly diffuse their noxious influence, till they had eaten out the life and power of true religion: even as a gangrene spreads in the human body, till it corrupts and destroys the whole of it. Of these vain disputers there seem to have been various descriptions: but the apostle mentioned Hymeneus and Philetus in particular, who had wandered far from the truth of the Gospel; for they explained the doctrine of the resurrection in a mystical and allegorical manner; as if it only meant the introduction of a new dispensation, or some moral change in men's characters, which were events in themselves, or in respect of Christians, already past; and thus they denied the future resurrection of the dead. (*Notes*, 1 *Cor*. xv. 1—19. 1 *Tim*. i. 19, 20.) In this manner they had perverted the faith of some, and seduced several into fatal heresies, who had once made a promising profession of the Gospel. *Rightly dividing*, &c. 'Let 'him pass over nothing that should be said; let him add 'nothing of his own: let him mutilate, tear in pieces, and 'wrest nothing: finally, let him diligently consider what 'the hearers are capable of receiving, and what conduces 'to edification.' (*Beza*.)

V. 19. Notwithstanding those apostacies and delusions, by which many were ruined, it ought to be firmly believed, that "the Foundation of God stood sure." Some have interpreted this of the doctrine of the resurrection, and others of election; but Christ himself, or the promise of eternal life to every one that believeth in him, is doubtless "the Foundation of God," which the apostle meant. This stands sure; "the gates of hell cannot prevail against "it," nor can any one, who has truly built upon it, be fatally deceived. According to the ancient custom of sealing the foundation-stones of magnificent structures, and engraving some inscription upon them, this mystical Foundation had the seal of God, and a double inscription, upon it. On the one side it was engraved, as it were, for the believer's encouragement, "The Lord knoweth them that "are his;" he knows whom he hath chosen; he approves, and takes special care of those, whom he hath called, and who are his believing and obedient people; he distinguishes the meanest of them from the most specious hypocrites, and he will preserve every one of them, whilst others are deceived and perish. This is supposed by some to refer to the words of Moses, concerning Aaron and himself, in the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. (*Num*. xvi. 5.) On the other side it is engraven, for the admonition of all professed Christians, and to mark the characters and direct the conduct of true believers, "Let "every one, that nameth the name of Christ, depart from "iniquity." Thus men must seek the assurance of their calling and election; thus they must evidence the sincerity of their faith and love, and show their gratitude for distinguishing grace; thus they will best avoid the snares of deceivers, and mark the difference between themselves and every kind of hypocrites. (*Notes*, *Zech*. iii. 9. *Matt*. vii. 24—27. 1 *Cor*. iii. 11.)

22 [t] Flee also [u] youthful lusts; but [x] follow righteousness, faith, [y] charity, [z] peace, with them that [a] call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

23 But [b] foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes;

24 And [c] the servant of the Lord [d] must not [e] strive; [f] but be gentle unto all *men*, [g] apt to teach, * patient;

25 [h] In meekness [i] instructing those that oppose themselves; [k] if God [l] peradventure, will give them [m] repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

26 And *that* they may † recover themselves [n] out of the snare of the devil, [o] who are ‡ taken captive by him [p] at his will.

t Prov. vi. 5. 1 Cor vi. 18. x. 14. 1 Tim. vi. 11.
u Ps. cxix. 9 Ec xi. 9. 1 Pet ii. 11.
x *See on*, 1 Tim. iv. 12. vi 11. 3 John 11.
y *See on*, 1 Cor. xiv. 1.
z Rom. xiv. 17. 19 xv. 5, 6. 1 Cor. i. 10. Heb xii 14. 1 Pet. iii. 11
a 1 Chr xxix. 17, 18. Ps. xvii. 1 lxvi. 18, 19 Prov xv 8. *See on*, 1 Tim. ii 8.——b *See on*, 14 16. 1 Tim. vi. 4, 5.——c Deut xxxiv 5. Josh i. 1. 2 Chr. xxiv. 9. Dan. vi. 20. 1 Tim. vi. 11. Tit. i 1. Jam. i. 1.——d Matt. xii. 19 Acts xv. 2 2 Cor. x. 4. Phil. ii. 3. 14. 1 Tim. iii. 3. Tit. i. 7. Jam. i. 19, 20. Jude 3.——e John vi. 52. Acts vii. 26. xxiii 9. Jam iv 2 *Gr.*——f Is. xl 11. 2 Cor. x. 1. Gal v. 22. 1 Thes. ii. 7. Tit. iii. 2. Jam. iii. 17. 1 Pet. iii. 8.
g 1 Tim. iii. 2. Tit. i. 9.
* Or, *forbearing*. Eph. iv. 12. Col. iii. 13.
h Matt. xi. 29. Gal. vi. 1. 1 Tim. vi. 11. 1 Pet iii. 15.
i Jer. xiii. 15—17. xxvi. 12—15. John v. 34. Acts xxii. &c.
k Jer. xxxi 18, 19. 33. Ez. xi. 19. xxxvi. 26. 31. Zech. xii. 10. Acts v. 31. xi. 18. Jam. i. 17. 1 John v. 16.——l Acts viii 22. 1 Tim. ii. 4.——m iii. 7. Matt. xxi. 32. Mark i. 3, 4. 15. Acts ii. 38. xx 21.——† Gr. *awake.* Luke xv. 17. 1 Cor. xv. 34. Eph v. 14.——n Ps. cxxiv. 7 Is. viii. 15. xxviii. 13. Acts xxvi. 18. 2 Cor. ii. 11. Col i 13. 2 Thes ii. 9—12 1 Tim iii. 7. vi 9, 10. Rev. xii 9. xx. 2, 3.——o Is. xlii 6, 7. xlix. 25, 26 liii. 12. Matt. xii. 28, 29 Luke xi 21, 22. 2 Pet. ii. 18—20——‡ Gr. *taken alive* p Job i. 12. ii. 6. Luke xxii 31, 32. John xiii. 2 27. Acts v. 3. 1 Tim i. 20.

V. 20—22. Still further to show that heresies and defections were entirely consistent with the engagements of God by his covenant to believers, the apostle observed, that in a great house, the habitation of some wealthy person, there were not only vessels of gold and of silver, but others of baser materials: the former for honourable, and the other for meaner, uses. In like manner, in the visible church, not only true Christians and faithful ministers were found, as willing instruments in the honourable work of glorifying God, and promoting the good of men; but persons also of a different character, whose hypocrisy and iniquity were over-ruled, contrary to their intentions, to fulfil his righteous purposes, though to their own ruin and everlasting contempt. If then a minister carefully purified himself from these evil things, and simply adhered to the truth and will of God, he would be a vessel of honour, sanctified, and prepared for the service of Christ, and ready to be his willing instrument in every good work. The apostle therefore warned Timothy, not only to avoid false doctrines, but "to flee youthful lusts:" both the sensual indulgences to which young persons are most liable, and also those impetuous passions, that rashness, and love of novelty or controversy, and that desire of being distinguished, to which they are equally propense: and he exhorted him to pursue every holy temper, and diligently to practise every good thing himself, as well as to inculcate them on others; especially to follow after peace with all those, who called on the Lord out of a pure heart, or in sincere faith and love, notwithstanding their infirmities, and mistakes in matters of inferior consequence.

V. 23—26. Again the apostle saw it necessary to caution his beloved Timothy against foolish and unlearned questions: such curious, presumptuous, or useless questions, as often appear to spring from a depth of discernment, reflection, and erudition; but which in fact are suggested by folly, and a want of solid acquaintance with the majesty of God, with man's true condition and character, and with other subjects of similar importance. For these questions, which different persons would resolve in different ways, must engender fierce and hostile contests among proud and obstinate disputants, which would be managed with such acrimony and mutual revilings, or even injuries, that they might be called *fightings.* Whatever Jewish or Gentile disputers did, "the servant of the "Lord must not strive" in this manner, or with such weapons. On the contrary, he must be gentle in his address and conduct to all men, even to the most virulent and unreasonable opposers, or perverters of the truth: he must be apt and ready to instruct men in the doctrines of Christ, with clear explanations, cool discussions, conclusive arguments and testimonies, pertinent illustrations, and kind language: at the same time he must patiently bear revilings, ridicule, and ill usage, without recrimination or resentment. Thus, in a meek, dispassionate, forbearing, and forgiving temper, he must continue to instruct such as opposed themselves, however perverse and obstinate they were, provided they would attend to the word; still hoping that "God, peradventure, would give them repentance." This might be sometimes the case; and then they would humbly receive and profess the truth, and depend on the mercy and grace of God in Christ for pardon, assistance, and deliverance. But, should this take place, the servant of God would reflect, with remorse, on the sharpness which he had shown towards those, whom the Lord had mercifully borne with, notwithstanding their provocations. He should, therefore, rather hope and wait for their coming to themselves, "awaking as from sleep," or recovering as men from intoxication; and so escaping the snare of the devil, in which he had entangled them, by his artful devices and suitable temptations, even as fowlers draw the birds into the fatal snare. That so they might recover their liberty, though taken captive by Satan, as prisoners are after a battle, who may be disposed of at the victor's will; being consigned to death, to chains, or to slavery, as he pleases. For such men would remain entirely in the power of Satan, unless God should mercifully please to give them repentance, and so effect their deliverance.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—13.

The falls of some, and the good examples of others, should excite us to be strong in the grace of Christ, and zealous in his cause. None ought to be chosen or appointed to the sacred ministry, who are not faithful men, and competent to instruct others also: and all concerned in this important trust should be careful, to whom they commit the "stewardship of the mysteries of Christ:" for if they wilfully, negligently, or partially choose, or ordain, improper persons, they will be condemned for it before many witnesses, however they here concealed their motives or excused their conduct. The good soldier of Christ must be ready, at his Captain's word, to venture into the most

CHAP. III.

The apostle foretels grievous times, in the last days, through the atrocious wickedness of those, who would have the form, without the power, of godliness, 1—5; and the devices and opposition of false teachers, 6—9. He proposes his own example to Timothy, 10—13; exhorting him to continue in the faith, 14; and showing the excellency, authority, and sufficiency of the sacred scriptures, 15—17.

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perilous situations, and to endure the extremest hardships. He ought therefore to be hardy, self-denying, and courageous; one who loves his leader, and firmy believes he can make up all losses to him, even the loss of his life, which no other prince, or general, can do for his soldiers. It is desirable that they who are engaged in this holy warfare, should be exempted from the necessity of attending to secular business: but all, who would please their Lord, must avoid whatever is not absolutely necessary, and every thing that is entangling. Whilst numbers wholly disregard these rules, some, who are active, and seem to strive for the mastery, are not careful to "strive lawfully:" for they either spend their zeal about outward forms, human inventions, and doubtful disputations, or they use unsanctified weapons, furnished by bigotry and resentment. We should also labour in patience and hope, assured "that "in due season we shall reap, if we faint not," without vainly expecting to receive our reward, till we have given proof of our persevering diligence. In all our hardships, conflicts, and temptations, we must remember the Lord Jesus, and meditate daily on his sufferings, his resurrection, and his subsequent glory. Thus we shall learn to expect trials, and be the less disquieted "if we suffer trouble as "evil doers even unto bonds;" knowing that no power can bind the word of God, or prevent the spread of the Gospel as he sees good. And if the mind of Christ be in us, we shall be willing "to endure all things, for the elect's "sake," and to promote the salvation and eternal glory of those, for whom Christ willingly laid down his life. It is a faithful saying, that if we be thus dead with Christ, we shall also live with him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with him. But he will deny before his Father's throne, those who deny him before men; and his truth as much ensures the unbeliever's condemnation, as the believer's salvation; for he cannot deny himself, and "heaven and "earth shall pass away, but his words shall not pass away."

V. 14—18.

Ministers must charge their flocks before the Lord, with great solemnity and earnestness, not to strive about words, or the *Shibboleths* of a party, which tend to no profit, but rather to the subverting of the hearers. In this part of our work we shall be likely to give offence; for eager controversy is exceedingly relishing to the vitiated taste of the carnal mind, which loathes plain practical instruction. We should therefore "study to show ourselves approved "to God," and to obtain his seal to our ministry: we should bestow pains to become *skilful*, as well as *faithful*, preachers, "workmen that need not be ashamed;" instructors "that know how rightly to divide the word of "truth," and to give every man the portion that belongs to him, with close application to his conscience and affections. This will lead us to a distance from profane and vain babblings, which continually increase to more ungodliness: for many a specious error is allowed, without notice, to be intruded among professed Christians, which gradually eats like a canker, and destroys the power of godliness in an imperceptible manner. Scarcely any thing hath done more mischief within the church, and among those who retain a regard for the scriptures, than the manner of Hymeneus and Philetus, in allegorizing away its plain doctrines and precepts, and so causing them to evaporate in some visionary mystical notion. This some call *spiritualising*; but it well answers the purpose of deceivers, (though often used by well-meaning injudicious persons.) It excites the wonder of the ignorant, and the disgust of rational men; and thus it takes off the one from the substantial part of religion, to amuse themselves with fancies; and it increases the prejudices of the other against evangelical religion. Nothing can be so crude, foolish, or evidently erroneous, but it will subvert the temporary faith of some professors of the Gospel; for of all the numberless delusions, which have been, or may be invented, there is not one, but is more congenial to the pride and lusts of men, than the simple truths of God's word.

V. 19—26.

Amidst all confusions and apostacies, "the Foundation "of the Lord standeth sure." Secure and happy are they, who build thereon by an obedient faith! He knows them as his own people; and they may know this themselves, by their diligent care to depart from iniquity, and to honour the name of Christ by a holy conversation. These are the vessels of gold and silver, which the Lord hath "before pre-"pared unto glory," whom he hath "sanctified and made "meet for his own use, and ready for every good work:" and when the vessels of dishonour shall be consigned to destruction, these will be "filled with all the fulness of "God." Let us then seek to be cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit: let young Christians and ministers flee from youthful lusts: let all "follow after righteous-"ness, faith, love, peace, with all them that call on the "Lord out of a pure heart:" and let the frequent repetitions of the apostle teach us the vast importance of avoiding foolish, curious, and frivolous questions, and whatever can produce strifes and angry controversies. Alas! how little has it been remembered, that "the servant of the "Lord must not strive, but be gentle towards all men, "apt to teach, patient!" Numbers seem to think that the reverse should be his character and conduct, and that zeal for doctrinal truths is incompatible with gentleness, meekness, patience, and love! This predilection for controversy, both in teachers and hearers of the Gospel, is one grand hinderance to our recovering sinners out of the snare of the devil; for to exasperate opposers is by no means the way to convince them. The artful enemy of our souls knows

THIS know also, that [a] in the last days, [b] perilous times shall come.

2 For men shall be [c] lovers of their own selves, [d] covetous, [e] boasters, [f] proud, [g] blasphemers, [h] disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

3 Without [i] natural affection, [k] trucebreakers, * false accusers, [l] incontinent, [m] fierce, [n] despisers of those that are good,

4 [o] Traitors, heady, [p] high-minded, [q] lovers of pleasures [r] more than lovers of God;

5 Having [s] a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: [t] from such turn away.

a Gen. xlix. 1. Is. ii. 2. Jer. xlviii. 47. xlix. 39. Ez. xxxviii. 16 Dan. x. 14 Hos iii 5. Mic. iv. 1. 1 Tim. iv. 1. 2 Pet iii. 3. 1 John ii. 18. Jude 18.
b Dan. vii. 8 20—25. viii. 8—14. xi. 36—45 xii. 1. 7. 11. 2 Thes. ii. 3—12. 1 Tim. iv. 1—3 Rev. viii—xvii.——c 4 Rom. xv. 1—3. 2 Cor v. 15 Phil. ii. 21. Jam. ii. 8 ——d Luke xii. 15. Rom i. 29. Col. iii. 5 2 Pet. ii. 3. 14, 15 Jude 11 16. Rev. xviii. 12, 13.——e Ps. x 3. xlix 6 lii. 1. Is x. 15. Acts v. 36. Rom. i 30. xi 18 2 Thes ii. 4. Jam iv. 16. 2 Pet. ii. 18. Jude 16 ——f Prov. vi. 17. 1 Tim vi. 4. Jam iv 6. 1 Pet. v. 5.——g Dan. vii. 25. xi. 36. 1 Tim. i. 20. 2 Pet. ii. 12 Jude 10. Rev. xiii. 1, 5, 6. xvi. 9. 11 21.——h Matt. xv. 6. Mark vii. 11, 12. Rom. i. 30.——i Matt. x. 21. Rom i. 31.——k 2 Sam. xxi. 1—3. Ps. xv. 4. Ez. xvii. 15—19. Rom. i. 31. *Gr.*

* Or, *make-bates.* Matt. iv 1. John vi. 70. *See on* 1 Tim. iii. 11. Tit. ii. 3. *All in Gr.*
l 1 Cor vii. 3 9. 2 Pet ii. 4 19 iii. 3 Jude 16. 18.
m Gen. xlix 7. Dan. viii 23. Rev xiii 15. 17. xvi. 6 xvii. 6.
n Ps xxii. 6. Is. liii. 3. lx 14 Luke x. 16 xvi. 14 1 Thes. iv 8 Jam. ii. 6.——o 2 Pet. ii. 10. Jude 8, 9.——p Rom. xi. 20. 1 Tim. vi. 17.——q Rom. xvi. 18. Phil. iii. 18, 19 1 Tim v. 6. 2 Pet. ii. 13. Jude 10. 12. Rev. xviii. 7 ——r Matt. x. 37. Rom. i. 25 viii. 7, 8. 1 John ii. 15, 16.——s Is. xxix. 13 xlviii. 1, 2. lviii. 1—3. Ez xxxiii. 30—32 Matt vii 15. xxiii. 7, 8. Rom. ii 20—24. 1 Tim v. 8. Tit i. 16.——t ii. 16. 23. Rom. xvi. 17, 18. Eph. iv. 14. 2 Thes iii. 6 14. 1 Tim. vi. 5. Tit. iii. 10. 2 John 10, 11.

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how to bait his hook, and spread his net for men, according to their different tastes, humours, and situations. He conceals the danger, and allures them with the prospect of gain or pleasure. They suspect not the deception, till they have swallowed the bait, or are caught in the net: then they are "taken captive by him at his will;" and they sometimes appear under a kind of necessity of proceeding in their ruinous courses. Yet, some are recovered from out of the snare: for when God gives them repentance, they come to themselves, they acknowledge the truth, they confess their guilt, they cry for mercy and deliverance, they obtain pardon and grace, they are set at liberty, and walk in newness of life; and Satan can never more regain his dominion over them. There is no *peradventure* in respect of the readiness of God to pardon those, who do repent; but we cannot tell whether he will give repentance to those, who still continue to oppose his will: yet, as he sometimes gives it even to the most obstinate of his enemies, it is our duty to hope and pray for them; and in meekness to instruct them, as long as we have the opportunity. And, if any feel themselves taken captive by Satan, and long for deliverance, let them remember, that they can never recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, except by acknowledging the truth of God in the Gospel; that this they never can do without repentance; that repentance is the gift of God; and finally, that they must ask it of him by earnest persevering prayer.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1—5. The apostle foresaw, and gave warning to Timothy, that in the last days, or under the Christian dispensation, perilous or grievous times would arrive; in which it would be extremely difficult for Christians to escape the contagion of bad examples and corrupt principles, or for ministers to preach the unadulterated truth of the Gospel; and in which they, who retained their integrity, would be exposed to the hatred and persecution of their professed brethren. For, while the love of Christ, of one another, and of all men, distinguished real Christians from others, a race was about to arise, who would in general "be lovers of their own selves," in a carnal, inordinate, and exclusive manner; being covetous and greedy in getting and keeping wealth at any rate, and idolatrously trusting in it. They would be "vain-glorious "boasters," and "proud," of their abilities, attainments, and supposed merits; blasphemers of the perfections, truths, and ways of God; disobedient to their parents; ungrateful to the Lord, and their earthly benefactors; unholy and profane, ready to violate promises and covenants, being unfaithful to every trust reposed in them; false accusers of others, in order to find a pretence for persecuting them; given up to the excessive indulgence of their appetites; fierce and savage in their tempers; not loving, but despising good men and good things; betrayers of those who trusted them; of a seditious and turbulent spirit respecting their rulers; rash and impetuous; haughty and imperious; and lovers of sensual or dissipated pleasures, rather than lovers of God; delighting in these gratifications, and not in the Lord and his holy service. Yet, along with all these hateful vices, they would retain "the form "of godliness," professing Christianity, attending on sacred ordinances, and pretending to be religious; whilst they renounced "the power of it;" and at least practically denied, that it ought to have any sanctifying influence on their affections, tempers, and conduct. From persons of this character Timothy was directed to turn away, and to have no fellowship with them. We are not to suppose that the same individuals would answer to the whole of this description; but men would arise, called Christians, who would be guilty of these vices: some being more notorious in one way, and some in another, even as the heathens were, and differing from them only in name. (*Notes, Rom.* i. 29—32.) Such persons have abounded within the visible church in every place, and through all succeeding ages hitherto; and some have been found even among those, that most zealously contended for the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel. Many such were soon perceived in the primitive church; but things grew worse and worse, (13,) till the grand antichristian apostacy was produced. The selfishness, enormous covetousness, high swelling words of vanity, and blasphemous claims and titles of the church of Rome, have generally been supposed to be pointed at in an especial manner. Their countenancing children to disobey their parents, and parents to withdraw their natural affection from their children, in order the more readily to replenish their religious houses; their disregard of the most solemn leagues and covenants, and want of all faith and mercy towards those whom they *falsely accused* of heresy; their enmity against true Christians; the licentiousness countenanced by indulgences and dispensations; their fierce persecutions; their arrogant conduct towards princes and emperors; have certainly exceeded every other corruption of Christianity that hath yet appeared: yet they have always maintained, and been very exact and pompous in their "form of godliness." It seems almost self-evident, that the apostle foretells what the state of things would be in the visible church, and among the professors and ministers of Christianity. No doubt, the Jews, just before

6 For [u] of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women, [x] laden with sins, [y] led away with [z] divers lusts,

7 [a] Ever learning, and never able to come to [b] the knowledge of the truth.

8 Now, [c] as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also [d] resist the truth: [e] men of corrupt minds, * reprobate concerning the faith.

9 But they shall proceed no further: for [f] their folly shall be manifest unto all *men*, as theirs also was.

u Matt. xxiii 14. Tit ii. 11. Jude 4 x Ps xxxviii. 4. Is. i 4 Matt xi. 28. y 1 Cor. xii. 2 2 Pet. iii. 17. z Mark iv. 19. 1 Tim vi 9 Tit. iii. 3 2 Pet ii. 18. Jude 16 18 a iv. 3, 4 Deut. xxix. 4 Prov. xiv. 6. Is. xxx. 10. 11 Ez. xiv. 4—10 Matt xiii 11 John iii. 20, 21 v 44. xii. 42, 43 1 Cor. iii. 1—4. Eph. iv. 14 Heb. v. 11, 12. b See on, ii 25. c Ex. vii 11 22. viii. 7. 18. d iv. 15 1 Kings xxii 22--24. Jer. xxviii 1, &c. Acts xiii. 8—11. xv. 24. Gal. i. 7—9. ii 4. 5. Eph. iv. 14. 2 Thes. ii. 9—11 Tit. i. 10. 2 Pet. ii. 1—3. 1 John ii. 18. iv. 1. Rev. ii. 6. 14, 15. 20.——e Acts viii. 21, 22. Rom. i 28. xvi. 18. 2 Cor. xi. 13—15 1 Tim i. 19. iv. 2. vi. 5. Tit. i. 16. 2 Pet. ii 14 Jude 18, 19.——* Or, *of no judgment* *See on*, 2 Cor. xiii. 5, 6.——f 8 Ex. vii. 12. viii. 19 ix. 11. 1 Kings xxii. 25. Ps. lxxxvi. 10. Jer. xxviii. 15—17. xxix. 21—23. 31, 32. xxxvii. 19. Acts xiii. 11. xix 15—17.

10 But † thou hast [g] fully known [h] my doctrine, [i] manner of life, [k] purpose, [l] faith, long-suffering, charity, patience,

11 [m] Persecutions, afflictions which came unto me [n] at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: [o] but out of *them* all the Lord delivered me.

12 Yea, and all that will [p] live godly in Christ Jesus, [q] shall suffer persecution.

13 But [r] evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and [s] being deceived.

† Or, *thou hast been a diligent follower of*. Phil. ii 22. g Luke i. 3. 1 Tim iv. 6. *Gr.* h iii. 16, 17. iv 3. Acts ii. 42. Rom xvi. 17. Eph iv. 14. 1 Tim. i 3. iv. 12, 13. Tit ii. 7. Heb. xiii. 9. 2 John 9, 10. i Acts xx. 18. xxvi 4. 1 Thes. i. 5. 2 Pet iii. 11. k 1. Dan. i 8. Acts xi. 23. 2 Cor. i 17. l ii. 22 2 Cor. vi. 4—10. 1 Tim. iv. 12. vi 11. 2 Pet. i. 5—7. m Acts ix. 16. xx. 19 23, 24. Rom. viii. 35—37. 1 Cor. iv. 9—11. 2 Cor. i. 8—10. iv. 8—11. xi. 23—28. Heb. x. 33, 34.——n Acts xiii. 50, 51. xiv. 2 5 19—21 ——o iv. 17, 18. Gen. xlviii. 16. 2 Sam. xxii. 1. 49. Job v. 19, 20. Ps xxxiv. 19. xxxvii. 40. xci. 2—6. 14. Is xli. 10. 15. xliii. 2. Jer. i. 19. Dan. vi. 27 Acts ix 23—25. xxi 32, 33. xxiii 10 12—24. xxv. 3, 4 xxvi. 17. 22. 2 Cor. i. 10. 2 Pet. ii. 9.——p 2 Cor. i. 12 1 Tim. ii 2. iii 16. vi. 3. Tit. i. 1. ii 12 2 Pet iii 11.——q Ps. xxxvii. 12—15. Matt. v 10—12. x 22—25. xvi. 24 xxiii. 34. Mark x. 30. Luke xiv. 26, 27. John xv. 19—21. xvi. 2 23. xvii. 14. Acts xiv. 22. 1 Thes. iii. 3, 4 Heb. xi. 31—38 1 Pet. ii 20, 21 iii. 14. iv. 12—16. v. 9, 10. Rev. i. 9, 10. vii. 14. xii 3 7—10 ——r *See on*, 8. ii. 16. 17. 2 Thes ii 6—10. 1 Tim. iv 1. 2 Pet. ii 20. iii. 3. Rev. xii 9. xiii. 14. xviii 23.——s Job xii 16. Is. xliv 20 Ez xiv. 9, 10. 2 Thes. ii. 11.

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the destruction of Jerusalem, answered in many things to the description here given; and so do numbers of protestant Christians, so called at this day. There was, however, no occasion to warn Timothy to "turn away from" persecuting Jews; but the mystery of iniquity was already working, and it was necessary for faithful ministers to protest against it in the most decided manner. *Without natural affection.* (3.) 'The Roman clergy, being forbidden to marry, can neither have wives nor children 'openly; so they are without the affections natural to 'mankind; at least they dare not avow them.' (*Macknight.*) The word rendered "false accusers," (3,) is *devils.* The persons intended are the ministers, and as it were the *mouth*, of this grand accuser of the brethren, and the successors of the traitor Judas, (*John* vi. 70, 71. *Rev.* xii. 9, 10.) *Lovers*, &c. (4.) Or "Lovers of pleasures, rather than lovers of God." This is the literal translation. The persons intended idolized pleasure, devoting themselves to it, instead of God.

V. 6—9. There were, even in the apostle's days, men of the sort which he had described, who, in a covert manner, and with subtle insinuation, crept into families, prying into their affairs, winding themselves into confidence, gaining ascendency over the consciences, and perverting the souls of the unstable, for their own interest or that of their party. Such deceivers singled out the weakest and most credulous women, that they might take advantage of their want of information and discernment, to work upon their imaginations and passions. Their success was also chiefly among such "as were laden with sins, and led "away with divers lusts;" perhaps such as, before they professed Christianity, had been addicted to licentiousness, and not being renewed by divine grace, but merely restrained by temporary convictions, were ready to hearken to the flatteries and soothing delusions of false teachers, and to embrace a carnal self-indulgent religion, which would at once give ease to the conscience, and licence to sinful passions. There were also such as were "ever learning," bestowing pains to become acquainted with religion; but running after every new teacher, and hearkening to every novel notion, continually shifting from one thing to another, and thus "never able to come to the knowledge of the "truth." (*Marg. Ref.*) These were the persons whom the false teachers first assailed; and, by their insinuations and flatteries, they reduced them into a kind of captivity to them, that by their means they might accomplish their covetous, ambitious, or licentious purposes. Now as the Egyptian magicians, (whose names were reported by tradition, and by some ancient writers, to have been Jannes and Jambres,) withstood Moses by counterfeiting his miracles, and thus endeavoured to bewilder Pharaoh's mind, that he might not regard the message of JEHOVAH; so these false teachers withstood the truth, by deceiving men with a false Gospel and various lying pretences; being corrupt and depraved in their minds, alienated from the faith of Christ, and rejected by God as hypocrites or apostates. But they would not be able to proceed any further in their opposition to the Gospel, than the limits prescribed to them in the wisdom of God; and at length their folly would be published to all men, even to their most devoted adherents; as that of the magicians was, when the bile was upon them as well as on the other Egyptians. (*Note, Ex.* ix. 11.)

V. 10—13. As a contrast to the base spirit of the deceivers before-mentioned, the apostle called Timothy's attention to his own conduct and ministry. He had had full opportunity of knowing accurately the doctrine, which he had preached in every place, the manner in which he had lived, the leading aim and purpose which he had pursued in the most determined manner, with every particular, concerning his spirit, conduct, and ministry; and he had attained to a full acquaintance with them. He had especially observed the patience, with which he had endured persecutions in several places. It is highly probable, that Timothy was converted to Christianity during the apostle's first progress through the cities of Asia Minor, (*Notes, Acts* xiii. xiv. xvi.—1—3;) and that he was an eye-witness of St. Paul's sufferings at that time. This satisfactorily accounts for his mentioning these persecutions, rather than more recent ones, which Timothy had not witnessed. Antioch in Pisidia is meant. Indeed, it was a general rule, that if any man was determined to live a godly life, in dependence on the atonement and grace

14 But [t] continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been [u] assured of, [x] knowing of whom thou hast learned *them* ;

15 And that [y] from a child thou hast known [z] the holy scriptures, [a] which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

16 [b] All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, [c] and *is* profitable [d] for doctrine, [e] for reproof, for correction, [f] for instruction in righteousness :

17 That [g] the man of God may be perfect, * thoroughly [h] furnished unto all good works.

t i. 13. ii. 2. *See on*, 1 Tim iv. 16.
u Acts xvii. 31. Rom. xiv. 5. *Marg.* Col. ii 2. 1 Thes. i 5. Heb. vi. 11. x 22.
x 15. 1 Thes. ii. 13.
y i. 5. 1 Sam. ii. 18. 2 Chr xxxiv. 3. Ps. lxxi. 17. Prov. viii. 17. xxii 6 Ec. xii. 1. Luke i. 15. ii. 40.
z Dan. x. 21. Matt. xxii. 29. Luke xxiv. 27. 32. 45. Acts xvii. 2. Rom. i. 2. xvi. 26. 1 Cor. xv. 2 Pet i. 20, 21. iii. 16.——a Ps. xix. 7. John v. 39, 40. Acts x. 43. xiii 29. 38, 39. 1 Pet. i. 10—12. 1 John v. 11, 12. Rev. xix 10.

b 2 Sam. xxiii. 2. Matt. xxi. 42. xxii. 31, 32. 43. xxvi. 54 56. Mark xii 24 36. John x. 35. Acts i 16. xxviii. 25. Rom iii 2. xv. 4 Gal. iii. 8. Heb iii. 7. iv. 12 2 Pet. i. 19—21.
c Ps. xix. 7—11. cxix. 97—104. 130 Jer. xxiii. 22. 32. Mic. ii 7. Acts xx 20. 27. 1 Cor. xii. 7. Eph iv. 11—16.——d *See on*, h. 10.
e iv. 2 Prov. vi 23 xv. 10. 31. John iii. 20. Eph. v. 11—13. Heb. xi. 1. *Gr.*——f ii. 25. Deut iv. 36. Neh ix. 20 Ps. cxix. 9. 11. Matt. xiii. 52. Acts xviii 25. Rom. ii. 20.
g *See on*, 1 Tim. vi. 11.——* Or, *perfected* ——h ii. 21. Neh. ii 18. Acts ix. 36. 2 Cor. ix. 8 Eph. ii 10. Tit. ii. 14. iii. 1. Heb. x. 24.

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of the Lord Jesus, and according to his precepts, he would certainly be exposed to persecution. A form of godliness, without any direct connexion with the doctrine of faith in a crucified Saviour; or a profession of that faith, without the example of a godly life, might be endured and tolerated: but the open profession of "the truth as it is in "Jesus," and a resolute attention to all the duties of vital godliness, would excite the scorn and enmity of mankind; nor could any abilities, amiableness, or beneficence, secure a man from some effects of their persecuting animosity.—Instead of matters taking a more favourable turn, the apostle predicted that wicked men and seducing teachers would grow more and more subtle, daring, callous, malicious, cruel, covetous, and ambitious; deceiving others, and being themselves deceived, by their own delusions and by Satan's wiles. The history of the Christian church, through all the subsequent ages, forms an awful demonstration, that he spake as he was moved by the Holy Spirit: so that all the declamations of infidels against the impostures, persecutions, wars, massacres, and mischiefs, occasioned by Christianity, are only so many attestations to the truth of that religion, which is contained in the holy scriptures, and in the profession and lives of a remnant through every age; and they bear against nothing but that spurious Christianity, which was long before condemned by the Spirit of prophecy. The individual deceivers, whom the apostle in the preceding verses described, would soon be put to shame: but others, succeeding them in the same course, would, from age to age, carry on a similar plan of deception, with more diabolical subtlety and iniquity; being themselves deceived by Satan, while employed by him to deceive mankind. The original word, for "seducers," signifies *magicians*, or *enchanters*, such as Jannes and Jambres had been: that is, men who, by lying pretences to miraculous powers, opposed that Gospel, which had been confirmed by real and indisputable miracles. Now it scarcely admits of a doubt, what company of men, since the apostle's days, have most exactly answered this description. (*Note*, 2 *Thes.* ii. 9—12. *Rev.* xiii. 11—17.)

V. 14—17. The apostle, applying what he had before stated, called on Timothy vigilantly to maintain, and persevere in, the profession and preaching of that doctrine which he had learned, and assuredly believed; knowing that he had received it from the Lord through his ministry, and remembering that it accorded to the holy scriptures, with which he had from his childhood been acquainted.—These, when properly understood, were sufficient to render him wise unto salvation, and to instruct him in all things pertaining to it; as they all spake of the promised Messiah, and prepared the mind for receiving him in faith, and submitting to his authority. For all the writings of Moses and the prophets were given by inspiration of God, to instruct men in divine things: and every part of them was not only perfect truth, but profitable, to teach them sound doctrine respecting God and themselves, the eternal state, the way of acceptance, and other interesting and difficult subjects; to reprove and convince them of their errors and sins, that they might learn their guilt and danger, and so value and embrace the remedy proposed; to correct and regulate their affections, dispositions, and conduct; and to instruct them in every part of universal righteousness, with the obligations, motives, and encouragements to it.—Thus they were suited, and sufficient, not only to make the Christian wise unto salvation, and to direct his whole behaviour, but to perfect "the man of God," the faithful minister of Christ; and fully to supply him with knowledge and wisdom, and whatever could tend to his fitness for every good work, in his private conduct, and public services. Doubtless this is still most emphatically true of the sacred scriptures, now the canon of the New Testament also is completed. The Old Testament, almost entirely in its present form, was called by the Jews, "The "scriptures," or, "The Oracles of God:" now, if every thing, which Christ and his apostles spoke on the subject, was exactly calculated to confirm them in this opinion, and to discredit all traditional revelations; and if the apostle here expressly declares, that the whole was divinely inspired; what are they about, who, as professed friends to Christianity, and in the office of pastors and rulers of the Christian church, labour indeed to persuade men that the books of Moses, and other parts of the Old Testament, are *genuine* and *authentic*, but speak so ambiguously on the point of their being divinely inspired, as to leave their readers in general to suppose, that they do not believe them to be so; or that this is a matter of subordinate consequence?

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

The descent of a stone to the earth is not more natural, than men's propensity to turn away from God; so that, whatever means are used to bring them to love him and one another, the end will not be attained, unless by the continual influence of his new-creating Spirit. We need not, therefore, wonder, that, in the last days, under the fullest external revelation which God hath made to man, perilous times soon came, and professed Christians became "lovers of themselves, lovers of money, of honour and "of pleasure, rather than lovers of God." Our land at

CHAP. IV.

The apostle solemnly charges Timothy to be diligent and faithful in his ministry, 1, 2; *as ere long men would not endure sound doctrine,* 3, 4; *and as he, Paul, had nearly finished his work, was about to suffer martyrdom, and receive the crown of righteousness,* 5—8, *he presses Timothy to come to him, and to bring Mark with him, as he was almost left alone; and gives him information, direction, and caution, in several particulars,* 9—15. *He shows Timothy how his brethren had forsaken him, and how the Lord had supported him, when called to answer before his persecutors; expressing his confidence in him for the future,* 16—18; *and concludes with salutations and benedictions,* 19—22.

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this day abounds with such nominal disciples as are here described; some are selfish and covetous; others proud boasters and blasphemers, or regardless of their duty to parents or children, relatives and rulers, being unthankful and unholy; others are slanderous, treacherous, intemperate, licentious, fierce, implacable, despisers of good men, traitors, heady, high-minded; and who can number those, " who are lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of " God?" Can any man seriously think that these crimes are less abominable in men called Christians, than they were in heathens? Can any one doubt that they will be more terribly punished? In fact, in proportion to the zeal and exactness with which the form of godliness is retained, when the power of it is denied, the more criminal and dangerous men become, and the more should they be avoided and protested against. For when any form or notion of religion is made a cloak or an excuse for wilful transgressions of God's law, the danger becomes greater than from men who openly cast off all regard to God. Hypocrisy, superstition, enthusiasm, and antinomianism, are infectious beyond other mental maladies; the poisonous draught is most dangerous, when mingled to resemble some valuable medicine; and a wolf in sheep's clothing is most dreadful to the unsuspecting flock. Of this *genus*, (which is divided into various *species*, popish and protestant, ancient and modern, learned and unlearned,) there have ever been artful men, who have insinuated themselves, by pompous or plausible pretensions and flatteries, into the favour and confidence of the weakest, most credulous, most ignorant, and imaginative of the human species; and who have taken them captive, by soothing them into quietness, " when " laden with sins, and led away with divers lusts." Those weak and deluded persons, who want a safe and comfortable religion, without self-denial, humiliation, and mortification of their lusts, " are ever learning, and never " able to come to the knowledge of the truth," and readily fall in with artful and interested deceivers of every description. For as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses by aping his miracles, so do such men resist the truth by a counterfeit Gospel, and by substituting visions, superstitions, or curious speculations, instead of repentance, faith, and holy obedience. Such delusions act like opiates; they lull the conscience into a pleasing sleep, and increase the disease; and they are administered by men of corrupt minds, who are reprobate concerning the faith, of whom all should beware. But, though it is grievous to perceive that " evil men and seducers grow worse and worse, de" ceiving and being deceived;" yet we may rejoice that they cannot exceed their limits, that they cannot fatally delude the upright believer; and that, at length, their folly will be made manifest to all men, as that of their predecessors has been.

V. 10—17.

In order to escape and expose every seduction, let us study to become well acquainted with the doctrine and example of the apostle; let us copy his manner of life, " his purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, and patience;" let us frequently reflect on his persecutions, supports, and deliverances; let us count our cost, and know assuredly, that " if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he must " suffer persecution" in one way or another, as far as Providence will permit the enmity of men's hearts to break forth against him. Let us then continue in the things which we have learned and professed to believe, endeavouring to get further acquaintance with the holy Scriptures, " which are able to make us wise unto salvation, by " faith in Jesus Christ," who is the principal Subject both of the Old and New-Testament; and let us learn to reverence the whole Bible, as every sentence in it was given by inspiration from God, and is profitable to instruct, reprove, correct, and guide us in the way of peace and holiness. Nothing more can be wanting to render the Christian or the minister perfectly qualified for every service required of him, and thoroughly furnished unto every good work, than a complete, believing, experimental, and practical knowledge of the whole Scriptures, in their genuine meaning and connexion, and the proportion of one part to another. All religious error springs from ignorance, perversion, or misunderstanding of the Scriptures; from overlooking, objecting to, or explaining away some part of them; or from adding men's notions, inventions, superstitions, or new revelations, to them, as of equal or superior authority. The way therefore to oppose error is by promoting the solid knowledge of the word of truth, especially by the faithful preaching of the Gospel; and the greatest kindness we can do our children is, to make them early acquainted with the Bible. Thus we shall do something important, that may tend to preserve religion in the world, when we are removed out of it; and to perpetuate a succession of those, who are established in the faith, wise unto salvation, and thoroughly furnished unto every good work. ' For it is evident, that the pious endeavours of Lois and Eunice, in bringing young Timothy acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, laid the foundation of all his subsequent eminence and usefulness, in which he was inferior to none but the apostles. It is probable, that, while they were teaching the child to

I [a] CHARGE *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, [b] who shall judge the quick and the dead [c] at his appearing, and [d] his kingdom;

2 [e] Preach the word; [f] be instant [g] in season, out of season; [h] reprove, rebuke, exhort, with [i] all long-suffering and doctrine.

3 For [k] the time will come, when [l] they will not endure sound doctrine; [m] but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, [n] having itching ears;

4 And they shall [o] turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned [p] unto fables.

5 But [q] watch thou in all things, [r] endure afflictions, do the work of [s] an evangelist, * make full proof of thy ministry.

6 For [t] I am now ready to be offered, [u] and the time of my departure is at hand.

a ii. 14. *See on*, 1 Tim. v. 21. vi 13. b Ps. 1 6 xcvi 13. xcviii. 9 Matt xvi. 27. xxv. 31, &c. John v 22—27 Acts x. 42. xvii. 31. Rom. ii. 16. xiv. 9—11. 1 Cor. iv. 4, 5. 2 Cor v 9, 10. 2 Thes i. 7—10 1 Pet iv 5 Rev. xx. 11—15. c 8. Col iii. 4. 1 Thes. iv. 15, 16. 1 Tim. vi. 14. Tit. ii. 13. Heb. ix. 27, 28. 1 Pet. i 7 v. 4 1 John ii 28. Rev. i 7——d Luke xix. 12. 15. xxiii 42. 2 Pet. i. 11. 17.——e Ps. xl. 9. Is. lxi 1—3 Jon. iii. 2 Luke iv. 18, 19. ix 60 Rom. x 15 *See on*. Col i. 25 28.———f Luke vii. 4. xxiii. 23. Acts xii. 5. *Marg* Rom xii. 12. 1 Tim iv 15, 16.——g John iv. 6—10. 32—34. Acts xvi 13 31—33. xx. 7 18—21. xxviii. 16 30, 31.——h Col. i. 28, 29. 1 Thes. ii. 11, 12 v. 14. 1 Tim. iv. 20. Tit. i. 13. ii. 15. Heb. xiii. 22 Rev. iii. 19.——i *See on*, ii. 24, 25. iii. 10——k *See on*. iii. 1—6. 1 Tim. iv. 1—3———l 1 Kings xxii. 8. 18 2 Chr. xvi 9, 10. xxiv 20—22 xxv. 15, 16. Is xxviii. 12. xxx. 9—11. Jer. vi. 16, 17. xviii. 18. Am. vii. 10—13. Luke xx. 19. John viii. 45. Gal iv. 16.

m 1 Kings xviii 22. 2 Chr xviii. 4 5. Jer. v 31. xxiii. 16. 17. xxvii. 9. xxix. 8. Mic ii. 11 Luke vi. 26. John iii 19—21. 1 Pet ii. 1—3 n Ez. xxxiii. 32. Acts xvii. 21. *Gr.* 1 Cor ii 1. 4. o i 15. Prov. i. 32 Zech vii. 11. Acts vii. 57. Heb. xii 25. p 1 Tim. i. 4 iv. 7 Tit. i 14. 2 Pet i. 16. q Is lvi. 9. 10. lxii. 6. Jer. vi. 17. Ez. iii. 17. xxxiii 2. 7. Mark xiii. 34. 37. Luke xii. 37. Acts xx 30, 31. 1 Thes v. 6. Heb. xiii 17. Rev. iii. 2.——r *See on* i 8 ii. 3 10. iii. 10—12.———s Acts xxi. 8. Eph. iv. 11———* Or, *fulfil* Rom. xv. 19 Col i. 25 iv. 17.———t Phil ii. 17.———u Gen. xlviii. 21. l. 24. Num. xxvii. 12—17. Deut. xxxi. 14. Josh. xxiii. 14. 2 Pet i. 14, 15.

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read, and treasure up in his memory, the Oracles of God, they little thought what a harvest in future life would spring from the seed thus sown. But the scripture warrants high expectations in this respect: and it may fairly be said, that the education of women in useful knowledge and genuine piety, in order that they might be qualified and disposed to instil good principles into the tender minds of children, would have the happiest effects towards reforming mankind, and diffusing the light of the gospel in the world.' (*Author's memoir of the Rev. Jerem. Newell, annexed to a funeral sermon preached on account of his death.*)

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1—5. These repeated solemn charges of the apostle, to so zealous and faithful a minister as Timothy, most emphatically show how difficult it is to fill up this important office, in a proper manner even to the end, especially in dangerous times. Again he called on his beloved Timothy, by the authority and as in the presence of God: and in that of the Lord Jesus, who was appointed to judge the living and the dead, at his last glorious appearing to complete the design of his mediatorial kingdom, and to gather his saints into his heavenly kingdom; that he should preach the word of God as one in earnest, being "instant" and unwearied in his work, "in "season, and out of season," at stated times and occasionally, when the opportunity was more and when it was less favourable; to large congregations, in private circles, in obscure places, before friends, or enemies, to one, or to ten thousands of hearers; when it might be done with safety and credit, and when it exposed him to hardship, reproach, peril, or loss. Timothy, to whom this exhortation was given, had an infirm constitution; so that this excuse for remissness should not be too readily admitted. In thus preaching the word of God, he was charged to reprove with authority the sins and negligences of professors; to rebuke with more sharpness those that were guilty of gross evils; and so to exhort, persuade and beseech his hearers, to attend to every part of the divine message with the obedience of faith. In this he was to persevere, "with all long-suffering," though many were unruly, ungrateful, or slow to understand his instructions; and he must enforce his exhortations, by explaining and applying the doctrines of the gospel, in the simplest and most convincing manner. In these important services, he ought to be the more assiduous; as the time was about to come, when professed Christians would not endure sound doctrine, the faithful salutary truths, and practical instructions, of God's word; but, being led away with divers lusts, would be exasperated or disgusted by it; and desire a doctrine, which gave them no disturbance or offence, whilst they indulged their several inclinations. They would therefore seek for "teachers after their own lusts; and they would "heap such unto themselves," as dissatisfied, without a large number of them, to gratify their love of novelty and variety, and to keep them in countenance in their delusions. Thus their "itching ears" would be humoured and pleased: they would turn them away from the truth with contempt and disgust, and pay all their attention to cunningly devised fables and specious heresies. To oppose the progress of this corrupt leaven, which was even then beginning to work, Timothy was called upon to "be vigilant in all things," and to shun all pursuits, which might prevent him from watching against the fallacies, with which Satan and his servants would in varied ways endeavour to seduce men from the simplicity of Christ; to endure cheerfully all the afflictions, to which his zeal and faithfulness might expose him from false brethren, or avowed enemies; to perform the office of an evangelist, in the several places to which he might have access; and to make full proof of his ministry, by trying to the uttermost every method of doing good to the souls of men, in the exercise of all its duties. Timothy is said in the postscript, to have been 'ordained the first bishop of the 'church of the Ephesians:' but it seems *to me at least*, that the office of an evangelist was superior to that of a diocesan bishop, as exercised in the earliest ages of christianity.—The evangelists appear to have been extraordinary assistants to the apostles, exercising great authority in their absence, over the several churches which they visited: perhaps when that extraordinary office began to cease in the church, diocesan episcopacy was substituted in its place. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'The twelve, after Christ's departure, had 'others, whom they sent into some part of their charge.—'These, when they were employed in preaching the gos-'pel, to them that had not yet received it, the scripture 'calls Evangelists.' (*Hammond.*)

7 I [x] have fought a good fight, [y] I have finished *my* course, [z] I have kept the faith:

8 Henceforth [a] there is laid up for me [b] a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, [c] the righteous Judge, shall give me [d] at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also [e] that love his appearing.

9 Do [f] thy diligence to come shortly unto me:

10 For [g] Demas [h] hath forsaken me, [i] having loved this present world, and is departed unto [k] Thessalonica; Crescens to [l] Galatia, [m] Titus unto Dalmatia.

11 Only [n] Luke is with me. Take [o] Mark, and bring him with thee: [p] for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

12 And [q] Tychicus have I sent [r] to Ephesus.

13 The [s] cloak that I left at [t] Troas, with Carpus, when thou comest, bring *with thee*, and the books, *but* especially the parchments.

x *See on*, 1 Tim. vi 13. y John iv. 34. Acts xiii 25 xx. 24 1 Cor ix 24—27. Phil. iii 13, 14 Heb. xii 1, 2. z iii. 14 Luke viii. 15. xi 28 John xvii 6. 1 Tim. vi 20. Rev. iii. 8 10. a Ps xxxi. 19 Matt vi. 19, 20. Col i. 5. 1 Tim. vi. 19 b ii. 5. Prov. iv. 9 1 Cor ix. 25. Jam i. 12. 1 Pet. v. 4. Rev ii. 10. iv. 4. 10 c *See on*, b. 1. Gen. xviii 25 Ps vii. 11 Rom. ii. 5. 2 Thes i. 5, 6. Rev. xix. 11.——d i. 12. 18. Mal. iii. 17. Matt. vii. 22. xxiv 36 Luke x. 12. 1 Thes. v. 4.——e Rom. viii. 23. 2 Cor v. 2. 1 Thes. i. 10 Tit ii 13 Heb ix 28. Rev. i. 7. xxii. 20.——f 20 i. 4——g Col. iv. 14. Philem. 21.——h 16 i. 15. Matt. xxvi. 56. Acts xiii. 13. xv. 38 2 Pet. ii. 15.

i Luke ix. 61, 62. xiv. 26, 27. 33. xvi. 13. xvii 32. Phil. ii 21. 1 Tim. vi. 10. 1 John ii. 15, 16. v. 4, 5. k Acts xvii 1. 11. 13 l Acts xvi 6. xviii. 23. Gal. i. 2 m 2 Cor ii. 13. vii 6 viii 6. 16. Gal. ii 1—3. Tit. i 4. n Acts xvi. 10. Col. iv. 14. Philem 24. o Acts xii. 12. 25. xv. 39. Col iv. 10 1 Pet. v. 13. p Hos. xiv. 4. Matt xix 30. xx. 16. Luke xiii. 30 q Acts xx 4 Eph vi. 21 Col. iv. 7. Tit. iii. 12.——r Acts xx. 16, 17. 25. 1 Tim. i. 3. s 1 Cor. iv. 11. 2 Cor. xi. 27.——t Acts xvi. 8. 11. xx. 5—12.

V. 6—8. It behooved Timothy to act with the greater vigilance and fortitude, as the apostle foresaw that he himself should shortly suffer martyrdom, and pour out his blood as a drink-offering to the honour of the Lord. For this approaching event he was ready, and he knew the time was at hand, when he should be removed out of the world, as the sojourner took up his tent and departed to another place. He considered himself as one who had finished his public ministry, and had only the concluding scene to pass through; and since the time when Christ had chosen him to be his soldier, he was conscious that he had "fought a good fight," he had valiantly contended against sin, the world, and Satan; he had, at Christ's command, through labours, perils, and sufferings, sought the subversion of the kingdom of darkness, the deliverance of Satan's captives, and the advancement of the kingdom of Christ; this he had done, with the appointed weapons of his warfare, by faithful preaching, a holy example, fervent prayers, and patient sufferings. He had "finished his course." He had set out to run the Christian race, laid aside every weight, pressed forward through every obstacle to the mark, and was now about to seize the prize. "He had also kept the faith," both in his profession, and in the execution of his important ministry. He therefore assuredly expected the "crown "of righteousness," that glory and immortality, which were prepared for all true believers in Christ, according to the measure of their grace, services, and sufferings, in his cause. This the apostle knew had been "laid up for "him," and he had little more to do, than to receive and enjoy it. The righteous Judge would openly award it to him "in that day," to which he constantly called men's attention; for, though as a sinner he merited condemnation according to the law, yet, as a believer, whose faith had been shown by his works, he was entitled to the reward of righteousness, according to the Gospel. He expected, indeed, "when absent from the body, to be present "with the Lord," and to have pre-libations of his complete felicity with "the spirits of just men made perfect;" but the public declaration of his right to the conqueror's crown, and his admission to the full enjoyment of immortal glory, would be reserved for that day, when Christ shall appear to show his righteousness, as well as his mercy, in rewarding his faithful followers, (*Notes*, 2 *Thes.* i. 5—10.) Nor was this crown of righteousness laid up for him *only*, or for other eminent ministers or martyrs, but for all believers, in every age and place, even for all "who love Christ's appearing;" for they all expect, prepare, and wait for his second coming; they look for their gracious recompense from him at that period; they endure hardships, and deny themselves worldly pleasures and interests, in hopes of that recompense; they regulate their habitual conduct, as those who believe 'that he will come 'to be their Judge;' they long to see him as he is, to be freed by him from all sin, and to witness his triumph over all his enemies, and, as far as faith and hope exclude anxious doubts of their acceptance, they love the thoughts of his appearing to raise the dead and judge the world.

V. 9—13. The apostle greatly desired Timothy to come to him, as he was solitary in his imprisonment, and had scarcely any with him whom he could employ in needful services. Demas, of whom he seems before to have judged favourably, had forsaken him in his perilous situation, "having loved this present world." He had not courage to venture his life, by continuing with the apostle under his persecutions; he loved the world too much to give up all for Christ, and perhaps some prospect of secular advantage offered itself, with which he was caught, and he departed to Thessalonica in pursuit of it. Whether he finally apostatized or not we cannot tell, but the apostle stood in doubt of him. (*Note*, 1 *John* ii. 15—17.) Two other helpers, known to Timothy, were gone to different places, about the work of the Lord, with the apostle's approbation, so that only Luke, his faithful companion in all his sufferings, continued with him. He therefore desired Timothy to bring Mark with him, who was employed in the same parts. Mark had once forsaken the apostle, having too much "loved this present world," but he had repented, and had now regained his entire confidence, and might be profitable to him for the ministry at Rome, as he had been in other places. He also informed Timothy, that "he had sent Tychicus to Ephesus." This has been deemed a *decisive* proof, that Timothy was not at Ephesus at that time, and indeed it greatly favours that conclusion; but, *possibly*, Tychicus might be sent by another way than the bearer of this epistle, and calling at other places might not arrive till afterwards, and the apostle might mean, that he had sent Tychicus to supply Timothy's place at Ephesus, that he might come to him the sooner. Among these informations and directions, we

14 [u] Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil; the Lord [x] reward him according to his works:

15 Of whom [y] be thou ware also; for he hath greatly [z] withstood our * words.

16 At my first [a] answer [b] no man stood with me, but all *men* forsook me: [c] *I pray God* that it may not be laid to their charge.

17 Notwithstanding, [d] the Lord stood with me, and [e] strengthened me; that [f] by me the preaching might be fully known, and *that* all the Gentiles might hear: [g] and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

18 And the Lord shall [h] deliver me from every evil work, [i] and will preserve *me* unto his heavenly kingdom: [k] to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

19 Salute [l] Prisca and Aquila, and [m] the household of Onesiphorus.

20 [n] Erastus abode at Corinth: but [o] Trophimus have I left at [p] Miletum [q] sick.

21 Do [r] thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, [s] and all the brethren.

22 [t] The Lord Jesus Christ *be* with thy spirit. [u] Grace *be* with you. Amen.

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u Acts xix. 33, 34. 1 Tim. i 20

x 1 Sam. xxiv 12 2 Sam. iii. 39. Ps xxviii 4 cix 5–20 Jer. xv. 15. xviii 19—23. 2 Thes. i. 6. 1 John v 16. Rev. vi. 10. xviii. 6. 20.

y Matt. x. 16, 17. Phil. iii 2.

z *See on*, iii 8.

* Or, *preachings*.

a Acts xxii 1 xxv. 16 1 Cor. ix. 3. 2 Cor vii. 11. Phil. i. 7 17. 1 Pet. iii. 15. *Gr.*

b *See on*, 10. Ps. xxxi. 11—13. Mark xiv 50. John xvi. 32.

c Acts vii. 60.

d Ps. xxxvii 39, 40. cix. 31. Jer. xv 20, 21 xx 10, 11. Acts xviii. 9. 10. xxiii 11 xxvii. 23, 24.

e Is. xli. 10 14. *See on*, 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10.——f Luke xxi. 15. Acts ix. 15. xxvi. 17, 18 Rom. xvi. 25, 26 Eph iii 8 Phil i. 12—14.——g Ps. xxii. 21. Prov. xx. 2. xxviii 15 Jer. ii. 30. Dan. vi. 22. 27 Heb xi. 33. 1 Pet. v. 8.

h Gen. xlviii 16 1 Sam. xxv 39. 1 Chr iv. 10 Ps. cxxi. 7. Matt. vi 13. Luke xi. 4 John xvii 15. 1 Cor. x. 13. 2 Cor. i. 10. 2 Thes iii. 3.

i Ps xxxvii. 28 lxxiii 24. xcii 10 Matt. xiii. 43 xxv. 34. Luke xii. 32. xxii. 29 John x 28–30. 1 Thes v. 23 Heb. xii 28 Jam ii. 5 1 Pet i 5. Jude 1. 24

k *See on*, Rom xi. 36 xvi 27 Gal. i. 5 1 Tim. i. 17. vi 16 Heb xiii. 21 1 Pet. v. 11. Jude 25

l Acts xviii 2. 18. 26. Rom xvi 3, 4 1 Cor xvi. 19. *Priscilla*

m i. 16—18 ——n Acts xix. 22. Rom. xvi 23 ——o Acts xx. 4 xxi. 29.——p Acts xx. 15. 17 *Miletus* ——q Phil. ii 26, 27.——r 9. 13 i. 4 ——s Rom xvi 21—23. 1 Cor xvi. 20. 2 Cor. xiii 13. Phil iv. 22. 2 John 13 3 John 14 ——t Matt xxviii. 20 *See on*, Rom xvi. 20 2 Cor. xiii 14 Gal. vi 18. Philem. 25 ——u *See on*, Rom i. 7. 1 Cor. xvi. 23. Eph. vi. 24. Col iv 18. 1 Tim. vi 21 1 Pet. v. 14. Rev. xxii. 21.

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find St. Paul desiring Timothy to bring his cloak to him. If the word means a cloak, or upper garment, (as it seems to do,) which he supposed he might want at the approach of winter, it is a remarkable proof of his poverty to the end of his life, that he should need to send so far for a garment to keep him warm during the remnant of his days! What books and parchments were meant, Timothy would know, but it is vain for us to conjecture. As Troas was not in the direct road from Ephesus to Rome, this may be urged as a proof that Timothy was not then at Ephesus; but it is not certain, that he might not go by another way, to call upon some of the churches with which he was connected.

V. 14, 15. It is not certain, though probable, that this was the same Alexander, of whom we have before read. (*Acts* xix. 33. 1 *Tim.* i. 20.) The apostle, however, knew the person spoken of to be an incurable apostate, or enemy to the Gospel. Perhaps, after having been excommunicated, he openly renounced Christianity, and did every thing that he could to stir up persecution against St. Paul and the believers, and to obstruct the success of the Gospel. He therefore spake by the Spirit of prophecy, declaring that the "Lord would reward him according to his works," or denouncing this awful sentence upon him for a warning to others. We cannot *certainly* know who are given up to final obduracy, and must therefore persevere in praying for our enemies and persecutors. Timothy was moreover warned to beware of the malignant and subtle machinations of this wicked man; as he would do as much to injure him, and withstand his words, as he had done against the apostle and his doctrine.

V. 16—18. When the apostle was first, "after his second imprisonment," called before the emperor, (or the prefect of the city in his absence, as it is generally thought,) none of the Christians at Rome had courage to stand by him, but all forsook him, to provide for their own safety, as the apostles had done when Christ was apprehended. The cruel persecutions of the Christians at Rome, under Nero, seem to have preceded the writing of this epistle. Numbers had then been put to death or driven from the city, and the rest seem to have been greatly intimidated; so that on this important occasion none were found, who dared to attend St. Paul to the tribunal. This was a criminal weakness, the effect of unbelief; but the apostle prayed that it might not be laid to their charge. Yet, though he was deserted by man, the Lord was graciously pleased to stand with him, and make him sensible of his presence, favour, and protection; thus giving him strength of faith, courageously to bear witness to the truth before his persecutors, that so the doctrine of the Gospel might be fully known by those in authority, and by all present; and that thus it might be circulated among the Gentiles into distant nations, with the most overbearing evidence of its divine authority. Indeed, though his judge was powerful and outrageous, yet he had been for that time delivered from him, as out of a lion's mouth. Perhaps the apostle had in view that adversary, "who goeth about as a roaring "lion, seeking whom he may devour;" and who was not entirely without hope, that the fear of death would induce St. Paul to renounce the faith, and that he should thus seize upon his soul. St. Paul certainly did not expect to escape martyrdom; but he was confident that "the Lord "would deliver him from every evil work," not suffering Satan to prevail against him, to cause him to do any thing inconsistent with the honour of the Gospel, or the benefit of his soul, and "that he would preserve him to his "heavenly kingdom." Instead therefore of complaints or dejection, he was ready to ascribe "glory to the Lord for "ever and ever. Amen."

V. 19—22. Prisca, or Priscilla, and Aquila, were near to the place where Timothy resided; but, as they frequently changed their abode, this does not determine where he then was. (i. 16—18.) The apostle had probably been attended by Erastus and Trophimus, when he last parted with Timothy; but the former abode at Corinth, and the latter was left sick at Miletum, the Lord not seeing good to enable him to work a miracle for his recovery. Having again desired Timothy to come to Paul before winter, (probably apprehending that he might otherwise come too late to see him,) he concluded with repeated prayers and benedictions. Surely, every reader must be fully satisfied, from reading the close of this epistle, that St. Peter was not at Rome when it was written: if, therefore, he suffered martyrdom at the same time that the apostle Paul did, according to ancient tradition, he must have arrived at that city after this epistle had been sent. Timothy accompanied the apostle from Corinth, through Macedonia, probably to Miletus, when he went to Jerusalem before his first imprisonment at Rome. (*Acts* xx. 4--16.) It would therefore have been wholly superfluous to inform him concerning Erastus, if that voyage had been spoken of: and Trophimus accompanied the apostle to Jerusalem. (*Acts* 21--29.) Some, indeed, suppose Miletum in Crete, mentioned by Homer, to be intended: but, in that case, St. Paul must have left Trophimus there, at some time subsequent to the voyage towards Rome, in which he suffered shipwreck; for no intimation of such an event is given in the narrative. Martial, a Roman poet, who lived about this time, mentions Pudens and Claudia; and some suppose that the same persons are here meant, and that they were converted to Christianity, by the apostle, during his imprisonment.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

The importance of the work of ministers, the peculiar temptations to which they are exposed, and the multiplied evil effects of their unfaithfulness or negligence, concur in rendering it needful to charge the most zealous of them, as in the presence of God and of the Lord Jesus, before whom they must shortly appear to give an account of their stewardship, that "they preach the word; instant in "season, out of season," to few, or many, as opportunities offer; like men engaged in the work, who make it their one great business and pleasure, without consulting their ease, interest, or reputation, or shrinking from hardship, reproach, or persecution; and that they reprove, rebuke, exhort, with forbearance and perseverance, with plain instructions and close application. This is the more indispensable, as the time is indeed *come*, when even the most of professed Christians "will not endure sound doc-"trine:" they are offended by the heart-searching, distinguishing, practical truths of God's word, which detects their sins, and shows the necessity of mortifying their peculiar lusts; and they desire to be soothed and flattered in the indulgence of them, and to have "teachers accord-"ing to them." Hence some admire emollient, complaisant, ingenious, or eloquent harangues; others prefer curious, speculative disquisitions, or virulent invectives on men of diverse sects and sentiments. Thus their consciences are quieted, and their self-preference and contempt of others are humoured, together with a curious and captious temper: and because "they have itching "ears," the pruriency of which is not easily quieted, "they heap to themselves such teachers," and always want new voices, new gifts, new notions, till their ears are wholly turned from the truth, and they are turned unto fables. This should induce those who love souls to watch in all things, to venture and endure all painful effects of their faithfulness, to take every opportunity of preaching the pure Gospel, and to make full proof of their ministry, that they may do all the good in it that they possibly can. In doing this, they should be quickened by the consideration, that their brethren, one after another, are taken away, or laid aside, and that their own term of usefulness will soon expire. In this way we may hope to be ready for the stroke of death, when the time of our departure arrives; for the diligent Christian, or faithful minister, who is conscious of having acted in good measure consistently with his profession, may with comfort say, at the close of life, "I have fought the good "fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the "faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of "righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will "*give* me at that day, and to all who love his appearing." The true believer will give all the praise to sovereign grace, and expect acceptance only by faith in Christ: but his conduct will prove, that "he hath loved the "Lord," who first loved him, and that he hath exercised the faith of God's elect. Such a man may therefore, amidst poverty, contempt, pain, sickness, and the agonies of death, rejoice in hope of the glory of God: but this triumphant language cannot properly be adopted, when most needed, by those who have been negligent, lukewarm, and unfaithful in the service of God, from the time of their supposed conversion. In proportion as the duties of a man's place and station are neglected, his evidence of an interest in Christ must be obscured; and uncertainty and discouragement may probably distress his closing scene.

V. 9—22.

There are various characters in the visible Church, and various changes take place among ministers. Some, who have apparently run well, are hindered, and forsake the Lord and his faithful servants, "loving this present "world:" others are recovered from grievous backslidings, and become profitable for the ministry: and not a few turn open apostates or virulent opposers, doing much harm to the servants of Christ, and greatly withstanding their words; whom the Lord will reward according to their works. Others bring their characters into doubt, or incur disgrace, by their cowardice in times of danger; and their brethren are called on to pray for them, that the Lord would not lay that sin to their charge. But a few proceed with diligence and courage in every circumstance; though no man stands by them, the Lord is with them, to strengthen and comfort them; he "gives them a mouth "and wisdom which all their enemies cannot gainsay;" he delivers them from outward dangers and enemies, as long as it is good for them; he preserves them from the mouth of the lion that would destroy their souls; and he keeps them from every evil work even unto his heavenly kingdom. Many such are now before the throne, giving glory to his name; may we be followers of them; may the Lord Jesus be with our spirits, to comfort and sanctify them; and may his grace be with all his disciples and ministers in every place! Amen.

THE

EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO

TITUS.

It is remarkable, that Titus, of whom the apostle repeatedly speaks in terms of the highest approbation, and most cordial affection, in his epistles ; (Marg. Ref. i. 1;) *is not once mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles. Nor is any thing recorded, concerning St. Paul's labours in Crete, now called Candia, a large island in the Mediterranean Sea. It is indeed probable, that the gospel was made known there at an early period ; as there were Cretes present on the day of Pentecost, to witness the stupendous miracles of that day, and to hear the unanswerable sermon of St. Peter, on that wonderful occasion.* (Acts ii. 11.) *If, however, any, who were then converted, on their return home made known the gospel to their neighbours ; the joyful report would reach none but the Jews and proselytes. But, no information is given us of what passed in that island, at that time, or afterwards ; except as this epistle shows, that St. Paul had laboured there with great success. Probably, this was subsequent to his first imprisonment at Rome, and before his second. He seems to have had very great success in his ministry in that island ; but by some means to have been hurried thence, before he could order the state of the Churches, in a regular manner. He, therefore, left Titus there, to settle the churches in the several cities of the island, according to the apostolical plan, in other places. Tradition and ecclesiastical records have made Titus bishop of Crete ; and, because so large an island, renowned for an hundred cities, was an extensive charge ; some have conferred on him the title of* archbishop. *But, I am not convinced, that even this title would not have been a derogation from his real dignity, as an evangelist. 'If by saying, Timothy and Titus were bishops, the one of Ephesus, the other of Crete, we understand that they took upon them these churches, or dioceses, as their fixed and particular charge, in which they were to preside for a term of life ; I believe that Timothy and Titus were not thus bishops : For, both Timothy and Titus were evangelists. Now the work of an evangelist, says Eusebius, was this, to lay the foundation of churches in barbarous nations, to constitute them pastors ; and, having committed to them the cultivating of those new plantations, they passed on to other countries. As to Titus, he was only left in Crete, to ordain elders in every city, and to set in order the things that were wanting. Having therefore done that work, he had done all that was assigned him in that station, and therefore St. Paul sends for him, the very next year to Nicopolis.'* (Whitby.) *It is, however recorded, that he afterwards returned to Crete, and died there when ninety four years of age. Dr. Whitby never doubted, nor does the author of these notes, at all doubt, but that diocesan episcopacy, was generally introduced into the churches, even during the lives of the apostles. But, the office of an evangelist of old, and that of a true missionary, at present, should be considered, as perfectly distinct from that of a bishop, and in many respects, (especially as a general commission, to preach the gospel to the nations,) superior to it. The postscript states, that the epistle was written from Nicopolis in Macedonia : but, had this been the case, the apostle would have said, " I have determined* here *to winter ;" not "* there *to winter."* (iii. 12.) *There were several cities called Nicopolis ; and it is not certain which is here meant. The scope and instructions of it, are similar to those of the two preceding epistles.*

CHAP. I.

The apostle speaks of the nature and importance of his office, and salutes Titus, 1—1. *He shows for what purpose Titus had been left in Crete,* 5; *and what manner of persons should be ordained to the ministry,* 6—9. *He exposes the dangerous principles, and the selfishness of the false teachers, whose mouths must be stopped,* 10, 11: *and the bad character of the Cretians; whom Titus must sharply rebuke and instruct, that they may be sound in the faith,* 12—16.

PAUL, [a] a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to [b] the faith of God's elect, and [c] the acknowledging of the truth which is [d] after godliness;

2 * In [e] hope of [f] eternal life, which [g] God, that cannot lie, [h] promised [i] before the world began;

3 But hath [k] in due times [l] manifested his word through preaching, [m] which is committed unto me, according to the commandment of [n] God our Saviour:

a See on, 1 Chr. vi. 49. Rom. i. 1. Phil. i. 1.
b John x. 26, 27. Acts xiii. 48. Eph. ii. 8. 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14. 1 Tim. i. 5.
c Col. ii. 2. 2 Tim. ii. 25. 1 John ii. 23.
d ii. 11, 12. Tim. i. 4. iii. 16. vi. 3. 2 Pet. i. 3. iii. 11.
* Or, *For.*
e ii. 13. iii. 7. John v. 39. vi. 68. Rom. ii. 7. v. 2—4. Col. i. 27. 1 Thes. v. 8. 2 Tim. ii. 10. 1 Pet. i. 3, 4. 1 John i. 25. iii. 2, 3. Jude 21.
f Matt. xxv. 46. Mark x. 17. 30. John iii. 15, 16. vi. 54. x. 28. xvii. 2. Rom. v. 21. vi. 23. 1 Tim. vi. 12. 19. 1 John v. 11—13. 20.
g Num. xxiii. 19. 1 Sam. xv. 29. 2 Tim. ii. 13. Heb. vi. 17. 18.
h 2 Tim. i. 1. 9. Rev. xvii. 8.
i Prov. viii. 23—31. Matt. xxv. 34. John xvii. 24. Acts xv. 18. Rom. xvi. 25. 1 Pet. i. 20—23. Rev. xiii. 8.
k Dan. viii. 23. ix. 24—27. x. 1. xi. 27. Hab. ii. 3. Acts xvii. 26. Rom. v. 6. Gal. iv. 4. Eph. i. 10. 1 Tim. ii. 6.
l Mark xiii. 10. xvi. 15. Acts x. 36. Rom. x. 14, 15. xv. 19. xvi. 26. Eph. ii. 17. iii. 5—8. Phil. i. 13. Col. i. 6. 23. 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6. Rev. xiv. 6.——m *See on,* 1 Cor. ix. 17. 1 Tim. ii. 7. 2 Tim. i. 11.——n ii. 10. 13. iii. 4—6. Is. xii. 2. xlv. 15. 21.——*See on,* 1 Tim. i. 1. ii. 3. iv. 10.

4 To [o] Titus, [p] *mine* own son after [q] the common faith: [r] Grace, mercy, *and* peace, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ [s] our Saviour.

5 For this cause [t] left I thee in [u] Crete, that thou shouldest [x] set in order the things that are † wanting, [y] and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:

6 If [z] any be blameless, [a] the husband of one wife; [b] having faithful children, [c] not accused of riot, [d] or unruly.

7 For [e] a bishop must be blameless, [f] as the steward of God; [g] not self-willed, [h] not soon angry, [i] not given to wine, [k] no striker, [l] not given to filthy lucre;

8 But [m] a lover of hospitality, [n] a lover of ‡ good men, [o] sober, just, holy, temperate;

9 [p] Holding fast [q] the faithful word, § as he hath been taught, that he may be able by [r] sound doctrine, both to exhort, and [s] to convince the gainsayers.

o 2 Cor. ii. 13. vii. 6. 13, 14. viii. 6. 16. 23. xii. 18. Gal. ii. 3.
p *See on,* 1 Tim. i. 2. 2 Tim. i. 2.
q Rom. i. 12. 2 Cor. iv. 13. 2 Pet. i. 1. Jude 3.
r *See on,* Rom. i. 7. 1 Tim. i. 2. 2 Tim. i. 2.
s *See on.* 3.—Luke ii. 11. John iv. 42. 2 Pet. i. 11. ii. 20. iii. 18. 1 John iv. 14.
t 1 Tim. i. 3.
u Acts ii. 11. xxvii. 7. 12, 21.
x 1 Chr. vi. 32. Ec. xii. 9. Is. xliv. 7. 1 Cor. xi. 34. xiv. 40. Col. ii. 5.
† Or, *left undone.*
y Acts xiv. 23. 2 Tim. ii. 2.
z *See on,* 1 Tim. iii. 2—7.
a Lev. xxi. 7. 14. Ez. xliv. 22. Mal. ii. 15. Luke i. 5. 1 Tim. iii. 12.
b Gen. xviii. 19. 1 Sam. ii. 11. 22. 24. 30. iii. 12. 13. 1 Tim. iii. 4. 5.
c Prov. xxviii. 7.
d 10. 1 Thes. v. 14.
e 5. Phil. i. 1. 1 Tim. iii. 1.
f Matt. xxiv. 45. Luke xii. 42. 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2. 1 Pet. iv. 10.——g Gen. xlix. 6. 2 Pet. ii. 10.——h Prov. xiv. 17. xv. 18. xvi. 32. Ec. vii. 9. Jam. i. 19, 20.——i ii. 3. Lev. x. 9. Prov. xxxi. 4, 5. Is. xxviii. 7. lvi. 12. Ez. xliv. 21. Eph. v. 18. 1 Tim. iii. 3.——k 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25. *Gr.*——l Is. lvi. 10, 11.——*See on,* 1 Tim. iii. 3. 8.—1 Pet. v. 2.——m *See on,* 1 Tim. iii. 2.——n 1 Sam. xviii. 1. 1 Kings v. 1. 7. Ps. xvi. 3. Am. v. 15. 1 John iii. 14. v. 1.——‡ Or, *good things.*——o ii. 7. 2 Cor. vi. 4—8. 1 Thes. ii. 10. 1 Tim. iv. 12. vi. 11. 2 Tim. ii. 22.——p Job ii. 3. xxvii. 6. Prov. xxiii. 23. 1 Thes. v. 21. 2 Thes. ii. 15. 2 Tim. i. 13. Jude 3. Rev. ii. 25. iii. 3. 11.——q 1 Tim. i. 15. iv. 9. vi. 3. 2 Tim. ii. 2.——§ Or, *in teaching.*——r ii. 1. 7. 8. 1 Tim. i. 10. 2 Tim. iv. 3.——s 11. Acts xviii. 28. 1 Cor. xiv. 24. 2 Tim. ii. 25.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1—4. St. Paul was the servant of God, as he was an apostle of Christ; the former was his general character, the latter his special employment. His apostolical office accorded with the faith of God's elect, and was intended to bring numbers to believe in Christ, and to encourage, increase, and direct, the faith of those who had already believed. This he did by publicly declaring the great truths of the everlasting Gospel. Thus men would receive and profess those doctrines, which being truly believed, bring sinful men, who have been alienated from God, to reverence, trust, love, and worship him, as his obedient children and devoted servants. These truths he preached, and his converts acknowledged, amidst manifold trials, "in hope of eternal life, which God, who can-"not lie," break his word, or deceive those that trust in him, "had promised" to Christ, the Surety of his peo-"ple, before eternal ages," (*Note*, 2 *Tim*. i. 9, 10;) which purpose or promise had been concealed, or but in part revealed, in former ages; but in due time God "had "manifested it as his word," that cannot be broken, by the preaching of the Gospel which had been committed to the apostle, "according to the commandment, or appoint-"ment of God our Saviour." He therefore wrote to Titus, "his *genuine* son in the faith," (which was common to all true Christians,) as he had been converted by his ministry, and trained up under him for the work of an evangelist, and in his behalf he presented his usual devout desires of "grace, mercy, and peace." (*Marg. Ref.*) The expression, "God our Saviour," seems here to relate to the Godhead, without distinction of persons; and in some places it refers to the person of the Father, as saving us by his beloved Son, (iii. 4—6.) Some explain the words, rendered "before the world began," (literally, *before eternal times*,) to relate to the promise made to Adam, or to Abraham, before the promulgation of the Mosaic law. But, without engaging in any argument on the critical question, I must think that the interpretation above given is far more obvious; if indeed Christ be "the Chosen of God," the Surety and Representative of all who were given to him: eternal life was promised to him, in behalf of his people, of all, who in every age should believe in him, before the world was, in consequence of his engagement to become incarnate, and to be obedient even to the death upon the cross. "Known unto "God are all his works, from the beginning of the "world." Allow this, (and who will venture to deny it?) and then the promise of eternal life to the divine Logos, in behalf of all his people, is clear, and the meaning satisfactory, which, in my judgment at least, the other interpretations by no means are.

V. 5—9. Titus had been left in Crete, to set in order what was wanting in the government, worship, and discipline of the churches; and especially to ordain elders in every city in which there were converts to Christianity. (*Notes*, 1 *Tim*. iii. v. 21, 22. 2 *Tim*. iv. 5.) There were many cities in this populous island, and the apostle seems to have been very successful during his short stay there

10 For [t] there are many unruly and vain talkers, and deceivers, [u] especially they of the circumcision;

11 Whose [x] mouths must be stopped, who [y] subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for [z] filthy lucre's sake.

12 One [a] of themselves, *even* a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians *are* alway [b] liars, evil beasts, slow-bellies.

13 This witness is true. Wherefore, [c] rebuke them sharply, [d] that they may be sound in the faith;

[t] Acts xx. 29. Rom. xvi. 17. 18. 2 Cor xi 12—15. Eph. iv 14. 2 Thes ii 10—12 1 Tim i. 4. vi 3—5. 2 Tim. iii. 13 iv. 4. 2 Pet. ii 1 2. 1 John i. 18 iv. 1. Rev. ii. 6 14.

[u] Acts xv 1 24 Gal. i. 6—8 ii. 4. iii. 1. iv 17—21 v 1—4 Phil iii. 2, 3

[x] 9. iii. 10. Ps. lxiii. 11. cvii 42. Ez xvi 63 Luke xx 40 Rom. iii. 19. 2 Cor xi 10

[y] Matt. xxiii. 14 2 Tim. iii 6

[z] See on, 7 Is. lvi. 10, 11. Jer. viii. 10 Ez xiii 19. Mic. iii. 5 11. John x. 12. 2 Pet. ii. 1—3.———[a] Acts xvii. 28 [b] Rom xvi. 18. 1 Tim iv 2. 2 Pet ii 12—15 Jude 8—13.———[c] ii. 15. Prov. xxvii. 5. 2 Cor. xiii 10. 1 Tim v 20 2 Tim iv 2.———[d] ii. 2. Lev. xix 17 Ps. cxix. 80. cxli. 5. 2 Cor. vii 8—12. 1 Tim. iv 6.

14 Not giving heed to [e] Jewish fables, and [f] commandments of men, that [g] turn from the truth.

15 Unto [h] the pure, all things *are* pure: [i] but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving, *is* nothing pure; but even [k] their mind and conscience is defiled.

16 They [l] profess that they know God; but in works they deny *him*; [m] being abominable, [n] and disobedient, and [o] unto every good work * reprobate.

[e] 1 Tim. i. 4—7. iv. 7 2 Tim. iv. 4.

[f] Is. xxix. 13. Matt. xv. 9. Mark vii. 7. Col. ii. 22.

[g] Gal. iv. 9 2 Tim. iv. 4. Heb. xii. 25 2 Pet. ii. 22.

[h] Luke xi. 39—41 Acts x 15. Rom. xiv. 14. 1 Cor. vi. 12, 13. x. 23. 25. 31. 1 Tim. iv 3. 4.

[i] Prov. xxi 4. Hag ii. 13. Zech. vii 5, 6. Matt. xv 18. Rom. xiv. 20. 23 1 Cor xi. 27—29.

[k] 1 Cor. viii 7. Heb. ix. 14. x. 22

[l] Num xxiv 16. Is. xxix. 13 xlviii. 1. lviii. 2. Ez xxxiii. 31. Hos. viii 2, 3 Rom. ii 18—24 2 Tim. iii. 5—8 Jude 4 ———[m] Job xv. 16. Rev. xxi. 8. 27 ———[n] 1 Sam. xv 22—24. Eph. v. 6. 1 Tim. i. 9 ————————[o] Jer. vi. 30. Rom. i 28. 2 Tim. iii. 8.

* Or, *void of judgment*

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but probably many had before been converted to Christianity. The character and qualifications of these pastors, (who are called *elders* and *bishops* indiscriminately,) correspond to what hath before been considered: but, it is here added, that they ought to be such as "had believing "children." They who had children grown up, not having embraced Christianity, that were accused of riot and licentiousness, or that would not be governed and restrained from scandalous vices, were not to be admitted into the pastoral office. The pastors must be chosen from those, who had for some time professed the Gospel, (when that could be done:) but, if their children proved untractable, it would at least be thought that they did not know how to govern their own families; and the misconduct of their children might reflect disgrace upon the Christian religion, as well as weaken the hands of their parents in the public ministry. For the overseer and steward of God's household, (*Note*, 1 *Cor.* iv. 1—3.) must be an irreproachable person; and not of an over-bearing, self-willed, dogmatical temper, that could not endure to be opposed or contradicted. To the other excellencies of his character, it was needful that he should be a man who "held fast," in a steady consistent profession, "the faithful word" of the Gospel, according as it had been taught by the apostles, without having perverted or sophisticated it, as many did; that so he might be a judicious, experienced defender of its truths; able, by substantial, salutary, and holy doctrine, in every particular, to exhort the disciples to steadfastness in the faith. and to an honourable conduct; and to confute, convince, or silence gain-sayers, who opposed or corrupted the truth.

V. 10—13. The qualification mentioned in the ninth verse was the more requisite, as there were in every place, (especially in Crete,) a number of ungovernable talkers and interested deceivers, who could not be kept, by any censures or admonitions, from doing great mischief. These were of various descriptions; but the Judaizers were the most busy, unruly, and pernicious; they subverted whole families, turning them aside from the simplicity of faith in Christ, to attend on legal ceremonies and human traditions, by teaching such things as they ought not, and "this for filthy lucre's sake," rather than from mistake or ignorance. For in this manner they humoured the pride and prejudices of some, and flattered others in their sins, till they got to be the heads of a party, and found means of enriching themselves. The mouths, therefore, of these deceivers must be stopped, by sound doctrine, and conclusive arguments, and testimonies from the word of God; that the tendency of their principles, and the baseness of their designs, might be manifest to every man, and that they might have nothing to say in their own defence. The character of the Cretians indeed was so bad, that numbers of such persons, both deceivers and deceived, might be expected in their churches: for Epimenides, a native of Crete, a poet of some reputation, who might be "called a prophet of their own," and who perhaps was deemed a prophet by his countrymen, had said, "the Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bel- "lies;" they had in all ages been notorious for lies, frauds, and impostures; they were like poisonous or ferocious animals, gluttonous, and indolent to excess; so that, whilst a great proportion of their time was employed in eating and drinking, they were rendered torpid and inactive, by their excesses, and made no good use of the rest. They united the subtlety of the fox, the venom of the serpent, or the fierceness of wolves and tigers, with the greediness and inactivity of swine. It is not easy to determine, from what concurrence of circumstances the Cretians obtained so odious and contemptible a national character: but the inspired apostle attested the truth of this testimony; and the effects of it appeared in the conduct of many false teachers and professors of Christianity. Titus was therefore directed "to rebuke them sharply," or with cutting reproofs and awful warnings, "that the churches might be sound in "the faith," when the mouths of deceivers were thus stopped, hypocrites detected, and unestablished Christians put upon their guard. Timothy had been taught to instruct opposers with *meekness*, and to rebuke with long-suffering; but Titus was ordered to rebuke with *sharpness*. Some have conjectured, that Timothy was too vehement in his natural spirit, and Titus too timid and pliant; others ascribe the difference to the opposite characters of the persons to be rebuked. But, in fact, Christian meekness is as distant from pusillanimous connivance at sin and error, as from impetuous anger and impatience. This the apostle's conduct, and even that of our Lord himself, demonstrates.

V. 14—16. In order to the Cretian churches being

CHAP. II.

The apostle directs Titus to instruct the people in their several duties; to exemplify them in his own conduct, and to take heed to his doctrine, 1—10: *and enforces his exhortations, by showing the holy tendency of the gospel, and charging Titus to speak with authority and firmness,* 11—15.

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sound in the faith, Titus was to warn them with sharp rebukes, if necessary, not to give heed to Jewish fables, human traditions, or legal observances, which were then entirely the commandments of men who "turned from the "truth," and wanted to impose their own usages on Christians. These related, greatly, to distinctions of clean and unclean meats, and the pharisaical inventions of washing their hands, and other external observances. (*Notes, Matt.* xv. 1—20.) But to the pure, to the real believer, who had peace with God through Jesus Christ, and had his heart purified by faith, all such things were pure in themselves, and used in a holy manner, by the allowance, according to the precepts, and for the glory, of God: to those, however, "that were defiled," with the guilt and pollution of unrepented sin, and who, through unbelief, remained strangers to the purging of the conscience with the blood of Christ, "nothing was pure:" for as their hearts were unsanctified, and their consciences were erroneous, partial, callous, and unclean, so all their enjoyments and actions, however innocent or good in themselves, were corrupted by their pride, avarice, sensuality, and enmity against God. They indeed professed to know him and to be his people, but in works they denied him, and manifested a disregard to his authority, favour, and indignation: for their conduct in all respects, especially in crucifying Christ, persecuting Christians, and endeavouring to subvert the churches of the Gentiles, proved them to be abominable and disobedient; and as to every good work rejected by God, and given up to judicial blindness. The unbelieving Jews seem to be primarily intended; but the judaizing teachers were purposely included as unbelievers also, though they professed to believe.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

All who are not slaves of sin and Satan are the servants of God: "this honour have all his saints," and this dignifies their meanest employments, though the office of ministers is confined to a few, and that of apostles and evangelists to a very small number. But sinners cannot serve God, except "according to the faith of his elect" people, and by "acknowledging the truth which is after "godliness:" (*Note,* 1 *Tim.* iv. 8:) nor can they be steadfast in the midst of trials and temptations, save "in hope "of eternal life." This was promised in Christ, "be- "fore the world began:" and, though he who gave this promise can do all things else, he "cannot lie," he cannot "deny himself." In his due time, he has manifested his word of truth by preaching: and all, to whom this is committed, must take heed to publish it, "according to "the commandment of God our Saviour," that the common faith may thus be wrought in those whom they may rejoice in as their own children, and to whom, "grace, "mercy, and peace, may be given from God the Father, "and the Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour." When a multitude of captives are brought forth from the dark dungeon of Satan into the glorious light and liberty of the Gospel, many things will be wanting, and much required to be set in order, before their worship and service can be performed in a suitable manner, the best methods used for their edification, and the most effectual defence made against the assaults of their spiritual enemies. Then the presence, counsel, and influence of some experienced and faithful servant of God will be peculiarly useful, especially in respect of the choice and ordination of pastors to preside over them and teach them. They, to whom this important trust is committed, are bound, as they shall answer for it before God, to appoint blameless and faithful men to this stewardship; such as are of pliant tempers, respecting *their own humours and interests*, peaceable, sober, temperate men; superior to the grovelling love of filthy lucre; lovers of hospitality and of good men; just and holy; prudent managers of domestic concerns; attentive to relative duties; constant and bold in professing the truth, as taught in the word of God, and able by sound doctrine to exhort and to convince gain-sayers. As it is peculiarly incumbent on ministers to educate their children with diligence and piety, and to rule them with prudence and firmness, so the children of ministers should consider what a dreadful account must be rendered by them, if their unbelief, riot, and unruly behaviour, bring an imputation on the characters of their fathers, and interfere with their usefulness.

V. 10—16.

In all ages there have been unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, by whom Satan sows tares in the Lord's field; and this should teach and induce the servants to be vigilant and diligent, that they may counteract the enemy. For unless the "mouths of such men be stopped," they will subvert whole families of hopeful persons, and teach the most pernicious doctrines for filthy lucre's sake. To prevent this mischief is the most difficult part of a minister's work: and his wisdom must especially be shown, in discerning men's characters, distinguishing between the weak and the wicked; and knowing when to exhort with gentleness, and when to "rebuke with sharpness, that men may be "sound in the faith." For though there are national differences of character, yet the heart of man in every time and place is deceitful and desperately wicked: and while some need the gentlest guidance, others must be exposed and warned with decided severity; or they will turn men away from the faith to fables and human inventions. The true Christian learns to exercise his liberty in a pure and holy manner; all things are pure to him, and grace teaches him "to eat, and to drink, and to do all "things to the glory of God;" and when he fails, he has humble recourse to the purifying blood and sanctifying grace of Christ. But unbelievers are defiled in their minds

BUT speak thou the things [a] which become sound doctrine :

2 That [b] the aged men be [*] sober, [c] grave, [d] temperate, [e] sound in faith, [f] in charity, in patience.

3 The aged women likewise, that *they be* in behaviour [g] as becometh [†] holiness : [h] not [‡] false accusers, [i] not given to much wine, [k] teachers of good things.

4 That they may teach [l] the young women to be [§] sober, [m] to love their husbands, to love their children :

[a] 11—14. i 9. iii. 8. 1 Tim i. 10. vi. 3. 2 Tim. i. 13

[b] Lev. xix 32. Job xii 12. Ps xcii. 14. Prov. xvi 31. Is. lxv. 20.

[*] Or, *vigilant.* 1 Cor xv. 34. 1 Thes. v. 6. 8. 1 Tim. iii. 2 11. 1 Pet i. 13. iv 7. v. 8. *Gr.*

[c] 7. 1 Tim. iii. 4. 8. 11. Phil. iv. 8. *Gr*

[d] i 8. Acts xxiv. 25. 1 Cor. ix 25. Gal. v. 23. 2 Pet. i. 6 Mark v. 15. Luke viii. 35 Rom. xii. 3. 2 Cor. v. 13 1 Pet iv 7. *Gr*

[e] *See on*, i. 13 ——[f] *See on*, 1 Tim. i 5 ——[g] Rom xvi. 2. Eph v. 3 1 Tim ii. 9, 10. iii. 11 v 5—10 1 Pet iii. 3—5.——[†] Or, *holy women* ——[h] *See on*, 1 Tim iii. 8. 11 [‡] Or, *make-bates* 2 Tim. iii 3. *Gr* —— [i] *See on*, 1. 7.——[k] 4. Heb. v. 12. Rev. ii. 20. [l] 1 Tim v. 2 11. 14.——[§] Or, *wise. See on*, 2 ——[m] 1 Tim. v. 14.

5 *To be* [n] discreet, chaste, [o] keepers at home, [p] good, [q] obedient to their own husbands, [r] that the word of God be not blasphemed.

6 [s] Young men likewise exhort to be [‖] sober-minded.

7 In [t] all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works : in doctrine *shewing* [u] uncorruptness, [x] gravity, [y] sincerity ;

8 [z] Sound speech that cannot be condemned ; [a] that he that is of the contrary part [b] may be ashamed, [c] having no evil thing to say of you.

[n] *See on*, 2

[o] Gen xvi. 8, 9. xviii. 9. Prov. vii. 11, 12. xxxi. 10—31. 1 Tim. v 13.

[p] Acts ix. 36 39. 1 Tim v 10

[q] Gen iii 16. 1 Cor xi. 3. xiv. 34. Eph v 22—24. 33 Col. iii. 18 1 Tim. ii 11. 1 Pet. iii. 1—5.

[r] 2 Sam xii. 14. Ps. lxxiv. 10. Rom. ii. 24. 1 Tim. v 14. vi 1.

[s] Job xxxix 8. Ps. cxlviii 12. Ec. x. 9. xii. 1 Joel ii 28. 1 Pet v. 5 1 John ii. 13, 14.

[‖] Or, *discreet*, *See on*. 2.

[t] Acts xx 33—35. 2 Thes. iii. 9. 1 Tim iv. 12. 1 Pet v. 3.——[u] 2 Cor ii. 17. iv. 2. [x] *See on*, c. 2 ——[y] 2 Cor. i 12. viii. 8 Eph. vi. 21. Phil i. 10.——[z] Mark xii. 17 28. 32-34. 1 Tim. vi 3 ——[a] Neh v. 9 1 Tim v. 14. 1 Pet ii. 12. 15. iii. 16.——[b] Is. lxv. 5. Luke xiii. 17. 2 Thes. iii 14.——[c] Phil. ii. 14—16.

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and consciences ; their ordinary actions and religious duties are unclean to them : whether they riot in licentiousness, as if that were liberty, or whether they enslave themselves to superstitious observances. For, alas! "numbers, of "various descriptions profess to know God, but in works "deny him ; being abominable, disobedient, and unto "every good work reprobate." Yet, at last "the tree "will be known by its fruit ; and every tree that bringeth "not forth good fruit, shall be hewn down and cast into "the fire."

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. To mark the difference between false teachers and the servants of Christ, the apostle exhorted Titus to "speak such things as became sound "doctrine," or the salutary healing truths of the Gospel, from which all the motives and encouragements to holy obedience must be deduced : and it "became sound doc"trine," that preachers should inculcate on their hearers the practice of their various duties, from evangelical principles. Thus, "the aged men should be sober," serious, prudent, vigilant, "grave, temperate," in every kind of indulgence, and "sound in faith," steadfast in the profession of sound doctrine, and faith in Christ, "in cha"rity," or love to him and their brethren, and "in "patience," amidst trials and persecutions. It does not appear that elders, or pastors of the Church, were exclusively intended. The original word is different from that translated *elders*, and signifies men advanced in years. The apostle had before spoken of the elders. (*Note*, i. 5—9.)

V. 3—6. Aged women also, whether employed as deaconnesses by the Church or not, should be instructed to act consistently with their sacred character, as professedly a part of the spiritual priesthood, and that devotedness to God which it implied. They should be warned against speaking slanders or calumnies, a sin to which human nature is peculiarly prone, and to which the national character of the Cretians must give them an additional propensity. The original word is the same that is in many places rendered "devils ;" which shows what a hateful example slanderers and back-biters imitate. They must be careful not "to enslave themselves to much wine :" some of them might have been accustomed to this when heathens, and it would need great self-denial to acquire victory over the habit, and liberty from the thraldom, of this infatuating vice. They were likewise required to be teachers of good things in their families, and to their juniors : that so they might be employed in exhorting the younger women to be sober and prudent, without levity or vanity ; affectionate to their husbands and children, and taking pleasure in the duties of wives and mothers ; discreetly avoiding all appearance of evil, or ground of suspicion, as well as every actual violation of their conjugal fidelity ; to be "keepers at home," and diligent in managing their domestic affairs, (for both are implied ;) not delighting to gad abroad, nor yet loitering away their time at home ; to be good or kind to all around them, "and "obedient to their own husbands," even if they were not Christians, and in many things behaved improperly to them ; for this would frequently be the case. These things must be attended to, "that the word of God might not be "blasphemed," or evil spoken of among the Gentiles, through any improper conduct of Christians in relative life. Young men also must be taught to be sober-minded, to act in a prudent and considerate manner ; avoiding all youthful lusts and vanities, and attending to their several duties in the fear of God.

V. 7, 8. It was especially incumbent on Titus to give, in his own conduct, a pattern of all those good works to which he exhorted others, that they might have his example for a comment on his instructions. In his doctrine also, he should take care to preserve "uncorrupt"ness," not admitting any of those additions or vain conjectures, by which the holy nature and efficacy of divine truth might be altered ; "gravity," avoiding every thing ludicrous, all affectation of wit, or whatever did not consist with the solemnity becoming the great concerns of God and eternity ; and "sincerity," or an upright, evident, and single aim to the glory of God and the good of souls ; without seeking applause or worldly advantage, or the appearance of selfish designs, in what he did. He must also use "sound speech, that could not be con"demned," as erroneous, ambiguous, unintelligible, or of bad tendency : that, thus stating divine truth in plain, convincing, and scriptural language, they, who were of the contrary part, whether heathens, or heretics, might find nothing weak, frivolous, or unguarded, to object against ;

9 *Exhort* [d] servants to be obedient unto their own masters, *and* [e] to please *them* well in all *things*; not † answering again:

10 Not [f] purloining, but [g] shewing all good fidelity; that they may [h] adorn the doctrine of [k] God our Saviour in all things.

11 For [l] the grace of God, that † bringeth salvation, [m] hath appeared to all men.

12 [n] Teaching us, that [o] denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should [p] live [q] soberly, righteously, and [r] godly, in [s] this present world;

d Eph vi. 5-8. Col iii. 22-25. 1 Tim. vi 1, 2 1 Pet ii. 18-25.
e Eph v 24
† Or, *gainsaying.*
f 2 Kings v 20-24. Luke xvi. 6-8. John xii 6. Acts v 2 3.
g Gen. xxxi 37. 38. xxxix 8, 9 1 Sam xxii 14. xxvi. 24. Ps ci. 6. Matt. xxiv 45. Luke xvi. 10. 1 Cor iv. 2.
h Matt. v 16. Eph. iv 1 Phil i 27 ii 15, 16 iv. 8. 1 Pet ii 12. iii. 16——i 1 Tim. v. 17 vi 1. 3. 2 John 9 ——k *See on*, i. 3 1 Tim i 1. Is. xii 2.——l iii. 4. Ps lxxxiv. 11. Zech iv. 7. x 12 John i. 14 16. 17. Acts xi. 23 xiii 43. xx. 24. Rom iv. 4, 5 v 2 15 20, 21. xi. 5, 6. 2 Cor vi. 1. Gal ii. 21 Eph. i. 6, 7. ii. 5. 8. 2 Thes ii 16. 1 Tim. i 14. Heb. ii. 9. xii. 15. 1 Pet i 10-12 v 5-12

† Or *bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared.*
m Ps xcvi 1-3. 10. xcviii 1-3. cxvii. Is ii 2, 3 xlv 22 xlix. 6. lii 10 lx 1-3. Matt xxviii. 19 Mark xvi 15. Luke iii 6. xxiv. 47. Acts xiii 47. Rom. x 18. xv. 9-12. Eph. iii. 6-8 Col. i 6. 23 2 Tim iv 17.——n Matt. xxviii 20. John vi. 45 1 Thes iv 9 Heb viii. 11. 1 John ii. 27.——o Is lv. 6, 7. Ez xviii 30, 31. xxxiii 14, 15 Matt iii 8-10 xvi 24. Rom. vi 4-6 12 viii. 13. xiii. 12, 13. 1 Cor. vi. 9-11 2 Cor. vii 1. Gal. v 24 Eph iv 22-25 Col. iii. 5-9 Jam iv 8-10 1 Pet ii 12. iv 2-5 2 Pet i. 4 ii 20-22 1 John ii. 15-17 Jude 18.——p Ps cv 45. Ez xxxvi 27. Matt v. 19, 20. Luke i. 6 75. iii. 9-13 Acts xxiv. 16. 25 Rom vi 19 1 Tim iv 12. 1 Pet. i 14 18. 2 Pet. i 5-8. iii. 11. 1 John ii 6. Rev. xiv. 12.——q *See on*, 4 r Ps iv 3 2 Cor i 12. 2 Pet ii 9.——s John xiv. 30. xvii. 14, 15. Rom. xii. 2. Gal. i. 4. Eph. ii. 2 2 Tim. iv. 10. 1 John v. 19.

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but that they who attempted to find fault with what was so evidently good and beneficial might be put to shame, having no evil thing to say of him.

V. 9, 10. (*Notes, Eph.* vi. 5—8. 1 *Tim.* vi. 1—4.) In general, servants must be exhorted to be obedient to their masters, and to make it their constant endeavour to please them well, and give them full satisfaction, in every part of their conduct; and, in particular, they must not "answer again," with rudeness or warmth, when found fault with, even though they had not been to blame; but rather bear an unmerited rebuke, than engage in altercations and give further offence, or incur the charge of impertinence. They ought also scrupulously to avoid "purloining," or pilfering, in the absence of their masters, such things as were put under their care or within their reach; either to apply them to their own use, or to bestow them on their companions. The word is used concerning Ananias, who clandestinely kept back part of the price for which his land was sold. (*Notes, Acts* v. 1—10.) This species of stealing was so common among the heathen servants, that the same word sometimes signifies a slave, which is generally rendered a thief! and it is to be apprehended, that it is extremely common, even among servants who are called Christians; few of whom are scrupulous about using, or disposing of, the provisions of the family, contrary to the intentions and interests of their masters; nay, sometimes they affect the praise and pride of generosity, by giving away their property to dishonest hangers-on, who acknowledge the obligation by reciprocal favours. But Christian servants must be taught strict honesty in these things, and "to show all good "fidelity," by uprightly using, or saving, whatever was intrusted to them, according to the will of their masters; being satisfied with the provision allotted them, and not countenancing any degree of waste or embezzlement— Thus they must "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour "in all things;" for though the doctrine of salvation by faith in the divine Saviour has unspeakable glory and beauty in it, yet unconverted men cannot discern this, but rather deem it foolish, absurd and pernicious; and the misconduct of professed Christians confirms them in these ruinous prejudices. On the other hand, honesty, fidelity, industry, a peaceable obliging conduct, and exact conscientiousness, in servants professing the Gospel, would put an ornament and a lustre on the doctrine in the eyes of their heathen masters. This argument of its excellency would be intelligible, and excite their attention, and they would thus be rendered more favourable to the truth, and might be induced at length to hear and embrace it.— The same observation might be equally applied to every other instance of relative and social good behaviour.

V. 11, 12. The nature of Christianity required, that such exhortations as have been considered should be given and observed; for "the grace of God which bring-"eth salvation," or the *saving* mercy and grace of God, and his abundant love to lost sinners, as discovered in the Gospel of Christ, "had appeared to all men," or had been illustriously displayed before Jews and Gentiles, of every rank and character, without exception; and the preachers were directed to preach to all, and invite all, to whom they could obtain access. This doctrine, in the most energetic manner, taught all who heard it "to deny "ungodliness and worldly lusts," as it exhibited, in the clearest light, the holiness and justice of God, the obligations and requirements of his perfect law, the evil of sin, the future state of retribution, the lost condition of fallen man, his need of mercy and grace, and the encouragements given him to "repent and turn to God, and to do "works meet for repentance." It taught men, that they ought to deny ungodliness, showed them how they might be enabled to do it, and supplied the most powerful motives to set about it. Moreover, when this saving grace of God took possession of the heart in regeneration, the new nature, under the influences of the Holy Spirit, inwardly and efficaciously taught men the same things; the law was written in their minds, whilst new, and more constraining motives to obedience were drawn from the obligations of redeeming love, the comforts of communion with God, and the hope of heavenly felicity. Thus in every age, the Gospel teaches men in general, and grace teaches believers in particular, "to deny ungodliness;" to refuse compliance with every inward and outward suggestion to neglect God and their duty to him, or to treat him with irreverence, ingratitude, contempt, and enmity; and constantly to resist and counteract that principle of alienation from God, whence all idolatry, infidelity, impiety, and irreligion, in thought, word, and deed, originate. It teaches them also to deny "worldly lusts," refusing to gratify those impetuous, carnal, and selfish desires of the human heart, which influence men to seek happiness from the world, and not from God; such as pride, ambition, avarice, sensuality, wrath, malice, and envy; whence spring all kinds of contentions, wars, cruelties, injustice, frauds, oppressions, murders, intemperance, and licentiousness, which disturb, desolate, and plague the earth; these the saving grace of God teaches

13 [t] Looking for that [u] blessed hope, and [x] the glorious appearing of the great God, and [y] our Saviour Jesus Christ;

14 Who [z] gave himself for us, [a] that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and [b] purify [c] unto himself a [d] peculiar people, [e] zealous of good works.

15 These things [f] speak, and exhort, and rebuke [g] with all authority. [h] Let no man despise thee.

t 1Cor. i. 7. Phil. iii. 20, 21. 2Tim. iv. 8. 2 Pet. iii. 12—14.

u i 2. iii 7. Rom. v. 5. viii. 24, 25. xv. 13. Col. i. 27. 2 Thes. ii. 16. Heb. vi 18, 19. 1 Pet. i. 3 1 John iii. 3.——x Job xix. 25—27 Is. xxv 9. Matt. xvi. 27. xxv. 31. xxvi. 64. Mark viii. 38. xiv. 62. 1 Tim vi 13, 14 Heb. ix. 28. 2 Cor. iv. 4. 6. *Gr.*——y iii 4. 6. 2 Pet iii. 18 1 John iv. 14.——z Matt. xx 28 John vi. 51. x. 15. Gal. i. 4. ii. 20 iii. 13 Eph. v. 2 23—27. 1 Tim. i. 15 ii. 6 Heb ix 14. 1 Pet iii. 18. Rev. i. 5. v. 9——a Gen xlviii. 16. Ps. cxxx. 8. Ez. xxxvi. 25. Matt. i. 21. Rom. xi. 26, 27.

b Mal iii 3 Matt. iii 12. Acts xv. 9. Jam iv. 8. 1 Pet i. 22 1 John iii. 3.

c Acts xv. 14. Rom. xiv. 7, 8. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

d Ex. xv 16 xix. 5, 6. Deut vii. 6. xiv 2 xxvi. 18. Ps cxxxv 4. 1 Pet. ii 9.——e 7 iii. 8. Num xxv. 13 Acts ix 36. Eph ii. 10. 1 Tim. ii. 10 vi. 18. Heb. x. 24. 1 Pet. ii. 12.——f *See on*, i. 13. 2 Tim. iv 2.——g Matt. vii. 29. Mark i. 22. 27. Luke iv. 36.——h 1 Tim. iv. 12.

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us, constantly and resolutely to deny, resist, and mortify; refusing them every kind of indulgence, opposing their first risings in the heart, and avoiding all temptations to them. The holy law of God, indeed, teaches men to love God and each other; but, requiring perfect obedience, it gives sinners neither injunction nor encouragement to repentance, to self-denial, or to works meet for repentance. It shuts them up under sin, and leaves them in that state, without hope or help; for every command, counsel, and encouragement to a sinner, properly belongs not to the law, but to "the saving grace of God," according to the Gospel. This grace, inwardly and efficaciously, teaches all who receive it, as the necessary effect of "denying "ungodliness and worldly lusts," "to live soberly," in the conscientious government of every appetite and passion; refraining from every unlawful and inexpedient indulgence, and from whatever can be injurious to themselves, or others, in body or soul, or in respect of social and relative comfort; "and to live righteously," according to the requirements of universal justice to all ranks and orders of men; in all commercial transactions and relative duties to superiors, equals, and inferiors; in an equitable and humane treatment of servants, labourers, and poor dependents: in a meek and forgiving conduct towards enemies; in exact truth, sincerity, and fidelity respecting the conversation, professions, promises, and engagements; in a compassionate, kind, and liberal behaviour to the poor, afflicted, and distressed; and a constant endeavour to promote the peace, comfort and happiness, temporal and eternal, of all men, according to their ability and opportunity; "and godly," or piously attending on all the ordinances of God with reverent devotion, as means of grace, and as rendering him the tribute of adoration, praise, and gratitude, due to his name; worshipping him in secret, in the family, and in public; hallowing his day, in reverencing and studying his word, honouring his name, fearing, loving, believing, submitting to, obeying, and delighting in God, according to the requirements of his holy law, and expressing these affections of the soul, in a constant desire and aim to please and glorify him. The grace of God taught, and still teaches, men to live after this manner, "in this pre"sent world," notwithstanding all its snares, temptations, and corrupt examples, and the ill usage to be expected by those "who *will* live godly in Christ Jesus;" and notwithstanding the remaining power of sin in the heart, with all the manifold infirmities and hinderances, of which the believer is conscious.

V. 13. In this tenour of conduct, the Gospel teaches believers to persevere, looking for that blessed object of hope, which the promises of the Gospel lead them to expect at the end of their course of obedient faith; and waiting in patient preparation for "the appearing *of the* "*glory* of the great God, *even* of our Saviour Jesus "Christ," to judge the world, and perfect the salvation of his people. The invisible God, the divine Essence, "which no man hath seen or can see," will not be manifested at that solemn period; but Christ will be displayed "in his own glory," as Mediator, "and in the glory of "the Father;" and thus will appear "*the glory* of the "great God, even of our Saviour Jesus Christ:" when, through his human nature, he shall exercise omnipotence, omniscience, and all the perfections of the Godhead, in assigning by a single word the everlasting state of unnumbered millions, whilst none shall be able to withstand the power, or object to the justice, of that awful decision!

V. 14. The decision above mentioned will be made by Him "who gave himself for us," to die in human nature as a sacrifice in the stead of his people, to atone for their sins and effect their salvation; that through his expiation he might redeem them from the punishment of all "their iniquity," and by his power deliver them from the dominion and pollution of all their sinful propensities; and that he might "purify them" by his word and Spirit, from all remains of defilement, that they might be devoted *to him*, as their Lord and God, to be his worshippers and servants, to live to his glory, and to recommend his salvation, as "a peculiar people, his property, not only as creatures, but as redeemed sinners, and as having voluntarily devoted and yielded themselves to him. Thus they were under singular obligations, as well as of a singular disposition, peculiarly pious spiritual, poor, humble, kind, and upright; not conforming to the customs and fashions of the world; but "zealous of good works," taking delight in obedience, waiting for, and embracing gladly, opportunities of doing good, and not regarding trouble, expense, or self-denial, in performing works of piety, righteousness, and charity, from zeal for the honour of Christ and love to mankind. Surely these verses are calculated, in the most conclusive and affecting manner, to lead us to the confession of Christ by Thomas, "My "Lord, and my God!" The view of Christ, as Judge, in the preceding verse, and in this verse, as he to whom all believers are *devoted*, "to live no longer to themselves but to him," as "a peculiar people zealous of good works," concur to establish this conclusion: for **Jehovah** will not give his glory to another."

V. 15. As the things above inculcated were a compendium of the important truths and duties of Christianity, Titus was directed to speak them; to exhort in the plainest and most urgent manner; and to rebuke with all authority, in the name of Christ, those persons who neglected, perverted, or opposed them; that acting with firmness, prudence, and faithfulness, no one might treat him

CHAP. III.

The apostle inculcates on Christians, subjection to rulers, and good behaviour to all men, 1, 2; *from the consideration of their own sinfulness, and their salvation by God's mercy through Christ, that they might maintain good works,* 3—8. *He cautions Titus to avoid disputes and shows him how to deal with heretics,* 9—11: *and directing him to meet him at Nicopolis, and about other matters,* 12—14, *he concludes with salutations,* 15.

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or his words with contempt, without being evidently a despiser of Christ who sent him.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

It becomes sound doctrine, and it is indispensably incumbent on ministers to teach all Christians their several duties, in connexion with evangelical principles. Aged men and women, professing godliness, are peculiarly called upon to "be sober, grave, temperate; stable, sound in "faith, love, and patience;" and less allowance will be made for them than for others, if they indulge in levity, vanity, and intemperance, or are betrayed into rashness, instability, or selfishness. In proportion as Christians advance in years, they are supposed to understand better, what behaviour, appearance, attire, and language, become holiness: they will have need to watch against censoriousness and peevishness; and they should be taught to seek comfort under the decays of nature, from a nearer communion with God, and not from "much wine," or any undue indulgence. The excellence of true religion is manifested, when every one is taught and induced by it to attend on the duties of his situation; and elderly persons should be teachers of good things to their juniors, by word and deed. Thus aged and pious women may with peculiar propriety instruct young women in their duties, as wives and mothers, "teaching them to be sober, to love their "husbands and children," and to show that love in a proper behaviour towards them; "to be discreet, chaste, "keepers at home," diligent in their domestic employments, and "obedient to their own husbands;" and to persevere in this useful and honourable conduct, though they meet with trials, hardships, or unkind usage, "that "the word of God may not be blasphemed." "Young "men also must be exhorted to be sober-minded," and to copy the seriousness, piety, purity, discretion, and temperance of those who are grown old in the service of Christ: and not the levity, excess, and folly of such as are preparing themselves anguish for riper years, or treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath. But they, who would with energy inculcate these practical subjects, must "in all things show themselves patterns of good works;" or else the most scriptural admonitions will be disregarded, or expounded by their own conduct. Uncorrupt evangelical doctrine also should be manifestly made the basis of such practical exhortations; and they should be delivered with *gravity*, as well as with sincerity; that sound speech, which cannot be condemned, may put to shame and silence, captious and malicious opposers.—As no rank in the community raises men above the minister's admonition, so none places them beneath his attention. The conduct of the meanest servant may disgrace, or it may "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour." The latter will be the happy effect, when servants, professing that doctrine are obedient to their masters, obliging in all things, "not answering again, not "purloining, but showing all good fidelity." In this manner they may acceptably and effectually recommend the gospel, and perhaps be instrumental to the salvation of the souls of their superiors. In these, and in all other things, it behooves every professed Christian to "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour;" which alone can ensure that doctrine its proper respect in this evil world.

V. 11—15.

The law teaches us godliness, righteousness, temperance, and universal holiness: but the grace of God which bringeth salvation, alone can "teach *sinners* to deny ungodli- "ness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, "and godly in this present world." How greatly then are they mistaken, who would inculcate such practical subjects, without leading men's attention to the mercy and grace of God in Christ, for instruction, motives, help, and encouragement! As this saving grace of our God hath appeared to all men, and to us in particular, by the word of truth; let us inquire, whether our whole dependence be placed upon that grace, which saves the lost, pardons the guilty, and sanctifies the unclean? And whether we have inwardly been taught by it, as truly penitent, to hate, forsake, and "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live "soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world?" Whether we are daily mortifying our sins, following after holiness, and practising all our duties to God and man, in expectation of Christ's coming to be our Judge; and patiently continuing in well-doing, whilst we look for "that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great "God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ," to 'number us 'with his saints in glory everlasting.' If we indeed believe, that Emmanuel "gave himself for us," to redeem us from deserved and eternal misery, that he might also deliver us from Satan and from "all iniquity, and purify us "*unto himself* a peculiar people, zealous of good works;" we can want no further inducement, to any kind or degree of self-denying obedience; provided we duly estimate his love, our obligations, and the assurance given us of all sufficient help, and of every needful good. The more evidently we are redeemed from all iniquity, and purified unto Christ as a peculiar people, zealous of good works; the clearer will our evidence be of an interest in his salvation, and the brighter our hope of eternal felicity: and the further we are removed from boasting, or trusting in imaginary good works, that we may glory in Christ alone: the more zealous shall we become of abounding in real good works, performed in an upright, humble, believing manner, to the glory of our Lord, and the benefit of his people, and of mankind. May all ministers speak these things decidedly, enforce them with earnestness, and re-

1 [a] PUT them in mind [b] to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, [c] to be ready to every good work,

2 To [d] speak evil of no man, to be [e] no brawlers, *but* [f] gentle, shewing all meekness unto [g] all men.

3 For [h] we ourselves also were sometimes [i] foolish, [k] disobedient, [l] deceived, [m] serving divers lusts and pleasures, [n] living in malice and envy, [o] hateful, *and* hating one another.

a Is. xliii. 26. 1 Tim iv. 6 2 Tim. i 6 2 Pet i. 12. iii. 1, 2. Jude 5.
b Deut. xvii. 12. Prov. xxiv 21. Ec. viii 2—5. x. 4 Jer. xxvii 17. Matt. xxii. 21. xxiii. 2, 3 Rom. xiii. 1—7. 1 Tim. ii 2 1 Pet. ii. 13—17.
c 8 14. ii. 14. 1 Cor xv. 58. Gal. vi. 9, 10. Eph. ii 10. Phil i. 11. Col. i. 10 1 Tim. v. 10. 2 Tim. ii 21. Heb. xiii. 21.
d Ps. cxl. 11. Prov vi. 19. Acts xxiii. 5. 1 Cor. vi. 10 2 Cor. xii. 20 Eph. iv. 31. 1 Tim. iii 11. Jam. iv. 11. 1 Pet. ii. 1. iii. 10. iv 4. 2 Pet. ii 10. Jude 8. 10 ——e Prov. xix 19. xxv. 14 1 Tim iii. 3.——f 2 Sam. xxii. 36 Is. xl 11. Matt. xi 29. 2 Cor. x. 1. Gal v. 22. vi. 1. Eph iv 2. Col. iii. 12, 13 1 Thes ii 7. 2 Tim. ii 24, 25 Jam i. 19, 20 iii. 17. 1 Pet. iii. 8.——g 1 Cor. ix 19. Gal. vi. 10 1 Thes. v. 14, 15. 1 Pet. ii 17 ——h Rom. iii 9—20. 1 Cor. vi 9—11 Eph. ii. 1—3. Col. iii. 7. 1 Pet iv 1—3 ——i Prov i. 22, 23. viii. 5. ix 6 ——k Matt xxi 29 Acts ix. 1—6. xxvi. 19, 20. Eph. ii. 2. 1 Pet. i. 14.——l Is. xliv. 20. Ob. 3. Luke xxi. 8 Gal vi 3 Jam i 26. Rev. xii. 9 xiii. 14 ——m John viii. 33. Rom. vi. 17. 22.——n Rom. i. 29—31. 2 Cor. xii. 19. 2 Tim. iii. 2, 3.——o Ps. xxvi. 2. Rev. xviii. 2.

4 But after that [p] the kindness and * love of [q] God our Saviour toward man [r] appeared;

5 Not [s] by works of righteousness which we have done, but [t] according to his mercy he saved us, by [u] the washing of regeneration, and [x] renewing of the Holy Ghost;

6 Which [y] he shed on us † abundantly, [z] through Jesus Christ our Saviour;

7 That, [a] being justified by his grace, we should be [b] made heirs according to the [c] hope of eternal life.

p Rom v. 20, 21. Eph. ii 4—10
* Or, *pity*
q *See on.* i 3. ii. 10. 1 Tim. i. 1. ii. 3. iv 10.
r ii 11. 2 Tim. i. 10 Heb ix. 26.
s Job ix 20 xv. 14 xxv. 4 Ps. cxliii 2. Is. lvii. 12 Luke x. 27—29 Rom. iii 20. 28. iv. 5 ix. 11. 16. 30 xi. 6 Gal. ii. 16—21. Eph ii. 9. 2 Tim. i 9.
t 4. Ps lxii. 12. lxxxvi. 5 15. cxxx. 7. Mic. vii. 18. Luke i. 50 54 72 78. Eph. i. 6, 7. Heb iv. 16. 1 Pet i 3. ii 10.
u John iii 3—5 1 Cor. vi 11. Eph. v. 26. 1 Pet. iii 21.——x Ps li. 10. Rom. xii 2 Eph. iv 23 Col. iii. 10. Heb. vi. 6 ——y Prov. i. 23. Is. xxxii 15. xliv 3 Ez xxxvi 25. Joel ii 28. John i. 16. vii 37. Acts ii. 33. x 45. Rom. v 5 ——† Gr. *richly. See on.* Eph. ii 4. iii 8 ——z i 4. John iv. 10. xiv. 16, 17 xvi. 7 Rom. viii 2.——a Rom. iii 24. 28 iv. 4. 16. v 1, 2. 15—21. xi. 6. 1 Cor vi 11. Gal. ii. 16.——b Rom. viii. 17 23, 24. Gal. iii. 29 iv. 7. Heb. vi. 17. xi 7. 9. Jam. ii 5. 1 Pet. iii. 7.——c *See on,* i 2 ii. 13.

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buke opposers with all authority; and may their doctrine and example secure them from the contempt of all, except that of the avowed despisers of Christ and his salvation!

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1, 2. (*Notes, Rom.* xiii. 1—8. 1 *Tim.* ii. 2.) Titus was further instructed, to remind the Cretians to obey those principalities and powers, or civil governors, whom Providence had placed over them; and even the inferior magistrates appointed by them. These were heathens, and generally oppressive and injurious: yet the apostle, during his short abode in Crete, had taught an unreserved subjection to them, except in matters of conscience towards God. But, as the Cretians would be apt to forget his admonitions, they were to be reminded of them, that so no disgrace might be brought on the gospel, by the turbulent spirits and conduct of professed Christians. They must also be directed "to be ready to every good "work," showing a willing mind for any kind action, even to their heathen neighbours: not reviling or slandering any man, nor even propagating disadvantageous reports when true, unless there were a necessity: not "brawl-"ing," or disputing, with acrimony and vehemence, even against those who injured them; but acting with gentleness and meekness to all men.

V. 3. The preceding exhortations would inevitably oppose the natural inclinations of the Cretians; and therefore the apostle enforced them by an argument, which related to the state of Christans in general before their conversion. (*Notes, Eph.* ii. 1—10.) Including himself. Titus, and all other Christians, among those in Crete; (for this is undeniably the plain meaning of the passage;) he argued, that they ought to bear with, and be kind to, their enemies, and patiently to endure their perverseness and injustice: for they themselves had experienced far greater patience and kindness from God; as "they had "sometime," that is, before their conversion, "been fool-"ish," ignorant of God, of themselves, and of divine truth; and had perversely preferred worldly things to true religion. In different ways they all had "been dis-"obedient," to God, in their habitual conduct; having been "deceived," by Satan and their own hearts, and led to wander out of the right way. They had been "slaves "to divers lusts," and the love of worldly "pleasures;" some being under the power of one sinful passion, some of another: they had lived in malice and envy, from the various competitions, animosities and resentments, which their eager pursuit of worldly objects, and the pride of their hearts, gave rise to: thus they had been "hateful" in their disposition and conduct in the sight of God, "and "had hated one another," especially in the reciprocal contempt and enmity borne by the Jews and Gentiles against each other.

V. 4.—7. God might justly have left even the apostle and Titus, with their brethren and fellow-labourers, to perish in their sins, as, before their conversion, they had not only deserved it, but were "vessels of wrath fitted "for destruction." Yet he had not only spared them, but had effected a blessed change in their state and character. For the kindness and philanthropy of God, (his love to sinful men, whilst he left sinning angels to perish,) had made it proper for them to call him "God our Sa-"viour," as he had purposed, planned, and effected men's salvation, by giving his holy Son to be their Redeemer. After this love of God to man had been displayed in the incarnation, obedience, death, and resurrection of the eternal Son of God, and by the preaching of the Gospel, he had also brought the apostle and his brethren to partake of this salvation; not through the merit or efficacy of "works of righteousness which they had done," but according to his exceedingly rich and free mercy, and compassionate good-will to them; and by "the washing of "regeneration," that new birth of the Spirit, of which the laver of baptism was the sacramental sign, but nothing more. This was not only a washing of the heart from the prevailing love and pollution of sin, but made way for the renewal of the soul to the divine image by the power of the Holy Spirit, which God the Father had richly and abundantly poured forth upon them, in all the variety of his gifts, graces and consolations, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. His atonement had purchased, and his mediation had obtained, this inestimable gift for sinners, in order to apply his salvation to their souls. Thus, being brought to repent, and believe in the Son of God, they had

8 *This is* [d] a faithful saying; and these things I will [e] that thou affirm constantly, that they [f] which have believed in God, might [g] be careful to maintain good works: these things are [h] good and profitable unto men.

9 But avoid [i] foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are [k] unprofitable and vain.

10 A man that is an [l] heretic, [m] after the first and second admonition, [n] reject;

11 Knowing that he that is such, [o] is subverted, and sinneth, [p] being condemned of himself.

d *See on*, i. 9. 1 Tim. i 15.
e Prov. xxi 28 Acts xii. 15. 2 Cor iv 13
Ps. lxxviii. 22. John v 24 xii 44. Rom iv. 5. 1 Pet. i. 21. 1 John v. 10–13.
g *See on*, 14 ii.14.
h Job xxii 2. xxxv. 7. 8 Ps. xvi. 2, 3 2 Cor. ix 12 — 15 Philem. 11
i *See on*, i. 14. 1 Tim i. 4—7. iv 7. 2 Tim. ii. 23.
k Job xv. 3. 1 Cor. viii. 1. xiii 2 2 Tim ii. 14.
l 1 Cor. xi. 19. Gal v. 20. 2 Pet. ii 1.
m Mat xviii. 15—17. 2 Cor xiii. 2.
n Rom xvi. 17 1 Cor v. 4—13. Gal. v. 12. 2 Thes iii 6 14. 2 Tim iii. 5. 2 John 10
o i 11 Acts xv. 24. 1 Tim i. 19, 20. 2 Tim. ii. 14. Heb. x 26.——p Matt. xxv. 26—28. Luke vii. 30. xix. 22. John iii. 18. Acts xiii. 46. Rom. iii. 19.

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been justified in him, of his free mercy and grace, without any of their own merits; and so they became the adopted children and heirs of God, according to the hope of eternal life, which his promise had taught them to entertain. Seeing then all their hopes and privileges had been conferred upon them wholly by the mercy of God, contrary to all their own deserts, it was proper for them to be followers of God, in their conduct towards their brethren and neighbours. The miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit are not so much as alluded to in this place: and nothing induces more confusion into the expositions given of the Scripture, by commentators of different descriptions, than the neglect of distinguishing between those communications, which constituted men prophets or apostles, and those which were, still are, and ever must be, indispensably necessary to render them true Christians. The expression, "shed," or *poured*, "on us," in this manifest allusion to the ordinance of baptism, may properly be noted as an intimation, that the pouring of water on any person, "in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit," is *baptism*, equally with immersion.

V. 8. "The saying," which the apostle had just delivered concerning free salvation to vile sinners, was true and faithful; and the doctrines which he had stated, as well as the exhortations before given, (for both seem to be referred to,) he would have Titus insist upon with constancy, and without wavering; in *order that* "they, who "had believed in God," and had come to trust in his mercy, grace, truth, and power, through Jesus Christ, might be rendered careful to maintain, or *to stand foremost*, in the practice of good works; being influenced by love and gratitude, and encouraged by the promises of the Gospel to abound in them. For though the things, before stated in various practical admonitions, could not in any degree justify sinners before God, they were good in themselves, and profitable to men, in respect of their temporal and eternal interests, both to those who performed them and to others.

V. 9. It was incumbent on Titus, to insist on the grand peculiarities of the Gospel, and by all means to avoid frivolous and foolish questions, or subtile nice distinctions and "genealogies," which the Jews were attached to, as if men were the better in the sight of God for being descended from the patriarchs. These matters and the contests and angry disputes of the Jewish teachers about the Mosaic law, and the obligations of its ceremonies, were utterly vain under the Christian dispensation; and only amused men with such speculations, as took them off from the great doctrines and duties of Christianity.

V. 10, 11. A heretic, in St. Paul's sense, seems to have been a professed Christian, who obstinately denied, and opposed, some fundamental doctrine of the Gospel, as taught by the apostles; especially if he were earnest to propagate his notions, from a vain desire of being the head of a party, and so made divisions in the Church. (*Note, Gal.* v. 20.) Titus was therefore directed to admonish such a man, once, and again; showing him the error and evil tendency of his principles, and their corrupt source; warning him of his guilt and danger, and exhorting him to retract them. If this failed of effect, he ought afterwards to reject him, as an excommunicated person; being assured that his dangerous errors, and his proud and pertinacious adherence to them, evinced him "to be subverted," or turned aside from Christ, the Foundation of the Church, by the artifices of Satan; that his mistakes arose, not from unavoidable ignorance, but from proud and carnal prejudices, so that he sinned in them; and that "he was condemned of himself," as his avowal of such heresies rendered further proof against him unnecessary: he was therefore not to be considered as a Christian, or allowed to continue in the communion of the Church. (*Marg. Ref.*) The Scriptures referred to in the margin, and many others, show, that when a man's own words suffice for his condemnation, without further evidence, he may be said to be "condemned of himself:" nor does any great difficulty appear in this much disputed text, except in explaining it in consistency with the systems of contending zealots. In subordinate matters, the apostle inculcated mutual forbearance: but all his epistles show, that he supposed some errors to be fundamental, and absolutely inconsistent with faith in Christ. For avowing these errors men were to be excommunicated, as much as for gross immoralities; and were things restored to their primitive state in the Church of Christ, there can be no doubt, but that they who deny the lost estate of man by nature, the Deity of Christ, the real atonement of his death, justification by faith in the merits of Christ being of grace and not of works, the need of sanctification by the Holy Spirit, and obedience to God's commandments as the effect and evidence of justifying faith, with other doctrines of similar importance, would, after proper admonition, be rejected by believers, and excluded from their communion. No doubt would remain in their minds, but that such heretics were subverted and sinned; and their profession of tenets, so destructive of Christianity, would be deemed a kind of "self-condemnation," without considering them as less sincere in opposing the truth than Saul of Tarsus was. They would not judge them proper persons to associate with those who believed the doctrines of grace; but they would not do them any injury in their temporal concerns, or neglect to pray for "God to give them "repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth." The

q *See on*, Acts xx. 4 2 Tim. iv. 12.
r 2 Tim. iv. 9 21.
s 1 Cor. xvi 8, 9.
t Matt. xxii 35. Luke vii 30 x 25. xi. 45, 46 52. xiv. 3
u *See on*, Acts xviii. 24
x Acts xxi. 5. xxviii. 10. Rom. xv. 24. 1 Cor xvi 11. 3 John 6—8.

12 When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or [q] Tychicus, [r] be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis: [s] for I have determined there to winter.

13 Bring Zenas [t] the lawyer, and [u] Apollos, [x] on their journey diligently that nothing be wanting to them.

14 And let ours also [y] learn to * maintain good works for necessary uses, [z] that they be not unfruitful.

15 All that are [a] with me salute thee. [b] Greet them that [c] love us in the faith. [d] Grace *be* with you all. Amen.

y *See on*, 8.
* Or, *profess honest trades* Acts xviii. 3 xx. 35. Gr Eph. iv. 28. 1 Thes ii 9. 2 Thes. iii 8.
z Is. lxi. 3. Matt. vii 19 xxi. 19. Luke xiii. 6—8. John xv. 8. 16. Rom. xv. 28. Phil. i. 11 iv. 17. Col i. 10. Heb vi 6—12 2 Pet. i 8 ——a *See on*, Rom xvi 21—24. b *See on* Rom. xvi. 1—20.——c Gal v. 8. Eph. vi. 23. 1 Tim i. 5 Philem. 5. 2 John 1, 2. 3 John 1.——d *See on*, 1 Cor. xvi. 23. Eph. vi. 24 2 Tim. iv. 22. Heb. xiii. 25.

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connexion, so long subsisting between excommunication and persecution, has caused a latitudinarian candour, and a laxity of discipline, to associate with men's ideas of toleration. But the fullest toleration does not imply, that all opinions should be regarded as alike right or probable: nor does excommunication imply, that any alteration should be made in men's civil circumstances. *Learned* and *ingenious* men have indeed at length discovered, that it is no sin to treat God's word with neglect, contempt, or proud opposition, and that it is of little or no consequence what doctrines men believe! No wonder then, that they cannot explain the Scripture into an agreement with such tenets, or bring the word of God to declare its own insignificancy. But they, who believe that "men love darkness rather "than light, *because their deeds are evil*," and treat the truth of God as a lie, because it opposes their *pride* or lusts, will not find much difficulty in understanding why such heretics should be separated from the society of believers; and they will chiefly lament, that it is not more generally practised, and more easily practicable, seeing it is evident, "that a little of this leaven leaveneth the whole lump," in many churches which once seemed to flourish.

V. 12—15. There were several cities called Nicopolis, and it is not certain which was here meant; but it hence appears that Paul was at this time at liberty. Had he written from Nicopolis, as the spurious postscript asserts, he would have said, "*here* to winter." He purposed to send Artemas or Tychicus to inform Titus when to meet him there, and probably to supply his place in Crete, and desired him to come without delay. But he was to bring, or to *send before*, Zenas, (who was either a converted Jewish doctor of the law, or one who had been a Roman lawyer,) and Apollos, who seems to have been then in Crete; and he was studiously to help them, that, by the kindness of the churches, their wants and travelling expenses might be supplied. Titus was also directed to remind the immediate friends of the apostle, and especially the ministers, that they should "learn to maintain," or to stand forth in the practice of good works, for such useful and necessary purposes; that they might not be unfruitful, but might set a good example to the new converts. Some explain the words to mean, that they should learn and labour in "use- "ful trades," which would enable them, though no emolument were annexed to their office, to assist their brethren, and so, in this respect, not to be unfruitful. (*Marg. Ref.*) With this admonition and customary salutations and benedictions he concluded the epistle.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

It hath at all times been necessary to remind Christians "to be subject to principalities and powers," and to obey "magistrates;" but it is peculiarly so at present, when most valuable privileges and liberties, which ought to have rendered cheerful subjection and peaceable obedience universal, among all who name the name of Christ, have given occasion to a contrary spirit and conduct in numbers, who seem to forget that precepts to this effect are found in the Scriptures. But real religion, in proportion as it prevails, will render men quiet subjects, as well as good neighbours and relations, and ready to every good work; it will repress the turbulent and censorious temper, and restrain them from speaking evil of others, and from reviling and wrangling, and it will teach them to be gentle and meek to all men. These dispositions and this conduct are the genuine effects of a deep conviction of our own guilt, united with an experimental knowledge of the free salvation of the Gospel; we shall not, if thus humbled and enlightened, disdain, or be wearied out by, the misconduct of the most unreasonable enemies; if we duly consider that we ourselves were formerly foolish, disobedient, and deceived, slaves to divers base lusts, and a fondness for carnal pleasures; "that we lived in malice and envy;" and, in short, were hateful to God, and disposed to hate one another, and thus "vessels of wrath fitted for destruc- "tion," till divine grace effected the blessed change. Let us then often contemplate the discoveries which have been made, of the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards our fallen apostate race, in giving his Son to be the propitiation for our sins; his patience in sparing us during the years of our foolishness and rebellion; his goodness in sending us the word of salvation; and, above all, his mercy in causing us to partake of the "washing of "regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost," which he poured upon our souls, of his plenteous grace, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Surely we know that none of these things were procured "by works of righte- "ousness that we had done!" And that we were "jus- "tified freely by his grace," and so made heirs according to "the hope of eternal life." Having been therefore brought into a state of safety, and made partakers of a joyful hope by the mere mercy of God the Father, through the redemption of his incarnate Son, and by the new creation of the Holy Ghost, it certainly behooves us to take the lead in every good work, by which we can glorify God our Saviour, or benefit mankind. Ministers should insist upon these faithful sayings, and affirm these things constantly; and show the tendency of the truths of the Gospel to holiness of life: and Christians should be ambitious of exceeding all other men in every good thing, for the honour of the truth through which they are saved.

V. 9—15.

Attending to the good and profitable things before inculcated, we should learn to avoid foolish questions and contentious disputations, which are unprofitable and vain. But, though we must not strive about words, or magnify every difference of opinion into a damnable heresy, yet, we should carefully watch against fundamental errors, which are inconsistent with the life of faith in the Son of God, and of grateful obedience to him. Many are subverted by heretics; we should therefore withdraw from them, if they neglect proper admonitions; and though they be not separated from the communion of believers here, yet, continuing impenitent, they will at last be rejected by the omniscient Judge of all men. Whatever Christians find to do, they should attend on it diligently; they should be ever ready to help one another, and to prevent and relieve the wants of those who are labouring to promote the Gospel. They who exhort others to such good works, must learn to maintain them in their own conduct, and, on necessary occasions, to set a decided and conspicuous example. Then they will not be unfruitful in the knowledge of Christ; mutual love, as the fruit of faith, will be increased, and the grace of our Lord will be with them all.

THE

EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO

PHILEMON.

Philemon seems to have been a Christian of some eminence, residing at Colosse; (Col. iv. 9. 17;) *who had been converted under St. Paul's ministry;* (19;) *perhaps during his abode at Ephesus.* (Acts xix. 10.) *When the apostle was imprisoned at Rome, Onesimus, a slave of Philemon, having, as it is generally thought, been guilty of some dishonesty, left his master and fled to that city, though at the distance of several hundred miles: When he came thither, curiosity, or some such motive, induced him to attend on St. Paul's ministry, which it pleased God to bless for his conversion. After he had given satisfactory proof of a real change, and manifested an excellent disposition, by suitable behaviour, which had greatly endeared him to Paul, he judged it proper to send him back to his master; to whom he wrote this epistle, that he might procure Onesimus a more favourable reception than he could otherwise have expected. The most competent judges have given it a decided preference, as a model of good writing in the epistolary kind, to the most admired remains of antiquity. Indeed, we can scarcely conceive, how such a cause, as that of Onesimus, could have been pleaded in a more interesting, obliging, prudent, pathetic, and masterly manner. It is also very replete with useful instruction. The apostle entertained no doubt of Philemon's compliance with his request; and expected that he would do more than he said. It is therefore probable, that Onesimus was not only received into favour, but set at liberty; and, it is generally thought, that he became afterwards a minister of the gospel. Onesimus accompanied Tychicus to Colosse, and, it may be concluded, that the apostle wrote to Philemon at the same time; and that Onesimus, having delivered the letter to his master, and obtained his forgiveness, joined with Tychicus, in executing the apostle's commission to the Colossians.*

⁂

A. D. 64. *A. D.* 64.

The apostle salutes Philemon, 1—3; declares his joy at hearing of his faith and love, 4—7; carnestly and pathetically entreats him to receive into favour his fugitive servant, Onesimus, now become, by the apostle's ministry, a consistent believer, 8—21; desires him to provide for him a lodging, as he expected to be speedily released, 22; and concludes with salutations and benedictions, 23—25.

PAUL, [a] a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and [b] Timothy *our* brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, [c] and fellow-labourer,

2 And to *our* beloved Apphia, and [d] Archippus, [e] our fellow-soldier, and to [f] the church in thy house:

a 9. *See on,* Eph. iii 1. iv 1. vi. 20
b *See on,* 2 Cor. i. 1. Col i. 1. 2 Thes. i. 1.
c 24. 1 Cor. iii. 9. Phil. iv. 3. Col. iv 11. 1 Thes. iii. 2
d Col. iv. 17.
e Phil. ii. 26. 2 Tim ii 3, 4
f Rom xvi 5. 1 Cor. xvi. 19. Col. iv. 15.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. The apostle did not intend to write authoritatively to Philemon, and therefore he only styled himself "the prisoner of Jesus Christ," which tended to procure an affectionate regard to his request; and he joined Timothy with him, that they might be presented as the united desire of him and his brethren. Though Philemon is called "a fellow labourer," yet it is not certain that he was a minister; perhaps he served the cause of Christ by active diligence in another manner. (*Marg. Ref.*) The beloved Apphia is supposed to have been his wife, though some think that she was his sister. Archippus, whom the apostle called his fellow-soldier, and to whom he sent a special charge in another epistle, is thought to have been the son or near relation of Philemon; and he seems to have resided in his family, which was so pious and well regulated, that it was in some sense a Christian Church.

3 [g] Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 I [h] thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers,

5 [i] Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast [k] toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints;

6 That [l] the communication of thy faith may become effectual by [m] the acknowledging of every good thing which is [n] in you in Christ Jesus.

7 For we have [o] great joy and consolation in thy love, because [p] the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.

8 Wherefore, though I might be much [q] bold in Christ, to [r] enjoin thee that which is convenient,

9 Yet for [s] love's sake I rather beseech *thee*, being such a one as [t] Paul the aged, and now also [u] a prisoner of Jesus Christ.

10 I beseech thee for [x] my son [y] Onesimus, [z] whom I have begotten in my bonds:

11 Which in time past was to thee [a] unprofitable, but now [b] profitable to thee and to me:

g *See on* Rom i. 7. 2 Cor. xiii. 14.
h *See on*, Rom. i 8. Phil. i. 3. Col. i. 3. 1 Thes. i 3 2 Thes. i 3. 2 Tim. i. 3.
i Gal. v. 6. Eph. i 15. Col. i. 4
k 7 Ps xvi 3 Acts ix. 41. Rom xiii. 13 xv 25, 26. 1 Cor. xvi. 1. 1 John iii. 23. v. 1, 2
l 2 Cor ix. 12 14. Tit. iii. 14. Heb. vi. 10
m Matt v. 16. 1 Cor. xiv 25 1 Pet ii. 12. iii. 1. 16
n 2 Pet. i 8.
o 1 Thes i 3 ii. 13. 19 iii 9 2 John 4. 3 John 3 —6.
p 20. 2 Tim i 16.
q 2 Cor. iii. 12. x. 1, 2. xi 21. 1 Thes. ii. 1 6.
r 2 Cor. x. 8.
s Rom. xii 1. [illegible] Cor v 20 vi. 1. Eph iv 1 Heb. xiii. 19. 1 Pet ii. 11.
t Ps. lxxi. 9 18. Prov. xvi. 31. Is xlvi. 4.
u 1. *See on*, Eph. iii. 1 iv 1.
x 2 Sam ix. 1—7. xviii 5. xix. 37, 38 Mark ix 17. 1 Tim i. 2. Tit. i. 4.
y Col. iv. 9.
z 1 Cor iv 15. Gal iv. 19.
a Job xxx. 1, 2. Matt. xxv. 30. Luke xvii. 10. Rom iii. 12.
b Luke xv. 24. 32. 2 Tim. iv. 11.

V. 3. (*Note, Rom. i. 7.*) (*Marg. Ref.*) ‘ Hence it ‘ appears, that the nature of the Father and of the Son is ‘ the same; seeing the Son can do that which the Father ‘ doeth, and the Father is said to do that which the Son ‘ doeth.’ (*Jerom.*)

V. 4—7. The apostle thanked God continually for his grace bestowed on Philemon, making mention of him in his prayers. His gratitude to the Lord was excited from time to time, by the good accounts which he received of his "love and faith," even his faith toward the Lord Jesus, and his love to all the saints for his sake. The obvious meaning of the passage requires a transposition of the words, which arises from an arrangement not at all unsuitable to the Greek language, though it is rather harsh in an English translation. The apostle also prayed, "that "the communication of Philemon's faith might become "effectual," &c. Some explain this of his liberal communication from his temporal affluence, being made effectual for the relief of the saints, and for the evident demonstration of his faith from which it sprang. Others suppose the apostle to mean, that his *communion*, or participation of faith in Christ, might be effectual in regulating his whole temper and conduct. But, though both these senses may be contained in the words, they seem to have a still further meaning; and the apostle probably prayed, that his endeavours to communicate his faith in Christ to those around him might be rendered effectual, through the evident excellency of his example and that of his family; so that men might be induced to acknowledge the reality and value of every good thing which was in them, by means of their relation to Christ, and thus to entertain a favourable opinion of that religion, which produced such beneficial effects on the conduct of those who embraced it. This he hoped would be the case; for he had great joy and comfort in the accounts that he heard of his liberal love, by which the urgent necessities of Christians and ministers were supplied; so that, while their bodies were refreshed at his expense, their hearts were also rejoiced by his good example and pious conversation; and therefore the apostle cordially owned him, and greatly loved him as his brother in the Gospel. The word *brother*, placed thus at the end of a sentence, is peculiarly emphatical, and expressive of the most entire cordiality.

V. 8—11. The apostle here enters on the immediate business of the epistle. When he considered his own apostolical authority and Philemon's character, he supposed that he might, with propriety, have enjoined him, in the name of Christ, to do what was so evidently convenient, or agreeable to the loving spirit of Christianity; yet he preferred the language of a suppliant in the present case, and besought Philemon, for love's sake, even the love of Christ to them, and their love to him and to each other through him, that he would grant him one special favour, which he had it much at heart to obtain. He would remind him, that his humble supplicant was such an one "as "Paul, the aged" minister of the Gospel, (for he was probably above sixty years old at this time:) who, having encountered numberless afflictions and perils, in seeking the salvation of men's souls, was then enduring the hardships of a tedious imprisonment in the cause of Christ; and he could not doubt of Philemon's readiness to do any thing which might mitigate the severity of his sufferings. His petition indeed was not presented for himself; but it was in behalf of "his son," even of one "whom he had "begotten in his bonds," the son of his old age, for whom he had the most tender parental affection; and the name of this son was "Onesimus!" In the original, Onesimus is mentioned at the close of the sentence; that the suspense, and most affectionate introduction, might prepare Philemon to read a name, which could scarcely fail of being associated in his mind with unfavourable ideas. *Onesimus* signifies *profitable*; in allusion to which, the apostle allowed that he had not formerly deserved that name, having been *unprofitable*; probably he had been unfaithful, dishonest, and unruly; perhaps addicted to other vices, and this the apostle seems to have known from his own confession. But he spake of his faults in the gentlest language, and hastened to mention the change that had taken place; by which his character was now made to answer the meaning of his name, and he was become profitable both to Philemon and to St. Paul. He was prepared to be a useful servant to the former; he had been serviceable to the latter, and he hoped that he would be still more so.

V. 12—16. Onesimus was Philemon's legal property, and St. Paul had required, and prevailed with him to return to him, having made sufficient trial of his sincerity; and he requested Philemon to receive him with the same kindness, as he would the aged apostle's own son according to the flesh, being equally dear to him, as his spiritual

12 Whom I have sent again: [c] thou therefore receive him, that is [d] mine own bowels.

13 Whom I would have retained with me, that [e] in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in [f] the bonds of the gospel.

14 But [g] without thy mind would I do nothing; that [h] thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly.

15 For [i] perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever;

16 Not now as a servant, but above a servant, [k] a brother beloved, especially to me; but how much more unto thee, [l] both in the flesh, and in the Lord!

17 If [m] thou count me therefore a partner, [n] receive him as myself.

18 If he hath wronged thee, or oweth *thee* aught, [o] put that on mine account;

c Matt vi. 14, 15. xviii. 21—35. Mark xi. 25. Eph. iv. 32.
d Deut. xiii. 6. 2 Sam. xvi. 11. Jer xxxi. 20. Luke xv. 20.
e 1 Cor xvi. 17. Phil. ii 30.
f *See on*, 1. Eph. iii. 1. iv 1.
g 8, 9. 2 Cor. i 24 1 Pet. v. 3.
h 1Chr xxix. 17. Ps. cx. 3 1 Cor. ix. 17. 2 Cor. viii 12. ix. 5. 7. 1 Pet. v. 2.
i Gen. xlv 5—8 l. 20. Ps. lxxvi. 10. Is. x. 7. Acts iv. 28.
k Matt. xxiii. 8. Acts ix. 17. Gal. iii. 28, 29 1Tim. vi. 2. Heb. iii. 1. 1 Pet i. 22, 23. 1 John v. 1.
l Eph. vi. 5—7. Col. iii. 22.
m Acts xvi 15 2 Cor. viii. 23. Eph. iii. 6. Phil. i. 7. 1 Tim. vi. 2. Heb. iii. 1. 14 Jam. ii 5. 1 Pet. v. 1 1 John i. 3.
n 10. 12. Matt. x. 40. xii. 48—50. xviii. 5. xxv. 40.
o Is. liii. 4—7. *Heb.*

19 [p] I, Paul, have written *it* with mine own hand, I will repay *it;* albeit I do not say to thee, [q] how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.

20 Yea, brother, [r] let me have joy of thee in the Lord: [s] refresh my bowels in the Lord.

21 Having [t] confidence in thy obedience, I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.

22 But withal, [u] prepare me also a lodging; [x] for I trust that [y] through your prayers, I shall be given unto you.

23 There salute thee [z] Epaphras, [a] my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus;

24 [b] Marcus, [c] Aristarchus, [d] Demas, [e] Lucas, [f] my fellow-labourers.

25 The [g] grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with [h] your spirit. Amen.

p 1 Cor. xvi. 21 22. Gal. v. 2. vi. 11.
q 1 Cor. iv. 15. ix. 1, 2. 2 Cor. iii. 2. 1 Tim. i. 2 Tit. i. 4. Jam v 19, 20.
r 2 Cor. ii. 2 vii. 4—7. 13 Phil. ii. 2 iv. 1. 1 Thes. ii. 19, 20. iii. 7—9 Heb. xiii. 17 3 John 4.
s 7. 12. Phil. i. 8. ii. 1. 1 John iii. 17.
t 2 Cor ii. 3. vii. 16 viii 22 Gal. v 10 2 Thes. iii. 4.
u Acts xxviii. 23.
x Rom. xv. 24. Phil i. 25, 26. ii 24. Heb. xiii. 23 2 John 12. 3 John 14.
y Rom. xv. 30—32. 2 Cor. i. 11. Phil i. 19. Jam. v. 16.
z Col. i. 7. iv. 12.
a Rom. xvi. 7. Col iv. 10
b Acts xii. 12 25. xiii 13. xv 37—39 Col iv 10 2 Tim iv. 11.
c Acts xix. 29. xxvii. 2 ——d Col. iv. 14. 2 Tim. iv. 10.——e 2 Tim. iv. 11.
f 1, 2. 2 Cor. viii. 23. Phil. ii. 25. iv. 3. 3 John 8.——g *See on*, Rom. xvi. 20. 24.
h 2 Tim. iv. 22.

child. He would gladly have kept him at Rome, to minister to him in his confinement; which Onesimus would willingly have done in the bonds of the Gospel, being attached to him from Christian love and gratitude; and, as he knew that Philemon would gladly have done him any service in person, if he had been at Rome, so he would have considered Onesimus as ministering to him in his master's stead. But he would not do any thing of this kind without his consent, lest he should seem to extort the benefit, and Philemon should appear to act from necessity, rather than from a willing mind. And though he had hopes of deriving benefit from Onesimus' faithful service, at some future period, by Philemon's free consent, yet he was not sure that this was the Lord's purpose respecting him; for perhaps he permitted him to leave his master for a season in so improper a manner, in order that, being converted, he might be received on his return with such affection, and might abide with Philemon with such faithfulness and diligence, that they should choose to live together the rest of their lives, as fellow-heirs of eternal felicity. (*Marg. Ref.*) In this case he knew that Philemon would no longer consider Onesimus merely as a slave, but view him as "above a slave, even as a brother "beloved." This he was become to Paul in an especial manner, who had before been entirely a stranger to him; how much more then might it be supposed, that he would be endeared to Philemon, when he became well acquainted with his excellency! seeing he would be near to him both in the flesh as one of his domestics, and in the Lord as one with him in Christ by faith.

V. 17—21. If Philemon deemed the apostle a partner, or partaker of the same grace, and dear to him for Christ's sake, let him express his love to him by receiving Onesimus with as much kindness as he would have received himself, if he had come in person; and, in case Onesimus had wronged Philemon, or was in his debt, let him place that to his account; and, as he wrote the epistle with his own hand, he gave, as it were, a promissory note, that he would repay it upon demand. It is generally observed, that this is a plain instance of a debt being imputed to one, which was contracted by another; and of one by a voluntary engagement becoming answerable for the misconduct of another, that he might be exempted from the punishment due to his crimes, and partake of benefits to which he had no right; according to the doctrine of Christ's voluntarily bearing the punishment of our sins, that we might receive the reward of his righteousness, by a reciprocal imputation. Perhaps the apostle understood that Philemon had expressed some sharpness concerning Onesimus' conduct; or knowing him to be *naturally* somewhat severe in his temper, he might fear lest he should punish him, as the laws permitted masters to do their slaves in such cases; which would not only have been grievous to Onesimus, but disgraceful to the Gospel, and to Philemon himself. He therefore so far interested himself in the matter, though he could scarcely suppose that payment would be demanded of him; and added, that although he made this proposal, yet, in doing so, he had forborne to bring into the account, that Philemon owed to him his own self, besides other benefits, as God had made him the instrument of his eternal salvation; thus intimating that he never could sufficiently requite that obligation. He therefore pathetically besought him to let him have an opportunity of rejoicing on his account, in the Lord's kindness to him, and to grant him this request, which would as much refresh his compassionate heart, as Philemon's liberality did the bowels of the saints. Having confidence that he was ready to obey the Lord's will, intimated by him, he had written to him, being assured that he would do even more than he had requested. Our curiosity is not gratified by being informed of the effect of this epistle; but we can hardly doubt that Philemon forgave Onesimus, received him with kindness, remitted what he owed to him, and afterwards gave him his liberty, that he might attend on the apostle. His appointment with Tychicus to deliver the epistle to the Colossians, seems to intimate, that Paul meant to employ him as a minister, which probably was afterwards done.

V. 22—25. The apostle, though at this time in bonds, had an expectation of being speedily released when he wrote this epistle, and he purposed to visit Philemon and the Colossians when that took place: he was persuaded they did not forget to pray for his liberty, that he might be enabled to visit them, and he trusted, that in answer to their prayers this would soon be effected; therefore he desired them to prepare him a convenient lodging. Epaphras attended Paul so closely, that he might be deemed his fellow-prisoner; or, perhaps he was imprisoned with him. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

The fellow-labourers and fellow-soldiers of Christ ought to pray, and to thank God, for each other, with the greatest constancy and fervency; for faith in Christ, and love to him, should unite saints more closely, than any outward relation can the people of the world. They, who partake of these graces, must and will desire to communicate them to others; and their endeavours will be rendered effectual, through fervent prayer, and by an uniform course of piety, purity, integrity, and benevolence, which will constrain men to acknowledge the good things, which are in them as believers in Christ. Faithful ministers have great joy and comfort in the little company of affluent Christians, whose love abounds in liberality to all men, and when the bowels of the saints are refreshed by them, and their wants generously supplied. It is by no means proper to exercise authority on every occasion, even when ministers may be bold to enjoin what is convenient. It is often far more prudent, for love's sake, to beseech even juniors and inferiors; especially when it may be supposed that they will be reluctant to what is required, and when it may be difficult to convince them of its indispensable obligation. These requests, from such a one as in any good measure resembles Paul the aged, will have the energy of injunctions, and engage compliance, without risking a subsequent distaste, which is always in such cases to be feared from the remaining self-love of the human heart, even in respect of pious men, who would do much to alleviate the sufferings, or increase the comforts, of their faithful pastors. In such circumstances, wisdom and humility will teach the aged and experienced to become willingly the obliged parties, when they might assume a higher tone. In speaking to men of their sins for their humiliation, the heinous nature and manifold aggravations of them should be insisted on: but in mentioning them to others, who are disposed to severity or resentment, we should soften and extenuate as far as truth will permit: and such subjects ought to be introduced with all the tenderness and caution imaginable, that every thing may tend to conciliate, and nothing to exasperate. When penitents show their sincerity by "works meet for repent-"ance," they should be treated by ministers with parental tenderness, and taken under their patronage, in respect of the temporal consequences of their former sins. For in this manner they, who were unprofitable to their relatives and neighbours, and a trouble to all connected with them, are made profitable to the community and to the Church of God. They often become greatly useful to ministers and their families, and a blessing to all among whom they reside; they supply other men's lack of service to the suffering disciples of Christ, by tending on them in their stead; they promote the Gospel by their example, conversation, and prayers, and many of them become preachers of the word of life to their fellow-sinners; for "behold "all things are become new!" No prospect of usefulness should induce ministers to counsel their converts to neglect relative obligations, or to fail of obedience to their superiors. One great evidence of true repentance, consists in returning to the practice of those duties, which had been neglected: and even liberty to engage in other services should be sought from those concerned, not as it were of necessity, but by their willing consent. We know not for what services God may intend those, whom he hath marvellously converted: having therefore given our judgment, and used proper means, we should leave all things to his determination.

V. 17—25.

Little do men know for what purposes the Lord leaves them to change their situations, or engage in enterprises, from worldly or criminal motives. We should have thought, that Onesimus' departure from his master would have been final, and his journey to Rome ruinous; yet the Lord had far other and more gracious purposes concerning him: and had not He over-ruled, in a similar manner, some of our ungodly projects, the writer, and many readers, may say, with humble gratitude, our destruction must have been the inevitable consequence, though they proved the means of our being brought into the way of salvation. And when we read of Onesimus' conversion at Rome, after having grown worse and worse, as it is probable, in Philemon's pious family, we should learn to despair of none, but still to use means and offer prayers for them; while we should be ever ready to receive the penitent with that kindness that God shows to his returning prodigals. This should especially be attended to in our conduct towards relations or domestics, whose conversion should be doubly welcome, notwithstanding their past misconduct, that they may be nearer to us in the flesh and in the Lord. Ministers should, in such cases, love to be peace-makers, and they should give up their own interest, in order to prevail with offended parents or masters to be reconciled to their penitent children or servants, that so the severity, animosity, and division, may be prevented, by which the Gospel is often disgraced. When such offenders have wronged others, or owe what they cannot pay, it may sometimes be proper for us to pay it for them, if we can, as followers of Christ, who bore our sins in his own body on the tree. Thus we shall best prevail with our brethren to use lenity and forbearance; especially when we deal with those, who owe their ownselves to the blessing of God on our ministry; and such persons ought to be reminded to let their loving pastors have joy of them in the Lord, to refresh their hearts, to answer their confidence, and even to do more than modesty will permit them to request. Then their prayers for each other will be more fervent; and, in answer to them, their meetings on earth will be comfortable and cordial; but even if this be denied, the grace of the Lord Jesus will be with their spirits, and they will soon meet before the throne, to join for ever in admiring the riches of redeeming love.

THE

EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

HEBREWS.

The general testimony of antiquity, the current tradition of the church, and the judgment of the most competent modern critics, determine this epistle to have been written by the apostle Paul: though some, both in former and latter times, have thought otherwise. "The epistle of Paul." '*Thus we find it 'written in all our manuscripts, one only excepted, in which it is only, "The epistle to the Hebrews."*' (Beza.) '*It is evident, that this epistle was generally received in ancient times, by those Christians who 'used the Greek language, and lived in the eastern parts of the Roman empire. In particular, Clement 'of Alexandria, before the end of the second century, received this epistle as St. Paul's, and quoted 'it frequently, and without any doubt or hesitation. It is not expressly quoted as St. Paul's by any of 'the Latin writers in the three first centuries. However, it was known to Irenæus and Tertullian. 'It is manifest, that is was received as an epistle of St. Paul, by many Latin writers in the fourth, 'fifth, and sixth centuries.*' (Lardner.) *Origen, who held some peculiar notions concerning it, says,* '*The ancients did not rashly hand it down as St. Paul's.*' '*It is very certain, that the churches and 'writers, who were ancients with respect to Origen, must have conversed with the apostles themselves, 'or at least with their successors. Since this tradition was* ancient, *in the times of Clement of Alexandria 'and Origen, about a hundred and thirty years after the epistle was written; it must have had its rise 'in the days of Paul himself, and so cannot reasonably be contested.*' (Hallet in Macknight.) *The doubts, which have been entertained on this subject, seem principally to have arisen from the circumstance, of the apostle's name not being affixed to it, according to his custom in all his other epistles* '*If it is 'not to be considered as Paul's, because it does not bear his name; let it belong to no one, because it 'bears no name. But, on the contrary, I contend, from this very circumstance, that it belongs to Paul 'rather than to any other person. For why should any other person have omitted his name? But Paul 'had a sufficient reason for sending an anonymous letter to Jerusalem: not, as I think, because he was 'the peculiar apostle of the gentiles, as Peter of the circumcision: but because he knew his name was 'greatly hated at Jerusalem, by the enemies of Christianity, and that their fury was even then raging; 'and was perhaps exasperated by occasion of his imprisonment;* (x. 33, 34;) *he was therefore unwilling 'to inflame them against the church by affixing his name.*' (Beza.) '*As Paul was the apostle of the 'gentiles, in writing to the Hebrews, he did not assume his apostolical character; because it was little 'respected by the unbelieving Jews and Judaizing Christians. It being designed, not for the believing 'Jews alone, but for the unbelieving part of the nation, especially the learned doctors and scribes at 'Jerusalem, Paul might think it prudent, not only to avoid assuming his apostolical character, but even 'to conceal his name, which would have prejudiced the unbelieving part of the nation to such a degree, 'that, in all probability, they would not have read his letter.*' (Macknight.) *The apostle intended to prove the doctrines of Christianity, and the changes, which it had introduced, and would introduce, to be entirely consistent with "the oracles of God," as received by the Jews: and as being either clearly predicted or evidently typified, or, at least sufficiently intimated, by them: so that any man, who fully understood the Old Testament, must have expected the substance of what was taught by Christ and his apostles, and the events which had occurred, It is, therefore, highly probable, that he expressly aimed to write an epistle, which might be put into the hands either of Judaizing Christians, or unbelieving Jews, and read by them, without any prejudice, on account of the person, who wrote it: let them impartially consider his* *arguments. It is, however, evident, that he supposed some of the Hebrews would know from whom it came.* (x. 34. xiii. 18. 23, 24.) *But these intimations are not given, till the argumentative part of the epistle is ended; and they would not be clearly understood by any but the apostle's friends. The writer's connexion with Timothy, and his residence in Italy, tend to confirm the ancient tradition; and the other objections, as the supposition, that the style is more elegant than St. Paul's; and that he uses expressions, which imply, that he received his doctrine from those who heard Christ, and not by immediate revelation, &c.; appear very vague and frivolous. He might perhaps, bestow more pains in this epistle, concerning the style, than he did when he wrote to other Churches: but indeed, many competent judges are of opinion, that it is not more elegant: and certainly the internal evidence, arising from the writer's manner of expressing himself and his reasoning, and things of a similar nature, corroborate the opinion, that St. Paul is the author; and if he thought it prudent to write as a converted Jew, to his countrymen, and not as an apostle, who insisted on his authority; he must of course join himself with the other Jewish converts, and not distinguish himself from them, as having received his doctrine immediately from Christ.* (Comp. ii. 4. with 1 Pet. iv. 3.)

Origen and some others were of opinion, that the epistle was written in the Hebrew, or Syriac, language; and translated into Greek by Clement, or Luke: but if this had been the case, it can hardly be supposed, that no one copy of the Hebrew epistle should be mentioned as extant in their days, and as seen by them. The quotations from the Old Testament are generally taken from the Septuagint; even where that version in some degree varies from the Hebrew: but this would scarcely have taken place, had the epistle been written in Hebrew. The Hebrew names are interpreted also in Greek, in a manner, that is not at all like the addition of a translator. The apostle, doubtless, supposed that the epistle would circulate widely among his countrymen, who spoke Greek; and among Christians in general, as well as among the Hebrews; and therefore, probably, he wrote in Greek, as most generally in use at that time, of any language in the world. The Hebrews were the Jews in Judea, and who spoke a dialect of the Hebrew; and to such of them as professed Christianity, the epistle was addressed; and probably sent to Jerusalem, to the rulers and pastors of the Church in that city; yet, the writer evidently expected, that the unconverted Jews also would read it; and their conviction and instruction seem to have been a leading part of his object in writing it. It opens with a declaration of the personal and mediatorial dignity of Christ; and proofs from the Old Testament that the Messiah was to be far greater than the angels: it then shows his superiority to Moses and other eminent men of the nation; proves, by the most unanswerable arguments, that in him the types of the law had their full accomplishment; that he was the substance of all those shadows; and that the ancient scriptures taught Israel to expect an entirely new dispensation, priesthood, and covenant, under the reign of the Messiah. These reasonings are interspersed and closed with most solemn and affectionate warnings and exhortations, addressed to different discriptions of persons. At length the writer shows the nature, efficacy, and triumphs of faith, by which all the saints in former ages had been accepted by God, and enabled to obey, suffer, and do exploits in defence of their holy religion; after which he adds various instructions, admonitions, encouragements, and exhortations; and then concludes with the customary salutations and benedictions. The internal excellency of this epistle, as connecting the Old Testament and the New, in the most convincing and instructive manner, and elucidating both, more fully, than any other epistle, or perhaps than all of them; added to other arguments, puts the divine inspiration of it beyond all doubt; we here find the great doctrines which we have elsewhere been considering, stated, proved, and applied to practical purposes, in the most convincing manner. It is supposed to have been written at the close of the apostle's first imprisonment at Rome, when he either was set at liberty, or daily expected it.

CHAP. I.

The writer declares the essential and mediatorial glory of the Son of God, by whom the Father speaks to men under the gospel dispensation, 1—4. *He adduces several scriptures to prove, that the Messiah was to be far greater than the angels, and worshipped by them as their Creator and Lord,* 5—14.

GOD, who [a] at sundry times, and [b] in divers manners, spake in time past unto [c] the fathers by the prophets,

2 Hath in [d] these last days [e] spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath [f] appointed Heir of all things, [g] by whom also he made the worlds;

3 Who, being [h] the brightness of *his* glory, and the express [i] image of his person, and [k] upholding all things by [l] the word of his power, when he had [m] by himself purged our sins, [n] sat down on the right hand of the [o] Majesty on high;

4 Being made [p] so much better than the angels, as he hath [q] by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

a Gen. iii. 15. vi. 3. 13, &c. viii. 15, &c. ix. 1, &c. xii 1—3. xxvi. 2—5. xxviii. 12—15 xxxii. 24—30. xlvi. 2—4. Ex. iii. 1, &c. Luke xxiv. 27. 44 Acts xxviii. 23. 1 Pet i. 10—12. 2 Pet. i. 20, 21 b Num. xii. 6—8. Joel ii. 28. c Luke i. 55. 72. John vii 22. Acts xiii. 32. d Gen. xlix 1. Num. xxiv. 14. Deut. iv. 30. xxxi 29 Is. ii. 2 Jer. xxx. 24. xlviii. 47. Ez. xxxviii.16 Dan. ii. 28 x. 14. Hos. iii. 5. Mic iv. 1. Acts ii 17. Gal. iv. 4. Eph. i. 10 2 Pet. iii. 8. Jude 18 ——e 5. 8. ii. 3 v. 8 vii 3. Matt. iii. 17. xvii 5. xxvi. 63 Mark i. 1. xii. 6. John i. 14. 18. iii. 16. xv. 15. Rom. i. 4.

f ii. 8, 9. Ps. ii. 6—9. Is ix. 6, 7. liii 10—12. Matt. xxi. 38 xxviii 18. John iii. 35 xiii. 3. xvi. 15. xvii. 2. Acts x. 36. Rom. viii 17. 1 Cor. viii 6. xv. 25—27 Eph i. 20—23 Phil. ii 6—11. Col. i. 17, 18. 1 Pet iii 22. g Prov. viii. 22—31. Is. xliv. 24. xlv. 12 18. John i. 3 1 Cor. viii 6 Eph. iii. 9. Col. i 16, 17 h John i. 14. xiv. 9, 10. 2Cor. iv. 6. i 2 Cor. iv. 4. Col. i. 15 k Ps. lxxv. 3. Col i. 17 Rev. iv 11.——l Ec. viii. 4. Rom. i. 16. 2 Cor. iv. 7 ——m vii 27 ix 12. 14. 26. John i, 29. 1 John i. 7 iii. 5 ——n iv. 14. viii. 1 x. 12. xii 2 Ps. cx. 1. Matt. xxii 44 Mark xvi 19. Luke xx. 42, 43 Acts ii. 33 vii 56. Rom viii. 34. Eph. i 20—22. Col. iii 1 1 Pet. i 21. Rev iii. 21.———o 1 Chr. xxix. 11 Job xxxvii. 22. Mic v 4. 2 Pet. i 16. Jude 25. p 9. ii 9. Eph. i. 21. Col i. 18. ii. 10. 2 Thes i. 7. 1 Pet. iii. 22 Rev. v 11, 12.——q Ps. ii. 7, 8. Phil ii. 9—11.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. The Hebrews allowed the divine authority of the Old Testament; and therefore the writer of this epistle waived the mention of his apostolical authority, and reasoned with them principally from their scriptures: and he thought it best to conceal his name; that none might be deterred by it from reading his arguments, or induced to receive them with prejudice. He therefore entered upon his subject without any introduction. That God, who in former ages had spoken to the progenitors of the Hebrews, from the calling of Abraham, to the latter times of their nation, by prophets, mere men of the same fallen nature with their brethren; who had gradually made known his truth and will, from time to time, through successive generations, and who had spoken to them in divers methods, by personal conference, by dreams and visions, or by supernatural impulses upon their minds; had in the last days, under the dispensation of the Gospel, spoken to them by his own Son, appearing personally among them in human nature. The eternal Word, or Son of God, had indeed appeared, and spoken to the patriarchs, prophets, and others: but he then spoke as JEHOVAH, as God, to a few individuals, by whom his will was made known to their brethren: whereas he had at length become flesh, and dwelt among men, and among the Jews almost exclusively, to fulfil ancient prophecies and promises, and to give the most complete and explicit revelation of God, and of his truth and will, to mankind; as well as to procure salvation for them. So that, while Moses and other mere men, were the prophets of the old dispensation, the only begotten Son of God, appearing in human nature, was the great Prophet of the new dispensation. This glorious Person the Father had appointed "Heir of all "things." As the coequal Son of God, the government of all worlds by original right was vested in him: possessing the essential perfections of the Deity, he was capable of properly exercising universal authority, which no mere creature could have done; and he had been appointed by the Father, in respect of his assumed manhood, to rule over all worlds upon the mediatorial throne, with uncontrolled dominion and unrivalled glory. Thus he inherited all things, and no creature can have any inheritance of power, honour, or felicity, except as derived from him, and held in subordination to him. (*Notes, Phil.* ii. 6—11.) This appointment had the more evident propriety, in that "by him also God made the worlds:" being One with the Father and the eternal Spirit, in essence, power, and counsel, he had been the immediate Creator of the heavens and the earth, and of every order of beings in the universe. The idea of a created agent, by whom God made all things, which some have endeavoured to support from this text, is so absurd in itself, as well as contrary to other scriptures, that it is astonishing it could ever have been adopted. The apostle evidently meant, that God now spake to men by that same glorious Person, who had been the immediate Creator of the world, and who was also exalted to the mediatorial throne as Heir of all things. 'I believe it is as impossible to understand how a man 'should have this empire over all things in heaven and 'earth, and over death itself, and yet be a mere man, as it 'is to understand any mystery of the sacred Trinity.' (*Whitby.*) (*Notes, John* i. 1—18.)

V. 3, 4. The essence of the Deity is invisible to man; but the only begotten Son, of whom the writer spake, had been appointed to make known his glory and perfections: being one with the Father, and equal to him in the divine nature; and shining "in the form of God," with all the effulgency of his glory; and being also distinct from the Father, as to his personal subsistence. By assuming human nature he became "the Effulgency of the divine glory" to men, and made known the perfections of the Godhead to them, so that "he who saw Him saw the Father also." For the Son was "the express Image," or the Character, of the Father's Person, or Subsistence; and showed every part of the nature and perfections of God to man, with the greatest exactness and in the most effectual manner possible; so that in proportion as any man knows Christ, in his Person, character, and salvation, he knows the Father also; and he that knows not Christ, hath no real knowledge of God at all. (*Notes, Matt.* xi. 25—27. *2 Cor.* iv. 3—6. *Col.* i. 15—19.) And not only did the Father create the world by the Son, but the same divine Agent still upholds all things by the word of his power, as one in the unity of the Godhead with the Father; and he even upheld all things in being, and in their settled order, by his almighty word and will, when he appeared on earth

5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, [r] Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, [s] I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

6 * And again, when he bringeth in [t] the First-begotten into the world, he saith, [u] And let all the angels of God worship him.

7 And † of the angels he saith, [x] Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.

[r] v. 5. Ps. ii. 7. Acts xiii. 33.

[s] 2 Sam. vii. 14. 1 Chr. xvii. 13. xxii 10 xxviii 6. Ps. lxxxix. 26, 27.

* Or, *When he bringeth again.*

[t] 5. Prov. viii. 24 25. John i. 14. 18. iii. 16 Rom viii. 29. Col. i. 15 18. 1 John iv. 9. Rev i. 5.

[u] Ps. xcvii. 7. Luke ii. 9—14. 1 Pet. iii. 22. Rev. v. 9—12.

† Gr. *unto*

[x] 14. 2 Kings ii. 11. vi. 17. Ps. civ. 4. Is. vi. 2. *Heb* Ez. i. 13, 14 Dan. vii. 10 Zech. vi. 5.

"as the visible Effulgence of the Father's glory, and the "Character of his subsistence;" of which he gave many proofs in his miraculous power over the course of nature, legions of evil spirits, diseases, and death. This same Person, who created and upholds all worlds, as the High Priest of his people, purged away the guilt of their sins, *by himself*, and the sacrifice of his death upon the cross. Then, having risen as a mighty Conqueror over death and hell, he ascended in human nature, to be seated as Heir of all things upon the mediatorial throne, at the right hand of the Father, where he displays his glorious majesty. There the incarnate Son is enthroned in pre-eminent dignity, as the Head of all things to his church, which he purchased with his own blood. For he was made so much better than the angels, or superior in authority to them, that they were all made subject to him, as reigning in human nature; seeing he *inherited*, as "the only begotten "Son of God," a more excellent name, or nature, than they: for, however exalted any of them were in capacity or authority, they were only mere creatures, and he their infinite Creator. This interpretation coincides with that, which hath already been given of similar passages; but it differs, in some degree, from that of several eminent evangelical expositors: for they suppose that the expressions, "the Brightness of his glory, and *the character of his sub-"sistence,"* are illustrations, taken from external objects, of the eternal generation of Christ, and his equality with the Father in the Godhead. But though the author is decidedly of opinion, that Christ is called the only Son of God, in respect of his divine nature; and therefore allows the eternal generation, as well as the equality of the Son with the Father, yet he does not think that the scripture contains any *illustrations* of these mysteries; or that we are taught to form any ideas of the manner, in which they subsist; but rather to receive them in implicit faith, as the revelation of God, and to adore them as absolutely incomprehensible by us in our present state. He, therefore, supposes these expsessions to signify the manifestation of the glory, character, and perfection of the invisible God to man, in and by the Person of his incarnate Son; whose original equality with the Father, by the participation of the divine nature, and his voluntary assumption of the human nature, concurred in rendering him the proper medium, so to speak, through which we might see the effulgency, or shining forth of the divine glory; and become acquainted with the perfections and subsistence of God in the best manner, of which in our present condition we are capable. He is also confirmed in this view of the passage, by finding that the venerable reformer Beza interprets it in the same manner, and makes the same objections to the other interpretations.

V. 5—7. In the preceding verses, the apostle had stated the outlines of that doctrine, on which he meant more largely to discourse: and, having declared the personal and mediatorial superiority of Jesus the Son of God to all angels, he proceeded to show, that the Old Testament prophecies spake of the promised Messiah in similar language. As we are satisfied by abundant evidence, that the writers of the New Testament were equally inspired with those of the Old, their expositions are of equal authority with the originals which they quote. But when the apostle reasoned with the Hebrews out of their scriptures, he doubtless quoted them in that sense in which many of them had been used to understand them, or in which they might be convinced they ought to be understood. Had not the more learned Jews, at the time when the epistle was written, been used to understand the texts adduced in the sense which the apostle puts upon them, he would scarcely have left them, as proofs of his doctrine, without hesitation, in an argumentative treatise, which he knew must pass the ordeal of the strictest examination, by the most prejudiced and hostile persons. Now, if they were sufficient proofs to the persons immediately addressed, they must be sufficient for all, who consider the writer as fully knowing, by divine inspiration, both the doctrine of Christ, and the true meaning of the scriptures: though the context might otherwise, in some instances, lead us to suppose them instructive accommodations; and though the Jews, in subsequent ages, to evade the writer's conclusion, have attempted to put another construction on them. We have briefly considered these quotations before; yet it is necessary here again to examine them. The first is brought from an evident prophecy of the Messiah's kingdom. (*Notes, Ps.* ii.) JEHOVAH had there addressed him in such language as had never been used to any angel. The words quoted were spoken long before his incarnation, and were the declaration of an eternal decree: they must therefore relate to his Sonship, or eternal generation: for the subsequent production of his human nature, by the power of the Holy Spirit, would not give him that essential and original superiority to the angels, which the argument here required; nor could his appointment to the office of the Messiah be meant by the words, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee:" as that appointment was the consequence, rather than the cause, of his superiority to the angels; he was advanced above them, as he had inherited a more excellent name than they: and his Sonship is plainly denoted to be such a participation of the Father's nature, as any son partakes of that of his father, in the ordinary course of things; and not merely a communication of existence by an act of creating power; or adoption, by an act of special grace. The next quotation appears primarily to have been meant of Solomon. (*Note, 2 Sam.* vii. 14;) but Solomon was a most remarkable type of the Messiah, as the Jews in general must know: so that when JEHOVAH said of him in so peculiar a sense, "I will be to him a Father," it must be obvious that this, in its fullest meaning was to be under-

8 But unto the Son *he saith*, [y] Thy throne, [z] O God, *is* [a] for ever and ever; [b] a sceptre of * righteousness *is* the sceptre of thy kingdom:

9 Thou hast [c] loved righteousness, and [d] hated iniquity; therefore God, *even* [e] thy God, hath [f] anointed thee with the [g] oil of gladness above [h] thy fellows.

y Ps. xlv. 6.
z iii. 3, 4 Is. vii. 14. ix. 6, 7. xlv 21, 22 25 Jer. xxiii. 6. Hos. i. 7 Zech. xiii. 9 Mal iii. 1 Matt. i. 23. Luke i 16, 17 John x. 30, 33. xx. 28 Rom ix. 5 1 Tim. iii 16. Tit. ii 13, 14. 1 John v. 20.
a Ps. cxlv 13 Is. ix. 7. Dan ii 44. vii. 14. 1 Cor. xv. 25. 2 Pet i 11.——b 2 Sam xxiii 3. Ps. lxxii. 1–4. 7 11–14. xcix. 4. Is. ix 7. xxxii. 1, 2 Jer. xxiii. 5 xxxiii 15 Zech ix. 9——* Gr *rightness*, or, *straightness* ——c vii. 26 Ps xi. 5. xxxiii. 5. xxxvii 28. xl 8 xlv. 7 Is. lxi. 8.——d Ps. cxix 104. 128 Prov. viii. 13. Am. v. 15 Zech. viii 17. Rom. xii. 9. Rev. ii 6, 7. 15.——e Ps. lxxxix 26 John xx. 17. 2 Cor xi. 31. Eph. i. 3 1 Pet. i. 3.——f Ps. ii. 2. 6 *Marg.* lxxxix 20 Is. lxi. 1. Luke iv 18 John i. 41. iii. 34. Acts iv. 27. x. 38.——g Ps. xxiii. 5. Is. lxi. 3. Rom. xv. 13. Gal. v. 22.——h ii. 11. 1 Cor i. 9. 1 John i. 3.

10 And, [i] Thou, Lord, [k] in the beginning [l] hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are [m] the works of thine hands:

11 They [n] shall perish: but [o] thou remainest; and they all [p] shall wax old, as doth a garment;

12 And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: [q] but thou art the same, [r] and thy years shall not fail.

i Ps. cii. 25–27.
k Gen. i. 1 John i. 1–3. Rev. iii. 14.
l Prov. viii 29. Is. xlii. 5 xlviii. 13 li. 13. Jer. xxxii. 17 Zech. xii 1
m Deut iv. 19 Ps. viii. 3, 4. xix. 1. Is. lxiv. 8
n xii 27 Is. xxxiv 4. lxv. 17. Matt. xxiv. 35. Mark xiii. 31 Luke xxi. 33 2 Pet. iii. 7–10. Rev xx. 11. xxi. 1
o Ps x. 16. xxix. 10. xc. 2 Is. xli. 4. xliv. 6. Rev. i. 11. 17, 18. ii. 8 ——p Is. l. 9. li. 6. 8.——q xiii. 8 Ex. iii. 14 John viii. 58. Jam. i. 17.——r Ps. xc. 4.

stood of the antitype rather than of the type. The next proof was brought from a prophecy of the establishment of the Messiah's kingdom, (*Notes*, *Ps.* xcvii.) in which it is said, (v. 7.) "worship him, all ye gods." JEHOVAH there spake of bringing in the Messiah, whom he had elsewhere declared to be his first begotten Son, (*Ps.* ii. 7.) and appointed to be Heir of all things; and at the same time he called upon the most exalted of his creatures to "submit to the Son," adore, and "honour him, even as "they honoured the Father that sent him." For, though the magistrates and grandees of the earth might be included, yet all the angels of God were evidently intended also. But JEHOVAH had never spoken in such language concerning angels; of whom it had been said, that he made them spirits, or *winds*, (for so some render it,) and as flames of fire to be his ministering servants. (*Note*, *Ps.* civ. 4.) (*Marg. Ref.*) He had indeed formed them active, powerful, pure, and spiritual intelligences, to perform his mandates with inexpressible force and fervent love; but he had never commanded other rational creatures to worship them; nay, he had most peremptorily forbidden the worship of any creature; yet he required the most exalted of them to worship his Son, even when brought into this world to dwell in human nature! A most decided proof of an infinite disparity between Christ and the highest angels. (*Rev.* xix. 10.)

V. 8, 9. A passage is next adduced from a most remarkable prophecy of the Messiah; (*Notes*, &c. *Ps.* xlv.) in which JEHOVAH said to him, as his Son, "Thy throne, "O God, is for ever and ever:" he addressed him as God, declaring the perpetuity of his mediatorial kingdom to the end of the world, and over his redeemed people to all eternity. (*Note*, 1 *Cor.* xv. 24—28.) As the sceptre with which he would rule his people, and all nations, yea, the universe, for their benefit, was a sceptre of righteousness, the exercise of his pardoning mercy would be most honourable to divine justice, and most effectual to promote righteousness in the world. His laws and administration would be altogether righteous: whilst he acted as the Friend and Saviour of sinners, he would most perfectly love righteousness and hate iniquity: as the Son of God, he was essentially and unchangeably holy: his human nature would be produced and preserved, entirely free from all pollution of sin; his whole conduct, even unto death, would be perfectly righteous, and the government of his kingdom would be the same for ever. On this account God, even his God and Father, would anoint him, (for the future was spoken of as if it had already taken place,) "with "the oil of gladness," or the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, (the source of all substantial gladness in the heart of man,) in a more abundant manner than any of those prophets or servants of God had received, whom he owned as his *fellows*, companions, or brethren, in the human nature. The Holy Spirit was given without measure to Christ, for the benefit of his church, in consequence of his undertaking, incarnation, obedience to death, and exaltation to the mediatorial throne: from this fulness all his fellows have received their appointed measure, whereby they have been qualified for these services, to which they were called, comforted in the trials appointed for them, and prepared for their future happiness in heaven. Some suppose, that angels were meant by Christ's *fellows*, because the apostle was proving his superiority to angels; but he never bore the nature of angels, and partaking of the same nature seems to be the meaning of the expression. (*Marg. Ref.*) The quotation was full to the apostle's purpose, by proving that JEHOVAH spake of the Messiah in such language as he never used of angels; and the Psalmist, from whom he adduced his proof, spake of the Messiah as incarnate, of his espousing the church to himself, and of believers as the companions of the glorious King. They were indeed anointed with the oil of gladness for his sake; but he far more than they all, even as his excellency and dignity exceeded theirs. 'They, who imagine this Psalm is 'an epithalamium upon Solomon's marrying Pharaoh's 'daughter, must suppose that it is foretold, that Solo'mon was to have a numerous progeny by her, whom he 'would set up for princes and rulers, up and down the 'world. (*Ps.* xlv. 16.) But this cannot be true: for, be'side that, we read not of any children Solomon had by 'Pharaoh's daughter. Rehoboam, who succeeded him, 'was the son of Naamah, an Ammonitess. And so far 'was he from being able to set up his sons to rule over 'other countries, that it was with great difficulty his suc'cessors kept two tribes of the twelve steadfast to them.' —Certainly, "a greater than Solomon was here." (*Bp. Pierce.*) Very many other suppositions, by which the prophecies, concerning Christ, are explained away, or enervated, by men called Christians, might be shown to be equally absurd, if the nature of this publication would admit of more than a specimen.

V. 10—12. (*Note*, *Ps.* cii. 25—27.) The psalm, whence these verses are quoted, seems to be a prayer of the afflicted church of Israel for the coming of her ex-

13 But [s] to which of the angels said he at any time, [t] Sit on my right hand, [u] until I make thine enemies thy footstool?

5. x. 12. Ps cx. 1. Matt. xxii. 44. Mark xii 36 Luke xx. 42 Acts ii. 34—36. vii. 55 Ps xxi. 8, 9. cxxxii. 13. Is. lxiii. 3–6. Luke xix 27. 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26. Rev. xix. 11–21. xx. 15.

14 Are they not all [x] ministering spirits, [y] sent forth to [z] minister for them who shall be [a] heirs of salvation?

x viii. 6. x. 11. Luke i. 23 Acts xiii. 2. Rom. xiii. 6. xv. 16. 27. 2 Cor ix. 12. Phil ii 17. 25. Gr. 1 Kings xxii. 19 Job i. 6. Ps ciii. 20, 21. civ. 4. Is. vi. 2, 3 Dan. vii 10 Matt. xiii. 41 49, 50. xviii. 10. Luke i 19 2 Thes. i. 7. Jude 14.——y Acts xi. 22. 1 Pet. i 12. Rev. v 6 ——z Ps xxxiv. 7. xci. 11, 12. Dan. vi 22 ix. 21—23. x. 12. Matt i. 20 ii. 13 xxiv. 31. Luke xvi. 32. Acts v 19 x. 3, 4. xii. 7. 23. xvi, 26. xxvii.23.——a vi. 12. 17 Matt. xxv. 34. Rom. viii. 17. Gal. iii. 7. 9. 29. Eph. iii. 6. Tit. iii. 7. Jam. ii. 5 1 Pet. i. 4. iii. 7.

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pected Deliverer; yet we might not have discovered that the Son was personally addressed in this passage, had not the apostle led our attention to it in this view. But considering it in connexion with other Scriptures, and remembering that the ancient prophets continually spake of their expected Messiah, we shall perceive a propriety in the church under affliction addressing herself to him as her unchangeable Friend. He had in the beginning created the heavens and the earth: these would at length wax old and wear out as a garment, but he would remain possessed of infinite power and perfection; at the appointed period, therefore, he would lay them aside, with as much ease as a man folds up a garment, and changes it for another, and so introduce "new heavens and a new earth, wherein "dwelleth righteousness;" and still he would continue the same "yesterday, to day, and for ever." (xiii. 8.)—Probably, many of the Hebrews were prepared to understand this psalm of the Messiah, as well as the others: it is, however, *to us* a most explicit testimony to the Deity of Christ, as one with the Father, the Creator of all things; and they, who labour to prove that the Father was spoken of by the apostle, must think that he reasons inconclusively, yea, absurdly; for what had the quotation, in that case, to do with Christ's superiority to the angels?

V. 13, 14. (*Notes*, vii. *Ps*. cx. *Matt.* xxii. 42—46. *Marg. Ref.*) JEHOVAH had never spoken to any angel in such language as was contained in another well-known prophecy of the Messiah, in which he called him to sit, as a mighty Prince, on his right hand, till he had crushed and put under his feet all those who presumed to rebel against his authority. Did not the Hebrews well know that all the angels, even the most exalted of them, were so far from possessing such supreme and universal authority, that they all were worshipping spirits, and servants of the Lord, to execute his commands with unreserved submission; and that they were sent forth by him to minister to those of the human race, who were appointed to be the heirs of salvation? Their willing and delightful obedience to such commands, and their loving services to such inferior and sinful creatures, for the Lord's sake, showed a most excellent disposition, and was worthy of imitation; yet no homage or worship were due to them on that account: on the contrary, they were joint worshippers of JEHOVAH, whom they adored in the person of Christ, the incarnate Son of God, and the Saviour of sinful men. As therefore such things were spoken of the Messiah, immensely above what was said of angels in the sacred scriptures, it was absurd to expect a mere man, or a temporal kingdom, or to suppose that this glorious Lord would come to confirm and continue that dispensation, which had been given by the ministration of angels.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—4.

We can never sufficiently bless our God, that he hath, in so many ways, and with such increasing clearness, spoken concerning salvation to us fallen sinners: and especially that he hath sent the message of mercy to us, by his well-beloved Son, whose dignity gives authority to every appointment, and certainty to every truth and promise. That the First-begotten of the Father, the Heir of all things, by whom all worlds were created, and by the word of whose power all things are upheld; who is the Effulgency of the divine glory, and the manifestation of the divine perfections, should "by himself purge our "sins," is a mystery of love, which exceeds, and overwhelms, all our admiration, praise, and gratitude. Now having sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; angels, principalities, and powers, are subject to him, who inheriteth a far more excellent name than they. Let us not then, absurdly and ungratefully refuse him our adorations, whilst all the angels of God worship him! For our salvation he abased himself, that he might redeem us to God with his blood; and shall we on that account refuse to adore and "honour him, even as we honour the "Father that sent him?"

V. 5—14.

We should never forget, that all the enemies of Christ will at length be put under his feet; and that all, who will not have him to reign over them, are his enemies. Let us then seek mercy of our God, in that way which glorifies his justice also: let us bow to the sceptre of our Redeemer's grace; put our souls under his protection; and seek that renewal of our hearts, which will make us delight in obeying his holy commands, and render us like him in "loving righteousness and hating iniquity." In proportion as we are anointed with "the oil of gladness" from his fulness, and as members of his mystical body, this will be our character: and "if any man have not "the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." We cannot indeed serve him as angels do, who excel in strength, and are like a vehement wind, or the swift lightning, in executing his mandates: but we may copy their love, their alacrity and humility, in ministering at his word to the poorest of the heirs of salvation, who are thus more royally attended than the mightiest of ungodly men. Surely then we should deem none of our brethren, nor any of their concerns, beneath us; but, like these pure spirits, should count it our honour to do them good for Christ's sake. Such humiliation and self-abasement will make way for our exaltation to be equal with the angels, yea, to sit down with Christ upon his throne; when he, who at first created the world, shall, with unchangeable power, destroy it as a worn-out garment, and make all things new: and when all they, whose hearts and hopes were placed on its perishing treasures and fading glories, will be driven from his presence into everlasting misery.

CHAP. II.

An earnest call to attend to the gospel; enforced by the consideration of the danger of neglecting so great salvation, thus revealed and confirmed, 1—4. *Further scriptural proof of Christ's superiority to the angels, notwithstanding his temporary humiliation in our nature,* 5—9. *An explanation of the motives, reasons, condescension, and benefit of his incarnation, temptations, sufferings, and death; as connected with his being the High Priest and Saviour of his people,* 10—18.

[a] THEREFORE, we ought to give [b] the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time [c] we should * let *them* slip.

2 For if the word [d] spoken by angels was steadfast, and [e] every transgression and disobedience received a just [f] recompense of reward;

3 [g] How shall we escape, if we neglect [h] so great salvation; which at the first [i] began to be spoken by the Lord, [k] and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him;*

4 [l] God also bearing *them* witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and † gifts of the Holy Ghost, [m] according to his own will?

5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection [n] the world to come, whereof we speak.

6 But one [o] in a certain place testified, saying, [p] What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or [q] the son of man, that thou [r] visitest him?

7 Thou [s] madest him a little ‡ lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:

8 Thou [t] hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing *that is* not put under him. [u] But

a 2—4. i. 1,2. xii. 25, 26.
b Deut. iv 9. 23. xxxiii. 46, 47. Josh. xxiii. 11, 12. 1 Chr. xxii. 13. Ps cxix. 9. Prov. ii. 1—6. iii 21. iv. 1—4. 20—22. vii. 1, 2. Luke viii. 15. ix. 44
c xii.5. Matt. xvi. 9 Mark viii 18. 2 Pet. i. 12, 13. 15. iii. 1.
* Gr. *run out, as leaking vessels.* Hag i. 6. ii. 16.
d Deut. xxxiii.2. Ps. lxviii. 17. Acts vii. 53. Gal iii 19.
e x 28. Ex xxxii. 27, 28. Lev. x. 1, 2 xxiv. 14—16. Num. xi. 33. xiv 28—37. xv. 32—36. xvi. 31—35. 49. xx. 11, 12 xxi. 6. xxv. 9. Deut. iv. 3, 4. xvii. 5. 12. xxvii. 26. 1Cor. x 5—12. Jude 5.
f x. 35. xi. 6, 26. *Gr.*
g x. 29. xii 25. Is. xx 6. Ez. xvii. 15. 18. Matt. xxiii. 33. Rom. ii 3. 1 Thes. v. 3. 1Pet iv. 17,18. Rev. vi. 16, 17.
h v. 9. vii. 25 26. Is. xii. 2. li 5. 8. lxii. 11 Luke i. 69. John iii 16—18. Acts iv. 12. 1 Tim. i. 15. Tit. ii. 11. Rev. vii. 10
i *See on,* i.2. Matt. iv. 17 Mark i. 14 Luke xxiv. 19 Acts ii. 22.
k Mark xvi. 15—19. Luke i 2 xxiv. 47, 48 John xv. 27. Acts i. 22. x. 40—42.
l Mark xvi. 20. John xv. 26. Acts ii. 32, 33. iii. 15, 16. iv 10. xiv. 3. xix. 11, 12 Rom. xv. 19.
† Or, *distribution.* 1 Cor. xii. 4—11. Eph. iv 8—11.
m Dan. iv. 35. Eph. i. 5 9.
n vi 5. Rev. xi. 15.
o iv. 4. v. 6. 1 Pet. i. 11.
p Job vii 17, 18. xv. 14. *See on,* Ps. viii. 4—8, cxliv 3. Is. xl. 17.
q Job xxv. 6. Ps. cxlvi 3, 4. Is. li. 12.
r Gen. l 24. Luke i. 68. 78. vii. 16.
s *See on,* 9.
‡ Or, *while inferior to.*
t 5. i 13 Ps. ii. 6 Dan. vii. 14. Matt xxviii. 18 John iii. 35 xiii. 3. 1 Cor. xv. 27. Eph. i. 21, 22. Phil. ii. 9—11. 1 Pet. iii. 22. Rev. i. 5. 18. v. 11—13.——u Job xxxix. 1—12 xli.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1—4. The apostle paused, after his proof of Christ's pre-eminent dignity, to make some application of his doctrine. The Hebrews, and all to whom the Gospel came, ought to give the more earnest, believing, and obedient attention to what they had heard, because of the majesty of the Speaker, and the gracious nature of his words. It was incumbent on those, who professed Christianity, to apply their minds with increasing reverence to these important subjects, lest at any time, through temptation, worldly cares and pleasures, or persecution, they should be induced to let them slip, or *run out* as water from a leaky vessel. This aptly represents the treachery of the memory, respecting spiritual things, and the way in which good instructions, convictions, or affections, gradually vanish, and no abiding change is made, or effect produced by them. The Jews counted the authority of the law to be the greater, and its perpetuity the more indubitable, because it was spoken by angels, as employed by Jehovah in delivering it to their fathers from mount Sinai; (*Note, Acts* vii. 53.) But if the word spoken by ministering spirits was steadfast, so that Jehovah would not permit any of the people to transgress in any way without inflicting on them merited punishment, how could they escape his vengeance, who neglected the great salvation of the Gospel? The greatness of the Saviour who created and upholds all things; the immensity of the price paid by him for this salvation; the depth of the misery from whence he saves his people, and their perishing need of it; its entire freeness to the chief of sinners who seek for it, without limitation or exception; the infinite provision made for the supply of all their wants, and the glorious felicity in which it terminates; all these things unite in rendering it worthy to be called "so great "salvation," even so great a salvation that it surpasses all conception. To refuse this invaluable blessing, from pride, love of the world, and sin, or attachment to superstitious vanities; to neglect it through sloth, procrastination, and aversion to the means of grace, or a fear of persecution; and to oppose or corrupt it from enmity to God and holiness, not only leave men under the curse of the law, but incur the condemnation of treating the truth of God as a lie, of despising his mercy, defying his justice and power, and rejecting his most gracious and urgent overtures to a reconciliation. How then can such persons escape the wrath to come? This salvation first began to be published in the fullest display of it under the Gospel dispensation, by the Lord himself appearing in human nature, as the great Prophet of the Church. He deigned to be the preacher of this great salvation; and after his ascension into heaven to appear in the presence of God for us, it was confirmed to the Jews and others, by his apostles and evangelists, who had been eye-witnesses of his glory, had heard his doctrine, and received their commission immediately from him. Moreover, God bore witness to their doctrine, as that of his beloved Son, by various miraculous powers exercised by them, and conferred on others also, and by the gifts of his Holy Spirit, dispensed to them according to his own sovereign will. So that the condescension of the Son of God, in becoming incarnate, and in first publishing his doctrine by his own personal ministry, his exaltation, and the subsequent sending of his ambassadors with such divinely attested credentials, to preach salvation to sinners, concurred in calling their attention from the abrogated Mosaic dispensation to Christianity.

now we see not yet all things put under him.

9 But we see [x] Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels * for the suffering of death, [y] crowned with glory and honour; that he [z] by the grace of God should [a] taste death [b] for every man.

10 For [c] it became him, [d] for whom *are* all things, and by whom *are* all things, in bringing [e] many sons unto [f] glory, to make [g] the Captain of their salvation [h] perfect through sufferings.

11 For both [i] he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, *are* [k] all of one: for which cause [l] he is not ashamed [m] to call them brethren,

12 Saying, [n] I will declare thy name unto my brethren, [o] in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

13 And again, [p] I will put my trust in

x viii 3. x. 5. Gen. iii. 15. Is vii. 14. xi. 1. liii. 2—10. Rom. viii 3. Gal. iv. 4. Phil ii. 7, 8.

* Or, *by*.

y Ps xxi 3—5. Acts ii. 33. Rev xix. 12.

z John iii. 16. Rom v. 8. viii 32 2 Cor. v. 21 vi 21 1 John iv. 9. 10

a Matt. xvi. 28. Mark ix. 1. Luke ix 27. John viii. 52.

b John i 29. xii 32. 2 Cor v. 15. 1 Tim. ii. 6. 1 John ii. 2. Rev. v. 9.——c vii. 26. Gen xviii. 25. Luke ii 14. xxiv. 26 Rom. iii. 25, 26. Eph i 6—8. ii. 7. iii 10. 1 Pet. i. 12 ——d Prov. xvi. 4. Is xliii. 21. Rom. xi. 36. 1 Cor. viii. 6. 2 Cor. v. 18. Col. i. 16, 17. Rev. iv. 11 ——e Hos. i. 10 John xi 52. Rom. viii 14—18. 29, 30. ix. 25, 26. 2 Cor. vi. 18. Gal. iii. 26. Eph. i. 5. 1 John iii. 1, 2. Rev. vii. 9.

f Rom. ix. 23. 1 Cor. ii. 7 2 Cor. iii. 18 iv. 17 Col. iii. 4. 2 Tim. ii. 10. 1 Pet. v. 1. 10.

g vi. 20. xii. 2. Josh v. 14. 15. Is. lv. 4. Mic. ii. 13. Acts iii. 15. v. 31.

h v 8, 9. Luke xiii. 32. xxiv. 26 46. John xix 30. *Gr.*

i x 10. 14 xiii. 12. John xvii. 19.

k 14. Acts xvii. 26 Gal iv. 4

l xi. 16. Mark viii. 38. Luke ix. 26.

m Matt xii. 48—50 xxv. 40. xxviii. 10. John xx. 17. Rom. viii. 29.——n Ps xxii. 22 25. o Ps. xl 10. cxi. 1. John xviii. 20 ——p 2 Sam. xxii. 3. Ps. xvi. 1. xviii. 2. xxxvi. 7, 8 xci. 2. Is. l. 7—9. Matt. xxvii. 43. Heb. xii. 2.

V. 5—9. The argument, concerning the Messiah's superiority to the angels, is here resumed. "The world "to come," or *the future age* or *dispensation*, was a phrase in use among the Jews, denoting the times of the Messiah, of which the apostle was discoursing: and it is observable that he uses it only in this epistle. (*Marg. Ref.*) This period began at the first coming of Christ, and will continue till his second coming. Now, it is not subjected to angels, but to him whom all the angels worshipped and obeyed; nor were they ministerially employed in the introduction of it, as they had been in the giving of the law.—This had been implied in what was spoken by one in a certain place, with which the Hebrews were well acquainted, (*Notes*, &c. *Ps.* viii.) In a view of the starry heavens, those majestic displays of God's creating power, David had exclaimed, "What is man, &c.?" The words might indeed be explained of the attention and kindness of God to so inconsiderable a creature as man, amidst the immensity of his works. He had made him at first in some degree inferior to the angels, but he had crowned him with glory and honour, and made him lord of this lower creation. Yet, as man had soon fallen from his original dignity, had lost his crown of honour, and retained but an imperfect dominion over the creatures; and as the Messish was intended to be the chief Glory and Blessing of the fallen race; so the Psalmist might properly be considered as "in Spirit" speaking of him, and of JEHOVAH's being mindful of and visiting the human race, by giving his own Son to become the Son of man for their salvation. Indeed, if the words were exactly weighed, it would be found that they had not received a full accomplishment in any other sense; for if God put *all things* in subjection under the feet of the Son of man, it must follow, that there was nothing left that was not put in subjection under him: whereas it was manifest, that all things, even here on earth, (not to speak of other worlds,) were not thus put in subjection to man, for many of the creatures scorned to bear his yoke, and some even made war against him. But believers, looking to Jesus, saw the accomplishment of the words in his exaltation, and the event of it; he had become a little lower than the angels, by appearing in the likeness of sinful flesh, that he might be capable of suffering death; but speedily he had been, as the Son of man, crowned with glory and honour, placed on the mediatorial throne, invested with universal dominion, and made Head over all things to his Church. So that, in fact, all things in heaven and earth, and under the earth, were put in subjection to him; and, though some for a time refuse to submit to him, they must all at length either be his willing servants, or be crushed under his feet as enemies. (*Note*, 1 *Cor.* xv. 24—28.) Thus, by means of his humiliation, he became capable of dying; and, by his subsequent exaltation, he was enabled to apply the benefits of his death to his people; and so he tasted death in all its bitterness, for the benefit of every man, who came to trust in his salvation; which constitution was the effect of the plenteous mercy and free favour of God to our rebellious race, as the Psalmist had intimated; nor could that grace ever be sufficiently admired. *Little lower.* (9.) Many expositors suppose the original to mean, "lower "for a short time," that is, during the term of our Lord's humiliation on earth; but the use of the same words in the seventh verse determines its sense here; yet there it can have no reference to time, unless we explain the Psalm as a prophecy of Christ exclusively, without allowing that either Adam or his posterity were at all intended. It is, indeed, argued, that Jesus was made, in human nature, immensely lower than the angels, being "despised "and rejected of men," and considered as one of the most abject of the human race. This objection, however, seems to be of no validity; for his real dignity and excellency as man, and not the opinion of others concerning him, are meant. He was in human nature, as the first Adam had been, "a little lower than the angels;" and being made like us in all things, sin alone excepted, he became capable of suffering and death, which angels are exempted from. In these respects he was "made a little "lower than the angels;" but, in all other things, he, even as man in his lowest humiliation, was but little lower than they, being vastly superior to all others of the human race, not excepting Adam himself before the fall. Beza thinks that the apostle includes the future glorification of believers, as one with Christ, and as sharing his glory. *Taste death.* (9.) Some explain these words as signifying the pain which our Lord endured in dying; and others, as marking the short time during which he continued dead; but the expression seems to have been in use among the Jews, merely denoting, *to die.* (*Marg. Ref.*) *Every man.* The word *man* is not in the original, and some think that the apostle meant, 'every one of those 'many sons, who shall be brought to glory.' (10.) The death of Christ is indeed sufficient for all men, and the proposal of the benefit should be made to every man; yet none but believers eventually share the blessing.

him. And again, [q] Behold I, and the children, [r] which God hath given me.

14 Forasmuch then as [s] the children are partakers [t] of flesh and blood, [u] he also himself likewise took part of the same; that [x] through death he might [y] destroy him that had the power of death, that is, [z] the devil;

15 And [a] deliver them, who [b] through fear of death, were all their life-time [c] subject to bondage.

q Is. viii. 18. liii. 10.
r Gen. xxxiii. 5. xlviii. 9. Ps. cxxvii 3. 1 Cor. iv. 15.
s See on, 10
t 1 Cor. xv 50.
u 18. iv. 15 Gen. iii. 15. Is. vii. 14. John i 14 Rom. viii. 3. Gal. iv 4. Phil ii. 7, 8. 1 Tim. iii. 16.——x ix. 15. Is. liii. 12. John xii. 24 31--33. Rom. xiv 9. Col. ii. 15. Rev. i 18.

y Is. xxv. 8. Hos. xiii. 14. 1 Cor xv. 54, 55. 2 Tim i. 10.
z Matt. xxv. 41. 1 John. iii 8—10. Rev. ii. 10. xii 9. xx. 2
a Job xxxiii. 24. 28 Ps xxxiii. 19. lvi 13. lxxxix. 48. Luke i. 74, 75. 2 Cor. i. 10 ————b Job xviii. 11. 14. xxiv. 17. Ps. lv. 4. lxxiii. 19. 1 Cor. xv. 55—57.————c Rom. viii. 15 21 Gal iv. 24. 2 Tim i. 7.

V. 10—13. Whatever the Jews might object to the sufferings and crucifixion of him, who was preached to them as their Messiah, yet it certainly became the eternal God, for whose glory, and by whose power, all things were created, and are upheld and governed, to adopt this method. It had not only pleased him as a Sovereign to do this, but it was admirably suited to manifest the glory of all his perfections; yea, it was necessary for the harmonious display of them. Having, therefore, purposed to adopt as children an innumerable company of Adam's fallen race, he was pleased in his infinite wisdom and love to appoint them a Captain, who should call them forth out of their state of sin and misery, and lead them through life and death to his eternal glory. The word, rendered "in bringing," agrees with that translated "Captain," not with "Him," in the preceding clause. But it was proper that this Captain, Prince, or Commander, (*Is.* iv. 4,) who leads countless millions of fallen sinners, as the adopted children of God, to victory over Satan, sin, the world, and death, and to eternal glory; that this Author of their salvation should be "made perfect" through sufferings; that is, perfectly authorized to, as well as qualified for, every part of that most important work. For, by assuming human nature, and humbling himself to the death upon the cross for our sins, he made the salvation of sinners consistent with divine justice, and showed us the way of fighting the good fight of faith, and pressing forward to the conqueror's crown. Thus Jesus, who purifieth his people from guilt and sin, and consecrateth them to God, and they who are thus sanctified by him, "are all of one," that is, of one father Adam; or, as speaking to the Jews, the apostle might mean Abraham. He became one with us in human nature, in order that his sufferings might atone for our sins, and that we might be justified by his righteousness; for which cause, he is not ashamed to own us as his brethren, notwithstanding his glorious majesty and perfect holiness, and our meanness, guilt, and pollution. Thus, in a remarkable prophecy of his sufferings and subsequent glory, (*Notes*, &c. *Ps.* xxii.) he had been introduced as saying, (22.) "I will declare thy name unto my brethren," and as engaging to celebrate the praises of JEHOVAH in his Church of redeemed sinners. In another place, where the Messiah's deliverances, victories, and kingdom, were predicted under the type of David, he spake as man, of "trusting in the LORD," amidst his trials, even as his brethren did, (*Ps.* xviii. 2:) and by another prophet, he had said, "behold I, and the children, which God hath "given me;" (*Notes*, &c. *Is.* viii. 18;) this implied the same equality of nature and endeared affection, as the relation of brethren. (*Note, Matt.* xxviii. 10. *John* xx. 17. *Rom.* viii. 29.) Many things in the eighth of Isaiah are evidently prophetical of the Messiah, and as such are quoted repeatedly in the New Testament; (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Is.* viii.) and, no doubt, the text here adduced was understood of him by the learned Jews, when the apostle wrote; for he was well acquainted with their sentiments, and would not have quoted it in a sense different from the usual interpretation, in an argumentative discourse, without attempting to establish the novel interpretation by cogent reasonings. (*Note*, i. 5—7.)

V. 14, 15. As, therefore, the children, of whom Christ spake by the prophet, even his elect people whom he had undertaken to redeem, were partakers of flesh and blood, or of the human nature, he also voluntarily condescended to partake of the same, in order that he might stand in the nearest relation to them, and so most properly become their Surety and representative, as well as be made capable of suffering and dying for them; that by so doing he might, as to them, abolish the reign of death, by destroying the dominion of the devil, who hath the power of death. For Satan, by seducing man into sin, first brought him under the sentence of death; and every man must be exposed to the sting, the terror, the stroke, and the consequences of death, whilst he continues unpardoned and unconverted; and the devil, as accuser and executioner, may have much power in inflicting or aggravating them. But the atonement of Christ made way for the deliverance of his people from Satan's bondage, and for the pardon of their sins through faith: then the devil loses his power in respect of death also; they are delivered from its sting, its terror, and its consequences; whilst inward peace and hope reconcile them to its stroke, and the whole will terminate in their glorious resurrection to eternal life. Thus Christ "delivered those, who all their life-time had been "subject to bondage through fear of death." Whatever pride, ambition, and desperate passions may sometimes effect, or perpetrate, the fear of death is universal, and in some degree enslaves all mankind; the juster apprehensions men have of God and eternal things, the greater must be their dread of death and its awful consequences, except as faith in Christ deliver them. Many of those who have been enslaved by it, during the former part of their lives, or at least from the time when they began seriously to reflect on the subject, are actually delivered from their terror by the Gospel, and habitually think of dying with composure and satisfaction: many, who do not before rise superior to their terrors, are entirely freed from them at that critical season; and even those believers, who fear death to the last, (as some perhaps do,) will be the more amazed at their deliverance, when, by the stroke, which they dreaded all their life-time, they find themselves perfectly freed from all that they groaned under and hated, and admitted to a felicity exceeding

16 For [d] verily he * took not on *him* the nature of angels; but he took on *him* [e] the seed of Abraham.

17 Wherefore in all things [f] it behooved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be [g] a merciful and faithful High Priest in things *pertaining* to God, [h] to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

18 For in that he himself hath [i] suffered, being tempted, [k] he is able to succour [l] them that are tempted.

d vi. 16. xii 10. Rom. ii. 25 1 Pet i 10.

* Gr. *taketh not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham he taketh hold*

e Gen. xxii. 18. Matt i 1, &c. Rom. iv. 16, &c. Gal. iii. 16. 29.——f *See on*, ii. 14. Phil. ii. 7, 8 —— g iii. 2 5. iv. 15. v. 1, 2. Is. xi. 5.

h Lev. vi. 30. viii. 15. 2 Chr xxix. 24. Ez. xlv. 15. 17. 20 Dan ix. 24. Rom. v. 10. 2 Cor. v. 18—21. Eph. ii. 16. Col. i. 21.

i iv. 15, 16. v. 7—9. Matt. iv. 1—10 xxvi. 37—39. Luke xxii 53.

k vii. 25, 26. John x. 29. Phil iii. 21. 2 Tim. i. 12 Jude 24.——l 1 Cor. x. 13. 2 Cor. xii. 7—10. 2 Pet ii. 9. Rev. iii. 10.

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their largest expectations. (*Note*, 1 *Cor*. xv. 55—58.) *By death.* 'Had not this been added, the apostle might 'have seemed to speak very absurdly: for must God 'become Man, in order to conquer the devil? Assuredly, here was need rather of strength than weakness. 'The apostle therefore declares, that to render this victory the most glorious, it was peculiarly suitable, that 'Satan, the conqueror of man, should be laid prostrate 'by a man; and so, by the very death of a man, he might 'be destroyed, as by his own weapons. The devil is 'said to have the power of death, as from him sin sprang, 'which death followed; and as he daily tempts us to sin, 'that he may draw us with himself into the ruin of eternal death. Understand death as joined with the wrath 'of God, which, without Christ, it must necessarily be; 'nor can any thing be conceived more miserable, than to 'be under the perpetual slavery of this dread and horror.' (*Beza.*)

V. 16—18. The introductory words of this passage are differently interpreted. Our translation explains them of our Lord's assuming, not the nature of angels, but our nature, in order to be our Brother, Surety, and Saviour; and the mention of the seed of Abraham, from whom he descended, favours this interpretation; but the margin, and, indeed, a great majority of commentators, suppose the apostle to mean, that the eternal Son of God, when angels sinned, did not *take hold* of them, to preserve them from final perdition; but he *took hold* of fallen man, to rescue him from his dreadful doom; and this lays the firmer foundation for the subsequent inference. The seed of Abraham, however, on this interpretation, cannot mean *all* the natural descendants of Abraham, nor any of them *exclusively*; but must be understood of Abraham's believing seed, whether Jews or Gentiles; and this, though according to the apostle's manner in other places, (*Rom.* iv. 11—18. *Gal.* iii. 26—29.) is not thought a natural exposition, in his present argument. The difference, indeed, is not great, between the two interpretations. In laying hold of fallen man, and not on fallen angels, he did not assume the nature of the former into personal union with his Deity; but, by a condescension still more inconceivable, he assumed the human nature of the seed of Abraham; and this was worthy of peculiar attention: for it thus appeared that it behooved him, and he *must*, in order to the honourable salvation of those sinners whom he graciously owned as his brethren, be made like them in the same nature, and in all those sinless infirmities to which sin had subjected them. This was needful, in order that he might become their High Priest, making atonement and reconciliation for their sins by his sacrifice of himself, and so lay the foundation for his subsequent intercession for them; and that he might give them the firmest ground of assurance of his compassion, love, and faithfulness, in this endearing and important character. For thus he, who was One with the Father as God, became one with them as Man; and so assured them that he would attend to the interests of his brethren in the most condescending, merciful, and faithful manner, even as he would regard the glory of God the Father, before whom he acted as their High Priest. And by his voluntary humiliation and suffering for them when enemies, he gave the most endearing pledge of his love to them, and taught them, most emphatically, that he would not fail them, when they were brought to trust in him; and when his omnipotent arm could effect the purpose for which he had shed his precious blood. For in that he suffered, being tempted by Satan in the wilderness, and during his last conflicts, (whose unholy suggestions must have tortured his mind, in proportion as he abhorred, and could not be defiled, by them;) in that he endured the severest trials from man's contemptuous malice and cruelty; and in that he bore the wrath of the Father for our sins: he was able to succour such as were tempted or tried, and afflicted by God; being authorized as Mediator to exert omnipotence in supporting, comforting, and rescuing them; and having a sympathizing and most tender love for them; seeing he had passed through the same temptations himself, as far as he could do it, continuing perfectly free from sin. The ends of Christ's humiliation, death, and exaltation, are set forth in this chapter. To "taste death for every "man," to "become the Captain of our salvation," and to "lead us to glory," to "sanctify us," to "destroy death, "and him that had the power of death," to deliver us from his bondage, to become our Hight Priest to "make "reconciliation for our iniquity," having "by himself "purged our sins." (i. 3.) What unutterable blessings are these, flowing to us from "the grace of God!" and what do they imply concerning the natural state of man!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—4.

The excellency, importance, and clearness of the Gospel, and the dignity and grace of the Redeemer, concur in calling on us to "give the more earnest heed to the "thing, which we have heard;" for unless serious recollection, fervent prayer, and reverent attention, with subsequent meditation and practice, prevent, we shall surely let divine truths run out of our minds, as water from a vessel with holes. Alas! how many hearers of this kind are found in all our congregations! and indeed we are all in some measure criminal, and foolish, in this respect. Let us then beg of God to sanctify our memories and hearts, that we may become less forgetful, and more practical, hearers of the word of life. The judgments of

CHAP. III.

The great superiority of Christ above Moses is proved and illustrated, 1—6. *The Hebrews are warned not to copy the example of their unbelieving ancestors, who perished in the wilderness*, 7—19.

God under the new dispensation are chiefly spiritual: but they are on that account the more to be dreaded, and "if "they, who despised Moses' law, died without mercy, "how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation" as Christ hath purchased and revealed? Blessed be God, this salvation is so great, that nothing but our neglect of it, in one way or another, can exclude us from its eternal advantages: so that the trembling penitent, who is ready to think himself too vile to be pardoned, or too polluted to be cleansed, may come to Christ with cheerful confidence, and expect from him the free gift of all that can be needful for him: and even they, who are conscious of having hitherto neglected so great salvation, may hope for the pardon of that atrocious guilt in the same manner; being assured, that "where sin hath abounded, grace shall "much more abound." Yet even partial neglects will not escape rebukes: and they, whose souls are not finally ruined, often weaken their evidence, and bring darkness upon their minds by them. Let us then mind this one thing needful: for, though we cannot sit at the Lord's feet, as they did, to whom he first began to speak the word, yet in duly attending to the writings, which were penned by those who heard the words from his gracious lips, and which have been abundantly attested to us by God himself, we shall be blessed with "that good part which cannot be "taken from us."

V. 5—13.

The glorious God hath done wonderful things for us in creation and providence, for which, alas! we have made the basest returns; but he was mindful of us, and visited us, in the most surprising manner, when he gave his own Son to be made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death in our nature and for our salvation; that, being crowned with glory and honour, and having all power given to him in heaven and earth, he might rescue every man, who believes in him, from all the effects of original and actual sin, and raise him to far higher dignity than what was lost by Adam's transgression. By the grace manifested in the incarnation of the Son of God, and the exaltation of the Son of man, the honour of our nature is eternally secured; and all our concern should be to secure an interest in this salvation. Whatever the proud, carnal, and unbelieving, may imagine or object, the spiritual mind will perceive peculiar glory in the cross of Christ, and be satisfied that it became him, (who in all things maketh the display of his own perfections his chief end,) "in bringing many sons unto glory, to make "the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Wisdom, power, justice, holiness, truth, and love, beyond expression or conception, are displayed by our God, in that union which was voluntarily formed between "him that sanctifieth and them that are sanctified," when "the Word was made flesh, and tabernacled among "us," and when he "whom all angels worship," vouchsafed to become our Brother, and to own and glory in that condescending relation to us sinful worms! And what advantages may we not expect from so powerful and gracious a Friend and Brother?

V. 14—18.

When the divine Saviour saw the children, whom he had undertaken to redeem, partakers of flesh and blood, he also was pleased to partake of the same; though he knew that he must not only dwell in their nature, but bear their curse, pay their ransom, and, through death, deliver them from the old serpent, by whom sin and death entered into the world, to make havoc of the human race. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but "he took upon him the seed of Abraham," that we might be made the children of Abraham, and the friends of God through him! Let then sinners, who dread death, and use a variety of methods to get the better of their terrors, no longer attempt to outbrave or smother them; let them not grow outrageous or licentious through despair, nor let them expect help from the world or human inventions; but let them seek pardon, peace, grace, and lively hope of heaven, by faith in him who died and rose again; that, being rescued from Satan's power, they may be made superior to the fear of death, which hath always hitherto held them in bondage. Let the trembling believer frequently meditate on the love of Christ, and on his cross, his sepulchre, his resurrection, and his glory; and thus, in simple dependence and obedience, let him wait for more complete deliverance from the fear of death, and from that last enemy himself, in the Lord's appointed time. Let us all remember, that so deep was our ruin, and so heinous our guilt, that it behooved Jesus to become "in all things like unto us, that he might be our faith-"ful and merciful High Priest, in things pertaining to "God, to make reconciliation for the sins of his people;" that we may come to the Father only in his name, and pleading his atonement and intercession, not in the least doubting of his faithfulness and mercy towards all who come to God by him: and let the afflicted and tempted, instead of yielding to despondency, or giving place to the devil, (as if their harassing temptations rendered it improper for them to come to the Lord with their prayers,) remember, that the Saviour suffered being tempted, on purpose that he might be able to succour them that are tempted; that he hath infinite power and compassion; and that he only waits to be called in to their help, by fervent persevering prayer. May we then hear him declare to us the name of God, and teach us to celebrate his praises; and may we learn to pass through all trials and temptations, trusting in the Lord and staying ourselves upon our God; that we may at length be found among those, whom the incarnate Saviour will present before the Father's throne, saying, "Behold, I and the children whom thou "hast given me!"

WHEREFORE, [a] holy brethren, [b] partakers of the heavenly calling, [c] consider [d] the Apostle [e] and High-priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

2 Who was [f] faithful to him that [*] appointed him, [g] as also Moses *was faithful* in [h] all his house.

3 For [i] this *man* was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he [k] who hath builded the house, hath more honour than the house.

a Col. i. 22. iii. 12. 1 Thes v 27. 2 Tim. i. 9 1 Pet. ii. 9 iii. 5. 2 Pet i. 3–10. Rev xviii 20 b 14. Rom. xi. 17 xv. 27. 1 Cor. ix. 23. x. 17 2 Cor i. 7 Eph. iii 6 Col. i. 12 1 Tim. vi. 2. 1 Pet v. 1. 2 Pet i. 4. 1 John i 3. c Rom. i. 6, 7. viii. 28–30. ix. 24 Eph iv 4 Phil. iii. 14. 1 Thes. ii. 14 2 Thes. ii. 14. 1 Tim vi 12. 1 Pet v. 10 2 Pet. i. 10. Jude 1. Rev. xvii. 14.——d Is i 3. v. 12 xli. 20. Ez. xii. 3. xviii 28 Hag. i. 5 ii. 15. John xx. 21. Rom. xv. 28.——e ii. 17 iv. 14, 15. v. 1–10 vi. 20. vii 26 viii 1–3. ix. 11 x. 21.——f ii. 17. John vi. 38–40. viii 29. xv. 10. xvii. 4.——* Gr. *made.* 1 Sam. xii. 6.——g 5. Num. xii. 7.——h 6. Eph. ii. 22. 1 Tim iii. 15.——i 5–10. i. 2–4. ii. 9 Col. i. 18.——k Zech. iv 9. vi. 12, 13. Matt. xvi. 18 1 Cor. iii. 9 1 Pet ii 5–7

4 For every house is builded by some *man;* [l] but he that built all things *is* God.

5 And Moses verily *was* [m] faithful in all his house [n] as a servant, [o] for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

6 But Christ [p] as a Son over his own house; [q] whose house are we, [r] if we hold fast the confidence, and the [s] rejoicing of the hope, firm unto the end.

l See on, 3. i. 2. Eph. ii. 10. iii. 9. m 2. Num. xii. 7. Matt xxiv. 45. xxv. 21 Luke xvi. 10. 1 Cor. iv. 2. 1 Tim. i. 12 n Ex xiv. 31. Deut. xxxiv. 5. Josh. i. 2, 7. 15. viii. 31. Neh. ix. 14. Ps. cv. 26. o Deut. xviii 15. 18. Luke xxiv. 27 44. John v. 39 46, 47. Acts iii 22, 23. vii. 37 xxviii. 23. Rom. iii. 21. Heb viii. 5. ix. 8 19–24. 1 Pet. i. 10–12.——p i. 2 iv. 14. Ps. ii. 6, 7. Is. ix. 6, 7. John iii. 35, 36. Rev. ii 18——q 2, 3 Matt xvi. 18. 1 Cor iii. 16. vi. 19 2 Cor vi. 16 Eph. ii 21, 22. 1 Tim. iii 15. 1 Pet. ii. 5.——r 14. iv. 11. vi. 11 x. 23 35. Matt. x 22. xxiv. 13. Gal vi. 9. Col. i 23. Rev ii. 25. iii. 11.——s Rom v. 2 xii. 12. xv. 13. 1 Thes. v. 16. 2 Thes. ii. 16. 1 Pet. i. 3–6. 8.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1—6. From what had been advanced concerning the superiority of the Messiah to the angels, and his dignity, as the incarnate Son of God, the apostle took occasion to call the attention of the Hebrews to the offices which he performed for the benefit of his Church. He addressed them as "holy brethren," either as belonging to that nation which was relatively holy, or rather as professors of Christianity, and "partakers of the heavenly "calling," by which the Lord from heaven called them to leave the vain pursuit of earthly things, and to seek those things which are above. He exhorted them to consider and attend impartially and seriously to his words respecting Jesus the Messiah, as the apostle and the High Priest of their profession. He had been sent by the Father as his Apostle, even as he had sent others to be apostles or messengers from him to mankind; (*John* xx. 21.) In this respect, he more especially superseded Moses, in his prophetical office, as the law-giver of Israel, as in his high priesthood he superseded Aaron and his posterity. Of this latter office the sacred writer meant afterwards to discourse more fully; he therefore proceeded to show how superior Christ was to Moses, as it might be proved from the prophecies of his being the Son of God. He had been faithful to the Father who had appointed him to this office, and had revealed to mankind the character, truth, and will of God in the most perfect manner. Indeed, Moses had been faithful to his trust, in delivering to Israel all the commandments and statutes which God gave to him, and in ruling over the Church, which might be called his house, or the holy habitation of JEHOVAH. (*Num.* xii. 7.) Yet Christ must be considered as immensely superior to Moses; "for he was counted worthy," by the Father, of more glory and honour than Moses could be entitled to, even as the builder of a house is more honourable than the building, or any part of it. Thus Moses had been only a part of the house of God, or a member of his household; but Christ had created him and his whole nation; he had formed them into a Church, had arranged every thing, with supreme authority, respecting their civil and religious constitution, and given all the believers among them spiritual life, grace, wisdom, and ability: so that he was as God, the Former, Owner, and Head of the Church, even before his incarnation, though in a different manner than afterwards. For as every house is contrived, erected, furnished, and prepared for a habitation by some person, whose skill and intelligence are visible in it, so He, who built all things as Creator, and arranged all things in the church of Israel, could be no other than God himself: yet this honour the Messiah possessed, and this glorious person, at length, appeared in human nature, as the Apostle or Prophet of the Father, to introduce a new dispensation, and terminate the old one. In still plainer language, Moses had been faithful, as a servant, in the house of the Lord, to introduce the legal dispensation, which prefigured and bore witness to those things that were to be more clearly revealed in future times: but Christ was faithful, as a Son placed in authority over his own house: for the church belonged to him equally as unto the Father, though he voluntarily acted as the Prophet of the Father to mankind. This spiritual house consisted of those who had been given to him and redeemed by him, and who were called by his grace, and made "an habitation of God through the Spirit;" so that the apostle and the Hebrews professing the Gospel, whom he immediately addressed, were a part of that sacred temple in which God would delight to dwell, to manifest his presence, and to communicate his blessings for ever, if they held fast their confidence in Christ, their hope of salvation by him, and their joy and glorying in him, and were firm and steadfast in dependence on him, and obedience to him, amidst the various temptations and persecutions to which this would expose them, as this perseverance would be the proper evidence of their sincerity. *Faithful.* Faithfulness to God who appoints, and tenderness to man by whom he is appointed, are the two great qualifications laid down as requisite in the High Priest, here and elsewhere. (ii. 17. iv. 15. v. 2—8.) He was made perfect, as to the latter, by his assumption of our nature and his sufferings in it. His Deity, as One with the Father, secured the former. He faithfully maintained the honour and rights of God, in every part of his salvation; he was faithful in the whole revelation which he made to us of God and his will, and in performing whatever he was sent into the world to accomplish, for rendering the salvation of man consistent with the honour of God. 'The government of the Christian Church is 'entirely committed to the Lord Jesus, and he, as su'preme Head and Lord of all, governs both it, and all 'things in earth and heaven, for the good of it; and

7 ¶ Wherefore, ([t] as the Holy Ghost saith, [u] To-day if ye will [x] hear his voice,

8 [y] Harden not your hearts, [z] as in the provocation, in the day of [a] temptation, in the wilderness:

9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, [b] and saw my works [c] forty years.

10 Wherefore, [d] I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always [e] err in *their* heart, and [f] they have not known my ways.

11 So [g] I sware in my wrath, * They shall not enter into [h] my rest.)

12 [i] Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you [k] an evil heart of unbelief, [l] in departing from [m] the living God.

13 But [n] exhort one another [o] daily, while it is called To-day; lest any of you be hardened through [p] the deceitfulness of sin.

t ix. 8. 2 Sam. xxiii. 2. Matt. xxii. 43. Mark xii 36. Acts i. 16. xxviii. 25. 2 Pet. i 21.
u 13. 15. iv. 7. Ps xcv. 7—11. Prov. xxvii. 1. Ec. ix. 10. Is. lv 6. 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2. Jam. iv. 13—15.
x Ps lxxxi. 11. Is. lv. 3. Matt. xvii. 5. John v. 25. x. 3. 16 27. Rev. iii 20.
y 12. 13. Ex. viii. 15 1 Sam. vi. 6. 2 Kings xvii. 14. 2 Chr. xxx. 8. xxxvi. 13. Neh. ix. 16. Job ix. 4. Prov. xxviii. 14. xxix 1. Jer. vii. 26. Ez. iii. 7—9. Dan. v 20. Zech. vii. 11. 12. xiii. 15. Acts xix. 9. Rom. ii. 5, 6.——z Num xiv. 11. 22 23. Deut. ix. 22, 33. Ps. lxxviii. 56.——a Ex. xvii. 7. Deut. vi 16. Ps. lxxviii 18. cvi. 14 1 Cor. x. 9.——b Ex. xix. 4 xx. 22. Deut. iv. 3 9 xi. 7 xxix 2. Josh. xxiii. 3. xxiv. 7 Luke vii. 22.——c Num. xiv. 33. Deut. viii. 2. 4 Josh. v. 6 Am. ii 10. Acts vii. 36. xiii. 18.——d Gen. vi. 6. Judg. x. 16. Ps. lxxviii. 40. Is. lxiii. 10 Mark iii. 5. Eph. iv. 30.
e 12. Ps. lxxxiii. 8. Is xxviii. 7 Hos. iv. 12. John iii. 19, 20. viii. 45. Rom. i 28. 2 Thes. ii 10—12
f Ps. lxvii. 2. xcv. 10. cxlvii. 20. Jer. iv. 22. Rom. iii. 17.
g 18, 19 iv. 3. Num. xiv. 20—23. 25. 27—30. 35 xxxii. 10—13. Deut. i. 34, 35. ii 14
* Gr *If they shall enter.*
h *See on*, iv. 9.
i ii. 1—3. xii. 15. Matt. xxiv. 4. Mark xiii. 9. 23. 33. Luke xxi. 8. Rom xi. 21. 1 Cor. x. 12.——k *See on*, 10. Gen. viii 21 Jer. iii. 17. vii. 24. xi. 8. xvi 12. xvii. 9. xviii. 12. Mark vii 21, 22——l x 38. xii. 25. Job xxi. 14. xxii. 17 Ps. xviii. 21. Prov. i. 32. Is lix. 13. Jer xvii. 5. Hos. i. 2.——m *See on*. 1 Thes. i. 9.——n x 24 25. Acts xi. 23. 1 Thes ii. 11. iv. 18. v. 11. 2 Tim. iv. 2.——o *See on*, 7.——p Prov. xxviii. 26. Is xliv. 20. Ob. 3 Rom. vii. 11. Eph iv. 22. Jam. i. 14.

'therefore, if he be not truly God, God doth not now 'govern the world, but hath given up the administration 'of it to a creature.' (*Whitby.*) The words translated, "made all things," may rather relate to the formation of the Church, than to the creation of the world; yet there can be no reasonable doubt, but that the apostle purposely intimated, that he who formed the Church also created the world; and certainly he asserted that Christ, whether as Former and Ruler of the Church, or Creator of all things, was God.

V. 7—13. This address was directed to those professed Christians who were in danger of apostatizing, or who did not seem in earnest in their religion; but it was peculiarly suited to excite the attention of such Jews also as might read it. The example of their unbelieving progenitors, and the words of their own Scriptures respecting them, were adduced with great propriety on this occasion. (*Notes, Ps.* xcv.) The warning given by the Holy Spirit in the days of David, with reference to more ancient events, was equally applicable to the Jews in the days of the apostle. On the present day, which might terminate their lives, or the season of the Lord's long-suffering, or deprive them of the means of grace, they were urgently entreated to attend to, and obey, the voice of God, if they ever meant to obtain his favour and escape his wrath; and not obstinately to harden their hearts, and stupify their consciences in wilful sin, by carnal prejudices and pleasures. This their fathers had done, in that provocation of Jehovah which had taken place in the wilderness; when, after all the demonstrations of his power and goodness to them, they ungratefully wearied out his patience by their aggravated rebellions. That season was peculiarly "the "day of temptation;" for their fathers acted as if they meant to try how much provocation God would bear with, before he took vengeance upon them. (*Note, Ex.* xvii. 2.) Wherefore he was at length so angered and grieved, by their perverse returns for his manifold favours, that he would no longer bear with that generation of Israel; for he said of them, that their wicked hearts always led them to depart from him; as they had never approved and chosen his holy ways, but had always preferred their own evil devices; he therefore irrevocably determined, and confirmed it by an oath, that they should never enter into the rest of Canaan, the type of heavenly felicity. (*Notes, Num.* xiii. xiv.) It therefore was incumbent upon the Hebrews to look well to themselves, lest there should be in any of them the same evil or wicked heart, the same proud, carnal, rebellious, and ungrateful temper, whence the unbelief of their ancestors had originated; and lest this should be manifested by their apostatizing from the living God: either in rejecting Christianity, or in afterwards renouncing it; for in both cases they would be deemed apostates from the living God, who now spoke to them by his beloved Son, and in no other way; and they would be punished accordingly. To prevent this, they ought also, day after day, to exhort one another to embrace and adhere to the Gospel of Christ; while the day of their personal and national probation continued; as they were shortly to be cast off from being the people of God; and that generation was about to be visited in a far more tremendous manner than their fathers had been in the wilderness. This was needful to every one, "lest any of "them should be hardened through the deceitfulness of "sin;" for their sinful propensities tended to deceive them into a persuasion, that satisfaction and impunity might be found in the world and in disobedience; and that the self-denial and suffering, connected with Christianity, were unnecessary and intolerable; and thus to delude them into negligence, procrastination, and sinful indulgence; which, producing frequent violations of the light of their own consciences, would gradually render them callous; and God might thus be provoked to give them up to fatal delusions or final obduracy. 'Seeing Moses, the servant, 'could not be despised with impunity, let them consider 'what punishment they must endure, if they despised the 'Son of God, to whom Moses himself invites them.' (*Beza.*) The apostle's reasoning, like that of Stephen, (*Notes, Acts* vii.) was suited to show, that the fathers of the Jewish nation had, in every age, been prone to resist the Holy Spirit, and those who spake by him. This had excluded the generation which came out of Egypt from Canaan, in the days of Moses: David, many ages after, was inspired, by the Holy Spirit, to warn the Israelites against imitating their unbelieving progenitors, and forfeiting spiritual blessings; and the writer of the epistle warns his contemporaries, not to exclude themselves from heaven, in the same manner as their ancestors were excluded from Canaan. In this view, there is a vast propriety in the warning and exhortation.

14 For [q] we are made partakers of Christ, [r] if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.

15 While it is said, [s] To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

16 For [t] some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit [u] not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

q 1. vi. 4. xii 10. Rom. xi. 17. 1 Cor i 30. ix. 23 x 17 Eph. iii. 6 1 Tim. vi. 2. 1 Pet. iv. 13. v. 1. 1 John i 3.
r *See on*, r. 6. vi. 11.
s *See on*, 7, 8. x. 38, 39
t *See on*. 9, 10 Num. xiv. 11. xxvi. 65 Ps. lxxviii 17.
u Num xiv 24. 30 38. Deut. i 36 38. Josh xiv. 7–11. Rom xi 4. 5

17 But [x] with whom was he grieved forty years? [y] *was it* not with them that had sinned, [z] whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?

18 And [a] to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, [b] but to them that believed not?

19 So we see that [c] they could not enter in because of unbelief.

x *See on*, 10.
y Num. xxvi. 64, 65. 1 Cor. x. 1–13.
z Num. xiv. 29. 32, 33. Deut. ii. 15, 16. Jer. ix. 22.
a *See on*, 11.
b Num. xiv. 11. xx. 12. Deut i. 26–32. ix. 23. Ps. cvi. 24–26.
c iv. 1, 2 Mark xvi. 16 John iii. 18. 36 2 Thes. ii. 12. 1 John v. 10. Jude 5.

V. 14—19. They, who professed the Gospel, were made partakers of Christ, and of all the blessings of his kingdom and salvation, provided they maintained the beginning of their *confidence*, (or their *subsistence* in him by faith) steadfast unto the end; and thus showed that they really were what they appeared to be. Considering, therefore, the immense advantages of perseverance, and the tremendous consequences of apostacy, they should consider the words of the Holy Spirit as if addressed to themselves. For though the whole nation of Israel had been brought out of Egypt, to hear the will of God from Moses, yet some of them, (how vast a proportion need not be said,) did provoke God to exclude them from Canaan. There were, however, some exceptions even in that devoted generation, as Joshua and Caleb, and some of the Levites, and perhaps of the women; (*Note, Num.* xiv. 27—30;) and thus, in the apostle's time, a remnant of Jews believed in Christ, whilst the bulk of the nation were about to perish in unbelief. Yet God had not failed of performing his promises, when he excluded that generation from Canaan; neither was it inconsistent with his justice; for with whom was he grieved, but with those obstinate transgressors, who always rebelled against him? He therefore cut them off, and their dead bodies lay by heaps in the wilderness; whilst his promises were performed to the remnant of believers, and to the children of the rebels, as they would also be in the present case. And in that particular instance, when he sware in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest, the tremendous sentence included none but the unbelievers; so that they could not enter into Caaaan because of their unbelief; nor could the Hebrews then enter into heaven, unless they believed in Jesus Christ. The original word for "believed "not," (18,) is often rendered "were disobedient," (*Rom.* x. 21. xv. 31. *Heb.* xi. 31. *Marg.* 1 *Pet.* ii. 7, 8. iii. 20;) for unbelief itself is an act of disobedience, inseparably connected with disobedience in other things, and generally the source of it. *Confidence*, (14.) (*Marg. Ref. Note, Heb.* xi. 1.) *While it is said*, &c. (15.) 'This 'sentence is noble; from which we learn, that the words 'of the prophets did not pertain to that one time; but that 'God, even at this day, invites us to himself, by setting 'the writings of the prophets before us.' (*Beza.*) This is directly opposite to the conduct of many moderns, who labour strenuously to prove, that the language of the sacred writers in many places was intended for certain descriptions of persons in their own time, and is but little, if at all, applicable to us, who are placed in very different circumstances. But, in reality, it is of comparatively small importance to us, as to religion, what the meaning of any passage in Scripture may be, if we are not concerned in it, and can, in our situation, derive no instruction, encouragement, or warning from it.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

All who hear and profess the Gospel should be "holy "brethren," and all who are "partakers of the heavenly "calling" will be sanctified, and united in love, according to their measure of faith. This calling is from heaven, and brings men thither; yet we all need to be excited to consider more frequently the condescending Apostle and compassionate High Priest of our profession, Jesus Christ: and every renewed contemplation of his Person and his salvation, will suggest new instructions, or new motives to love, confidence, and obedience. The stewards and servants of God are required to be faithful in all things intrusted to them, and many have been approved as such by their common Lord. But the eternal Son of God is counted worthy of more honour, than any, or all of his servants; they are only a part of the spiritual house, of which he is the great Builder, Proprietor, and Ruler; and his new creation of the Church proclaims his eternal power and Godhead, even as do his formation and upholding of the universe. As therefore they are most absurd, who allow "every house to be builded of some man," and yet atheistically ascribe the glorious creation around them to chance or necessity; so they reason little, if at all, better, who allow Christ to be the Author of life, holiness, wisdom, strength, and salvation, to the multitudes of his people, and yet deny his real Deity. All prophets and apostles acted as servants in the house of another, to bear testimony to Christ and to honour him; but he appeared to direct and govern all things with unlimited sovereignty, as a Son over his own house. May we then belong to this spiritual building, and manifest that we do so, by holding fast our confidence, and the rejoicing of our hope in Christ, steadfast through all trials even to the end!

V. 7—19.

Alas! what numbers of professed Christians are as far from the power of true religion, as the Israelites were in the days of Moses, or the Jews in those of St. Paul! The Holy Ghost therefore still says to them, 'To-day if ye 'will hear the voice of God, and submit to his righteous- 'ness and authority; do not harden your hearts.' While sinners are procrastinating, God may be about to say, "This night shall your souls be required of you:" how

CHAP. IV.

An admonition to humble fear, and against unbelief, 1, 2. *The certainty and excellency of the heavenly rest, as typified by that of the sabbath, and of Canaan*, 3—11. *The energy of the word of God, the omniscience of our Judge, and the compassion of our great High Priest, used as motives to steadfastness and earnestness in coming to the throne of grace*, 12—16.

LET [a] us therefore fear, lest, [b] a promise being left *us* of entering into [c] his rest, [d] any of you should seem to come short of it.

2 For [e] unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but [*] the word preached [f] did not profit them, [†] not being [g] mixed with faith in them that heard *it.*

3 For [h] we which have believed do enter into rest; as he said, [i] As I have sworn in my wrath, If they shall enter into my rest: although [k] the works were finished [l] from the foundation of the world.

4 For he spake [m] in a certain place of the seventh *day* on this wise, And [n] God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

5 And in this *place* again, [o] If they shall enter into my rest.

6 Seeing therefore [p] it remaineth that

a 11. ii. 1–3. xii. 15. 25. xiii 7. Prov. xiv. 16 xxviii 14. Jer. xxxii. 40. Rom. xi. 20 1 Cor. x. 12.
b 9. Num. xiv. 34. 1 Sam ii. 30. Rom iii. 3, 4. 2 Tim ii 13
c 3–5 *See on*, iii. 11
d Matt vii. 21–23. 26, 27. xxiv. 48–51. xxv. 1–3. Luke xii 45. 46 xiii. 25—30. Rom iii. 23. 1 Cor ix. 26, 27
e Acts iii. 26 xiii. 46. Gal iii. 8 iv. 13. 1 Pet i. 12.

* Gr *the word of hearing* Rom. x. 16, 17. *Marg.*
f Rom. ii 25. 1 Cor xiii 3. 1 Tim iv. 8.
† Or, *because they were not united by faith to.*
g 6. iii. 12. 18, 19. xi. 6 1 Thes. i. 5. ii 13. 2 Thes. ii. 12, 13 Jam. i. 21.
h 6. 10, 11. iii. 14 Is. xxviii. 12 Jer. vi 16. Matt xi. 28, 29. Rom. v 1, 2.
i *See on*, iii. 11. Ps xcv. 11.
k Gen. i. 31. Ex xx. 11.
l ix. 26. Matt. xiii 35. Eph. i. 4. 1 Pet. i 20
m *See on*, ii 6
n Gen ii 1, 2 Ex. xxxi 17
o 3 iii. 11.
p 9 1 Cor. vii. 29.

infatuated then must they be to close their eyes and harden their hearts against conviction, to run into dissipation and worldly lusts, and to yield to sloth and make delays in such a perilous situation! Thus, like the ancient rebels in Israel, they provoke and tempt God, till, being grieved by their obstinacy, and their carnal enmity to him and his ways, he swears in his wrath that they shall never enter into his rest. Let then such triflers and loiterers on the brink of the bottomless pit look well to themselves, for evil is before them. Let them remember that their unbelief springs from the wickedness of their hearts; for they must be conscious that their excuses, their delays, and even their objections to doctrines and preachers, arise from covetousness, or sensuality; from pride, and an aversion to the life of faith and holiness. We all, however, have need to exhort one another daily, or whilst the day of life and grace continue, lest sin should first deceive, and then harden us, till negligences and offences in lighter things terminate in more daring crimes or open apostacy. The happiness of being partakers of Christ, as our complete salvation and eternal portion, and the fear of God's wrath and eternal misery, combine to put us upon our guard against hypocrisy and apostacy, and to excite us to persevere in the life of obedient faith. Let us then beware of trusting to outward privileges or profession, remembering that unbelief and disobedience will exclude men from God's promised rest, and that nothing else can do it; and let us pray to be numbered with that remnant of believers who will enter heaven, when all others shall be refused admission because of their unbelief.

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1, 2. The awful justice of JEHOVAH towards his ancient people, when they believed not, called aloud on their descendants "to fear," with a humble and jealous distrust of their own hearts, a diligent self-examining attention to every means of grace, and a careful watchfulness against temptation, lest they should fall under a still more terrible condemnation. A promise indeed of "entering into rest," under the Messiah and in heaven, had been left them in the scriptures, as a legacy from their believing progenitors, for whose sake they had been thus favoured; and they were called on by the preaching of the Gospel to partake of that promised benefit; but it behooved them to fear, lest any of them should *be seen* to come short of it, and so be excluded from heaven, as their fathers had been from Canaan; or even lest they should *seem* to themselves, or to others, to be in danger of doing this, either during their lives, or when death approached; and this must be the case, if they rejected or renounced the Gospel, and would probably be so, if they grew remiss or wavering in their profession of it. For the glad tidings of entering into this rest had been preached to the Hebrews, even as they had more obscurely been declared to their fathers; whose unbelief and consequent disobedience had excluded them from Canaan, and from that better rest of heaven typified by it. For the *word of hearing* had not profited them, because "not "being mixed with faith," or joined by the faith of the hearers; as these were destitute of faith, by which they might receive the word into their hearts, for the appropriation of the benefit, and to render it a principle of obedience. And, in like manner, the clearer revelation of the Gospel would be unprofitable to the Hebrews, unless they had faith in it, and so received it in a dependent and obedient manner. Of all that vast multitude which fell in the wilderness, not one came short of Canaan, by the power of any enemy, or because of his past sins, or present weakness; or for any other cause, but the want of true faith; and none that hear the Gospel are excluded from heaven, on any account whatever, except through unbelief. 'He proves, that the promise to give Abra'ham and his Seed the land of Canaan, for an everlasting 'possession, was really a promise to give believers of all 'nations the everlasting possession of the heavenly country, 'of which Canaan was the emblem; and that the oath 'which excluded the rebellious Israelites in the wilder'ness from Canaan, likewise excluded from the heavenly 'country all that continue in their sins. So that, in this 'ancient oracle, a future state, with its rewards and 'punishments, was actually made known to the Jews.' (*Macknight.*)

[q] some must enter therein, and [r] they to whom * it was first preached [s] entered not in because of unbelief:

7 (Again, he limiteth a certain day, [t] saying in David, [u] To-day, [x] after so long a time; as it is said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

8 For if † Jesus [y] had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.

9 There [z] remaineth therefore, ‡ a rest to [a] the people of God.

10 For [b] he that is entered into his rest, he also [c] hath ceased from his own works, [d] as God *did* from his.)

11 [e] Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, [f] lest any man fall after the same example of § unbelief.

q Num. xiv. 12. 31 Is. lxv. 15. Matt xxi. 43. xxii. 9, 10. Luke xiv. 21—24. Acts xiii 46, 47 xxviii 28

r 2 Gal. iii. 8

* Or, *the Gospel was first*, &c

s *See on*, iii. 18. 19.

t iii 7, 8 2 Sam xxiii 1, 2. Matt xxii. 43. Mark xii. 36. Luke xx. 42. Acts ii. 29—31. xxviii. 25 —— u iii. 7. 15 Ps. xcv. 7 —— x 1 Kings vi 1. Acts xiii. 20—23.—— † That is *Joshua. See on*, Acts vii 45.—— y xi. 13—15. Deut. xii. 9 xxv 19. Josh. i. 15. xxii 4 xxiii. 1. Ps. lxxviii 54. cv. 44.

z 1. 3. iii. 11. Is. xi. 10 lvii 2. lx. 19, 20. Rev. vii. 14—17. xxi. 4.

‡ Or. *keeping of a sabbath*

a xi 25 Ps xlvii. 9. Matt. i. 21. Tit. ii 14. 1 Pet. ii. 10

b i 3. x. 12 Rev. xiv 13

c John xix 30. 1 Pet. iv. 1, 2.

d *See on*, 3, 4.

e 1 vi 11. Matt. vii. 13 xi 12. 28 — 30. Luke xiii 24. xvi. 16. John vi. 27. Phil ii. 12. 2 Pet. i. 10, 11.—— f *See on*, iii 12. 18. 19 —— § Or, *disobedience*. Acts xxvi. 19. Rom xi. 30—32. Eph ii. 2 v. 6. Col. iii. 6. Tit i. 16 iii 3 *Gr.*

V. 3—11. The apostle laid it down as a principle, that they who believed, and they only, entered into that rest which was especially intended: they had the title to that inheritance, and earnests of it, in peace with and confidence in God, delight in his love and service, hope and joy through the power of the Holy Spirit, and a full persuasion that happiness could only be found in the favour and salvation of the Lord Jesus. It was evident that more was meant than the rest of Canaan, in the scriptures referred to, as God had called it *his* rest, with allusion to the appointment of the sabbath, though the works of creation from which he ceased, and in which he rested with infinite satisfaction, as being "very good," had been finished from the foundation of the world; above two thousand five hundred years before he spake thus of the unbelieving Israelites; for it was thus written in a passage of scripture, well known to the Hebrews, concerning the original institution of the sabbath, (*Note*, *Gen.* ii. 1, 2.) And yet he spake so long after, that they "should not "enter his rest," which implied that the rest of Israel in Canaan would be a type of a more spiritual and sacred rest, satisfaction, and felicity, in him and his glory, (in some degree resembling his complacency in his own perfect work of creation,) which would be conferred on his believing people. The exclusion of the generation from Canaan, to whom that rest was first preached or proposed, implied that it remained for some others to enter in, which their posterity accordingly did; and the language denoted, that while, through unbelief, numbers of them came short of the better rest of heaven, yet it was purposed that some should enter in by faith. In confirmation of which, another day was limited by the Holy Spirit in the prophet David, many ages afterwards, during which believers would enter into rest, but after which unbelievers would be irrevocably excluded. Now, as this was addressed to those who were actually in possession of the promised land, and at the height of their prosperity as a nation, it evidently related to another and better rest than that of Canaan, from which unbelief would exclude even the inhabitants of that good land. For if Jesus, (or Joshua, as it would have been better rendered, to prevent mistake and ambiguity,) had given them all the rest intended for believers, God would not so long after have spoken "of another day." Joshua had indeed given Israel rest from the fatigues and wanderings of the desert, and from the hardships and perils of war, by their settlement in Canaan, yet there evidently remained for the true people of God another and better rest, even the keeping of a perpetual and most blessed sabbath; for the word is changed to express the idea the more strongly. This was reserved for them in heaven, where they have done with sin, temptation, pain, conflict, fear, death, labour, and disappointment, and enjoy uninterrupted, unalloyed, ineffable, and eternal delight, in God and his holy worship and service. This point the apostle argued from the Old Testament so carefully, because the Sadducees entirely denied that any better recompense than temporal prosperity was to be expected, and the Jews in general were prone to overlook the spiritual blessings proposed to them in the promises made to their fathers, and to rest wholly in the temporal sanctions of the national covenant made with them at mount Sinai. (*Notes*, *Ex.* xix. 1—15.) He therefore added, that he, who had entered into his rest, had ceased from his own works, in which he had previously been occupied, even as God ceased from creating when he rested on the sabbath-day. Thus Jesus had finished his work on earth, and had entered into his rest in heaven, as the Fore-runner of his people; thus the souls of the righteous have ceased from their self-denying labours, and are enjoying their gracious recompense: and thus the believer, when brought to rest in the mercy and love of God, through Jesus Christ, ceases from all his allowed works of sin and folly, as well as from his vain endeavours to establish his own righteousness, or to effect his own happiness. As such blessings therefore were surely attainable by those who diligently sought them; and as the promised rest would so abundantly repay their previous hardships and conflicts: it behooved them to labour in the use of all appointed means, and in the persevering attendance on every duty, to enter into this rest, and to obtain the assurance and earnest of it; fearing, lest any of them should fall under condemnation, after the same example of unbelief, by which their ancestors had been excluded from Canaan. The apostle's reasoning, from the Old Testament, concerning another *rest*, entirely distinct from the rest in Canaan; even "the keeping of a sabbath re- "served for the people of God," which unbelievers even in Canaan came short of, is as conclusive against all those moderns, who labour to prove, that the doctrine of a future state of righteous retribution was no part of the religion of Israel; as against the ancient Sadducees. The proof of this doctrine, from comparing two passages in the books of Moses, with one in the Psalms, is as clear and conclusive, as our Lord's proof of the resurrection by what JEHOVAH said to Moses from the bush; and, probably, the apostle knew the Pharisees in general would have allowed, that all who rejected it, "erred, not knowing the scrip- "tures."

12 For [g] the word of God [h] *is* quick, and powerful, and [i] sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, [k] and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

13 Neither [l] is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* [m] naked, and opened unto the eyes of him [n] with whom we have to do.

14 Seeing then that we have [o] a great High Priest, [p] that is passed into the heavens, [q] Jesus the Son of God, [r] let us hold fast *our* profession.

15 For [s] we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points [t] tempted like as *we are*, [u] *yet* without sin.

16 Let us therefore [x] come boldly unto [y] the throne of grace, that we may [z] obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

g xiii. 7 Luke viii. 11. Acts iv. 31. 2 Cor. ii. 17. iv 2. Rev. xx. 4.

h Ps. cx. 2 cxix. 130. Ec. xii 11 Is lv. 11. Jer. xxiii. 29. Rom. i. 16. 1 Cor. i. 24 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. 1 Thes. ii. 13 Jam i. 18. 1 Pet. i 23. *Gr.* John vi. 51. 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5.

i Ps. xlv 3 cxlix 6. Prov. v 4 Is. xi. 4 xlix. 2. Acts ii. 37. v. 33. Eph. vi. 17. Rev. i. 16. xix. 15. 21.

k 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25. Eph. v. 13.——l 1 Sam. xvi 7. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9 2 Chr. vi. 30 Ps. vii 9 xxxiii. 14. 15 xliv. 21. cxxxix. 11, 12. Prov xv 3. 11. Jer. xvii. 10 xxiii. 24. John ii. 24, 25. xxi. 17. 1 Cor. iv 5. Rev. ii. 23 ——m Job xxvi 6. xxxiv 21. xxxviii. 17 n Ec. xii. 14. Matt vii. 21, 22. xxv. 31, 32. John v. 22—29. Acts xvii. 31. Rom. ii. 16 xiv. 9—12. 2 Cor v. 10. Rev. xx 11—15.——o *See on*, ii. 17. iii. 1. v. 5, 6.

p i 3. vi. 20 vii 25, 26 viii 1. ix. 12. 24. x. 12. xii. 2. Mark xvi. 19. Luke xxiv. 51. Acts i 11. iii 21. Rom viii. 34.

q *See on*, i. 2. 8. Mark i. 1.

r *See on*, ii. 1. iii. 6 14.

s v 12. Ex. xxiii. 9. Is. liii. 4, 5. Matt. viii. 16, 17 xii 20. Phil. ii. 7, 8.

t *See on*, ii. 17, 18. Luke iv. 2. xxii. 28.

u vii. 26. Is. liii. 9. John viii. 46. 2 Cor. v. 21. 1 Pet. ii. 22. 1 John iii. 5.

x x. 19—23 xiii 6. Rom. viii. 15—17 Eph ii. 18. iii. 12 ——y ix 5. Ex. xxv 17—22. Lev. xvi 2 1 Chr. xxviii. 11.——z Is. xxvii. 11. lv. 6, 7. Matt vii. 7—11. 2 Cor xii. 8—10. Phil. iv. 6, 7. 1 Pet. ii. .0.

V. 12, 13. It hath been greatly controverted whether the holy scriptures, or the personal Word of God, be meant in these verses; but St. Paul never calls our Lord by this title, and it appears to me that the apostle meant the written word, and that he gradually passed from the word spoken, to him who spake it. The Hebrews needed not be surprised to find such deep and interesting truths couched under the typical events of their history, or contained in other parts of their scriptures, for they were "the word of God." This was no lifeless, feeble, or formal instruction, like the traditions and glosses of the scribes, but it was a living, active, energetic word, suited to be the instrument of the Holy Spirit in quickening those that were dead in sin, and in awakening, convincing, and alarming the most careless and insensible of mankind. It was even sharper than any two-edged sword, which would cut each way; for it would pierce the heart and conscience like the irresistible lightning, forcing convictions and alarms upon the most haughty and obstinate; showing men their past and present sins in all their odiousness and aggravations; detecting the unsuspected pride, enmity, rebellion, ingratitude, and other evils of the heart; distinguishing men's characters with the clearest evidence, and exposing the base motives of their most specious actions. Thus, by exhibiting the glory of the divine perfections; men's relations and obligations to the great Creator; the spirituality, extent, excellency, and sanction of the law; the evil and desert of sin, and the depravity of the human hearts, in a variety of ways and a multiplicity of experiments; it forces conviction of guilt and danger upon the sinner, and compels him, as it were, to condemn himself and seek deliverance; nor can any kind of delusion or hypocrisy stand before its penetrating energy, when experimentally and fully preached, and applied to the hearts of men according to their various characters. It is, as it were, a sword which can pierce so deep and cut so keenly, as to divide between soul and spirit, (1 *Thes.* v. 23.) and to penetrate the joints and marrow, which no other sword can reach; being, in plain language, a discerner of men's most secret thoughts and intentions: so that it often shows them their most hidden purposes, and makes them afraid of being openly named and exposed; as if the preacher knew their hearts far better than they did themselves, and had a register before him even of those sins which they had forgotten. (*Marg. Ref.*) Thus "the word of God," is "the sword of the Spirit," in the hands of Christ, as well as in the hands of his people. For the Lord himself is the Speaker, when his own word is properly declared and applied; he discerns, and, by his word, detects, the thoughts and intentions of the heart; nor is there any creature, who is not wholly manifest in every respect in his sight, before whom all things are naked, as stripped of all disguise, and open, being fully understood by him "with whom we have to do," as with our Lawgiver and Judge, and to whom we must at length render an account of all our conduct, and of all our most secret thoughts, motives, and intentions. The expressions, "naked and "open," are supposed to refer to the sacrifices, which were flayed and opened, and cleft down the chine, and then every part of the body and of the intestines, that were before concealed, were exposed to the exact inspection of the priest.

V. 14—16. As, therefore, conviction and condemnation were inevitable to sinners before an omniscient Judge, whose quick and powerful word forced men even here to condemn themselves, it was the more needful for the Hebrews to regard the great High Priest, whom he was recommending to them, even Jesus the Son of God, who, having appeared in human nature, as in the court of the sanctuary, to offer his atoning sacrifice, had passed *through* the intervening heavens into the immediate presence of the Father, (as the high-priest passed through the first sanctuary into the holiest of all, to sprinkle the blood and burn the incense on the great day of expiation,) and was accepted in his ministrations, and invested with all power in heaven and earth to save or to destroy; it behooved them to hold fast the profession of the Gospel in all dangers and persecutions. For they had not a High Pries who disregarded or could not sympathize with them in their pains and sufferings for his sake, or who would make no allowance for their infirmities, or refuse assistance in their temptations; but he was One, who, to procure their pardon and salvation, had voluntarily submitted to be tried and tempted, even as they were, as far as he could be without a sinful nature, or the least sin in his life; and this exemption was needful, in order that he might be their Sacrifice and their Advocate. As therefore there was a mercy-seat above the ark of the covenant in the most holy place, before which the high-priests once a

CHAP. V.

The nature of the Aaronic high priesthood, and the requisite call and qualifications for it are stated, 1—4; in order to show the pre-eminence of Christ, as a High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, 5—10. A reproof of the Hebrews for their small proficiency in Christianity, 11—14.

year appeared in behalf of the people, and over which the glory of God was displayed, as propitious to them: even so, God the Father was, as it were, placed on a throne of grace, a mercy-seat, in the heavenly sanctuary, before which Jesus appeared as the High Priest of his people, through whom he waited to receive petitions, to grant pardons, and to communicate blessings, to all who applied for them in humble faith and by fervent prayer. Let then every one of them, before they were summoned to the throne of judgment, come with humble confidence in Christ, and in the love of the Father through him, to supplicate forgiveness and mercy, and to ask for seasonable and sufficient grace, to support, comfort, strengthen, and sanctify them, as their trials and services required: not fearing a refusal, but boldly and freely, yet with reverence and lowliness, enlarging and multiplying their requests, as fully assured of their heavenly Father's readiness to do for them even "more than they could ask or think."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

Blessed be God, that the Gospel is preached to us, even as to the primitive Christians, and far more clearly than to Israel of old! Exceedingly great and precious promises are given to us of entering into the heavenly rest: yet we should "rejoice with trembling," in our outward advantages, lest any of us should be found at last to come short of the blessing, and to sink under proportionably deeper condemnation, through unbelief. Nay, it is a very dreadful consequence of a wavering profession, or a lax and negligent conduct, that it often causes men to *seem* to come short, even when they are launching into eternity; and they leave the world in gloomy doubt, and their survivors in distressing uncertainty, whether they are gone to heaven or to hell. Let us then "give diligence, that we may "have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom "of our Lord." Under every dispensation God hath declared man's rest to be in him and his love, as the only suitable and sufficient happiness of the soul; and faith in his promises, through his Son, as the only way of entering into that rest. His rich mercy, the plenteous redemption of Christ, and the word of the Gospel, will not profit those who do not unite faith with his gracious message; for many have heard and professed the truth, who are finally excluded from the promised rest because of their unbelief; their state is determined, and all their sabbaths and ordinances have only served to increase their condemnation. Many thousands join them every day, to whom, could we address them, we could only say, 'Had you attended yes'terday, it might have been well; now it is too late.' To survivors, however, we may still say, "To-day if ye will "hear my voice," and the present is an accepted time and a day of salvation. Many, also, are continually entering into the earnest and beginning of this rest by faith: and others into the full possession of it, by dying in the Lord. Then they have done with all their sorrows, sins, and temptations, and their groans and tears are exchanged for unalloyed and perfect serenity and satisfaction. Let sinners then labour to enter into this rest, lest they should fall after the example of ancient unbelievers, and perish with heaven before their eyes: let believers keep close to Christ by faith and obedience, and learn to delight in his holy day and sacred ordinances, as earnests of their expected eternal sabbath, and preparations for it: let them bear up under fatigues and hardships, in the prospect of heavenly rest; and, if ever drawn aside, let them recollect these things, and say to themselves, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul." (*Ps.* cxvi. 7.)

V. 12—16.

While we find, by experience, that "the word of God "is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged "sword," to penetrate the heart and conscience, let us remember that the Lord himself is the Discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, before whom all creatures are manifest, and all things are naked and open. With him we have to do, and to him we are accountable; and if, under faithful preaching, we find our hearts condemn us, we are sure that "God is greater than our "hearts, and knoweth all things." Instead, therefore, of quarrelling with the heart-searching ministry, and choosing such lifeless, feeble instructions, as are more like a shaken reed than a two-edged sword, let us lay open our inmost souls to the piercing strokes of the distinguishing word of God, that we may learn our need of that great High Priest, even the Son of God, who now pleads for us before his Father's throne in heaven. In proportion as we know and condemn ourselves, and abhor our sins, he will become more and more precious to our souls, and we shall cleave to him more constantly. The thoughts of the holiness and heart-seaching knowledge of God, and our consciousness of guilt and infirmity, will endear to us the Redeemer's condescension and compassion; and we shall rejoice that he can be "touched with the feeling of our "infirmities," and that he knows what sore temptations mean, though he was perfectly free from sin. Let us then approach continually to the throne of grace, where our reconciled God deems it his peculiar honour to pardon rebels, and answer the prayers of those who supplicate his favour in the name of his beloved Son: let us improve the day of his patience, and approach in his appointed way: let us come with believing boldness, as well as with adoring reverence and humble repentance: let us seek for mercy to pardon our sins, to compassionate our miseries, and to supply our necessities: and let as supplicate grace sufficient for us in all our trials and temptations, and to enable us for every day's service; thus waiting as humble pensioners at the throne of grace, which is our best preparation for appearing before the tribunal of our omniscient and holy Judge.

CHAPTER V.

FOR [a] every high priest taken from among men, is ordained [b] for men in things *pertaining* to God, that he may offer [c] both gifts and sacrifices for sins:

2 [d] Who can * have compassion on the [e] ignorant, and on [f] them that are out of the way; for that he himself also [g] is compassed with infirmity.

3 And by reason hereof he ought, [h] as for the people, so also for himself to offer for sins.

4 And [i] no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as *was* Aaron.

5 So also [k] Christ glorified not himself to be made an High Priest; but he that said unto him, [l] Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee.

a x. 11. Ex. xxviii. 1, &c. xxix. 1, &c Lev. viii. 2, &c.
b Num xvi. 46—48 xviii. 1—3.
c viii. 3, 4. ix. 9. x. 11. xi. 4. Lev. ix. 7. 15—21.
d ii 18 iv. 15.
* Or, *reasonably bear with.*
e Num. xv 22—29 1 Tim. i 13.
f xii. 43. Ex. xxxii. 8 Judg ii 17 Is xxx 11.
g vii. 28. Ex. xxxii. 2—5. 21—24. Num. xii. 1—9 xx. 10—12. Luke xxii 32. 2 Cor. xi 30. xii 5. 9, 10. Gal. i 13
h vii. 27. ix 7. Ex. xxix 12—19. Lev. iv 3—12. viii 14—21. ix. 7. xvi. 6. 15—19.
i Ex. xxviii. 1. Lev. viii. 2. Num. iii. 3. xvi. 5. 7 10. 35. 46—48. xvii. 3—11. xviii. 1—5. 1 Chr. xxiii 13 2 Chr. xxvi 18. John iii 27 ——k John vii. 18. viii. 54.——l i. 5. Ps. ii. 7. Mic. v. 2. John iii. 16. Acts xiii. 33. Rom. viii. 3.

6 As he saith also in another *place*, [m] Thou *art* a Priest for ever after the order of [n] Melchisedec.

7 Who [o] in the days of his flesh, [p] when he had offered up prayers and supplications, [q] with strong crying [r] and tears, [s] unto Him that was able to save him from death, [t] and was heard † in that [u] he feared;

8 Though [x] he were a Son, [y] yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

9 And [z] being made perfect, [a] he became the Author of [b] eternal salvation [c] unto all them that obey him;

10 [d] Called of God an High Priest after the order of Melchisedec.

m 10. vi. 20. vi 3. 15. 17. Ps cx. 4.
n Gen xiv. 18, 19.
o ii. 14 John 14. Rom viii. 3. Gal. iv. 4. Tim. iii. 16. John iv. 3. John 7.
p Ps. xxii 1—20 lxix. 1, &c. lxxxviii. 1, &c. Matt. xxvi. 38—44 Mark xiv. 32—39. Luke xxii 41—44. John xvii. 1, &c.
q Matt. xxvii. 46. 50. Mark xv. 34. 37.
r Is. liii. 3, 4. 11. John xi 35.
s Matt. xxvi. 52, 53. Mark xiv. 36.
t xiii. 20. Ps xvi 19, 20. xxii. 21 24. xl. 1—3. lxix. 13—16. Is. xlix. 8. John xi. 42. xvii. 4, 5.
† Or, *for his piety.* xii 28.
u Matt. xxvi 37, 38 Mark xiv 33, 34. Luke xxii. 42—44 John xii. 27, 28.——x *See on*, i. 5. 8. iii. 6.
y x 5—9 Is 1 5, 6. Matt. iii. 15. John iv 34. vi. 38. xv. 10. Phil ii. 8 ——z ii. 10 xi. 40. Dan ix. 24. Luke xiii. 32. John xix. 30. *Gr.*——a xii. 2. Ps. lxviii. 18—20. Is. xlv. 22. xlix 6. Acts iii. 15. *Marg* iv 12.——b ii. 3. ix. 12. 15. Is xlv. 17 li 6 8 2 Thes. ii 16. 2 Tim. ii. 10. 1 John v 20 Jude 21.——c xi. 8. Is. 1. 10. lv 3. Zech. vi 15. Matt vii. 24—27. xvii 5. Acts v. 32 Rom. i. 5. ii. 8. vi. 17. x. 16. xv. 18 2 Cor. x. 5. 2 Thes i. 8. 1 Pet. i 22.——d *See on*, 1. 5, 6.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1—4. In order more fully to show the nature and efficacy of the high priesthood of Christ, the apostle made some observations on that of Aaron, which tended to manifest its insufficiency, and to point out its typical meaning, as well as to illustrate his subject. Every high priest, selected from among men, was ordained and appointed for the benefit of man in the great concerns of religion. That office required him who sustained it to present before God the oblations and sin-offerings of the people; nor would he accept of any services that were not offered in this way, which continually testified that sinners were unworthy to approach their offended Creator, save through an expiatory sacrifice and an intercessor. For as the high priest was the head of the whole priesthood, so all the other priests were descended from Aaron, who had first obtained this office in Israel, and, were in some sense, one with him. It was, moreover, proper that the high priest should be capable of compassionating, in a proportionate and reasonable manner, his brethren, who had sinned through ignorance and infirmity, for which their sin-offerings were appointed; and this was provided for, by ordaining men of like passions with others to that office, who being conpassed with natural and moral infirmities, were as liable to mistake or sin as they. It was therefore prescribed, that they should offer sacrifices for their own sins, as well as for those of the people, which was a plain intimation, that they could only be typical high priests, being not worthy to appear before God in their own cause, but with the shedding of blood. (*Marg. Ref. and notes on the Scriptures referred to.*) Nor might any man assume this honourable office of his own will, or by human appointment, but it was confined to those whom God expressly called to the execution of it, as he did Aaron, and his posterity after him: and if any one else presumed to perform any part of its peculiar duties, he did it at the hazard of his life, which showed, that it derived all its efficacy from the appointment of God, and not from its own intrinsic value.

V. 5, 6. According to these prefigurations, Christ had not taken honour to himself, by acting as the High Priest of his people, without express warrant; but the Father had in the Old Testament openly declared that the Messiah should sustain that office; for as he said in one place, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," when announcing his decree concerning the Messiah's kingdom; (*Notes*, i. 5. *Ps.* ii.) so had he as expressly made known his appointment to the priesthood in another prophecy, (*Notes, Ps.* cx.) though the Jews had paid more regard to the predictions of his kingdom, than to those of his priesthood, through their prejudices for the Levitical law. Many expositors, interpreting the expression, "This day have I begotten thee," of Christ's resurrection, (though that was only the *proof*, and not, in any sense, the *cause* or *origin*, of his Sonship,) have strangely argued that he did not officiate as a priest till after he arose from the dead! But the typical meaning of the legal ceremonies will sufficiently expose the gross absurdity of this supposition as we proceed with the subject.

V. 7—10. Though our Lord was free from all sinful infirmity, yet he came as near the condition of a sinner as he possibly could; he was compassed about with the sinless infirmities of our frail nature; he "appeared in the "likeness of sinful flesh;" he was dealt with as a sinner, both by God and man; he endured the most violent temptations, sufferings, and agonies; and even his soul was full of consternation and of horror unspeakable. This was "in the days of his flesh," subsequent to his incarnation, and previous to his exaltation, when his human nature became incapable of suffering, and was made inconceivably glorious, (*Note*, 1 *Cor.* xv. 50.) His humiliation, and distress were extreme in his agonies in the garden. (*Notes, Matt.* xxvi. 36—42. *Luke* xxii. 40—44.) Then especially he offered up to his Father most earnest prayers, and supplications, accompanied with strong cries and tears, 11 Of whom [e] we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered; seeing ye are [f] dull of hearing.

12 For when [g] for the time ye ought to be [h] teachers, ye have need that one [i] teach you again, which *be* [k] the first principles of [l] the oracles of God; and are become such [m] as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

13 For every one that useth milk, * *is* unskilful in [n] the word of righteousness: for [o] he is a babe.

14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are † of full age, *even* those who by reason of ‡ use have [p] their senses exercised [q] to discern both good and evil.

e 1 Kings x. 1. John vi 6. xvi. 12. 2 Pet iii. 16.
f Is. vi 10. Matt. xiii. 15 Mark viii. 17, 18. 21. Luke xxiv. 25. Acts xxviii 27.
g Matt. xvii 17 Mark ix. 19
h Ezra vii 10. Ps xxxiv 11. 1Cor. xiv. 19. Col. iii 16 Tit. ii 3, 4.
i Is. xxviii. 9, 10. 13. Phil. iii. 1.
k vi 1.
l 2 Sam. xvi 23 Acts vii. 38 Rom iii. 2 1 Pet. iv. 11.——m 13. Is lv 1. 1 Cor. iii. 1–3. 1 Pet ii. 2.

* Gr. *hath no experience*
n Ps. cxix. 123. Rom. i. 17, 18. x. 5, 6 2Cor. iii. 9. 2 Tim iii. 16.
o Is xxviii. 9. Matt xi. 25. Mark x. 15. Rom. ii. 20. 1 Cor. xiii. 11. xiv. 20 Eph iv. 14. 1 Pet. ii. 2.
† Or, *perfect.* Matt. v. 48. 1 Cor. ii. 6. Eph. iv. 13. Phil iii. 15. Jam iii. 2. *Gr.*——‡ Or, *an habit,* or, *perfection* ——p Job vi 30. xii. 11. xxxiv. 3 Ps cxix 103 Cant i 3. ii 3. Matt. vi 22, 23 Eph i. 18.——q Gen iii 5 2 Sam xiv. 17. 1 Kings iii. 9 11. Is. vii. 15 Rom. xiv. 1. *Gr* 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15. Phil. i. 9, 10. *Gr.* 1 Thes. v. 21.

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as vehement expressions of his inward anguish: he addressed himself to God, as able to save him from death, and he was heard and answered *because of his piety,* his reverence of the divine Majesty, his love, and his zeal for the glory of the Father. Or, as most commentators explain it, "He was heard, *and delivered* from his fear." No doubt the most distressing dread of that awful wrath of God against our sins, which he had undertaken to endure, was one cause of our Lord's agony in the garden. This might well oppress his human soul, without his having the least apprehension that he should finally sink under it, or come short of "the joy set before him;" the least distrust of the Father's faithfulness to his engagement; any defect in his patience and submission, or any degree of sin. For the prospect of the temporary, and even transient, enduring of such a load of guilt and wrath was sufficient to excite the most overwhelming consternation. Thus it appeared that he had communion with his brethren in that passion, or feeling, which is most foreign to the divine nature, even fear; and which is never ascribed to God, as many others are; and that he could sympathize with them in it, and deliver them from it.—And indeed, though he was not delivered from dying; though "the cup did not pass from him," but he willingly submitted to drink it; yet he was delivered from that agonizing terror, which dictated his "supplications "with strong crying and tears;" and was afterwards calm and composed under his heaviest sufferings. Learned men have clearly shown, by pertinent examples, that the words may well bear this sense: and it seems more exactly to suit the apostle's argument. Our Lord was not indeed *spared,* or exempted from any part of his expiatory sufferings, concerning which he said, "Thy will be done," notwithstanding the strong reluctancy of his holy human nature to such exquisite and complicated sufferings, knowing that it was not possible for that cup to pass from him, consistently with the glory of the Father and the salvation of his people: yet the horror of his mind was allayed; he was strengthened to support the immense weight of suffering that was laid upon him; his sacrifice was accepted for his people; he was raised from the dead, exalted to the mediatorial throne, and invested with the power of saving, "to the uttermost, all who come to God through "him." So that, when the Son of God himself was appointed to the high priesthood, he learned the difficulty of obeying the divine commandments, in the present circumstances of human nature, amidst the temptations and trials to which men are exposed: of this he acquired an experimental knowledge, as far as could consist with sinless perfection; and even his perfect obedience became more exalted and honourable, through his whole life, by the enlargement of his human powers, and by the things which he suffered; so that his zeal and love were never so admirable and astonishing, as when he agonized in the garden and hung upon the cross. Thus, by his appointment to the high priesthood, by the obedience which he finished amidst sufferings and unto death, by the efficacy of his sacrifice, and by his subsequent exaltation, he was made *perfect,* as Mediator; being fully authorized and qualified for his gracious work: and so he became "the Au-"thor of eternal salvation to all those," of the whole human race, who obey his call to repentance, to faith, and to take his yoke upon them; mercifully giving them all things pertaining to that deliverance, as the purchase of his own blood, and leading them forth to all those conflicts and services, which are connected with their laying hold of eternal life. For all this springs from his having been nominated and acknowledged of God as a High Priest after the order of Melchisedec; a King as well as a High Priest, and so of a nobler order than that of Aaron. (*Notes, Gen.* xiv. 18—20. *Ps.* cx.) It is observable, that Melchisedec is never mentioned in the Old Testament, after the account of his meeting with Abraham, as recorded in Genesis, except in the hundred and tenth Psalm; and never in the New Testament, except in the apostle's argument in this epistle concerning the high priesthood of Christ; a subject of infinite importance, and proved, beyond all reasonable doubt, by this single argument? How much may depend on a detached testimony of scripture, which superficial readers pass over unobserved, and which perhaps very few much attend to!

V. 11—14. Concerning Christ, as a High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, the apostle meant to discourse more fully: but the things which he had to say of him were such as it would be difficult to state in a proper manner; not so much because they were in themselves abstruse, as because the Hebrews were dull of hearing, through their prejudiced attachment to the Levitical law and priesthood. Though they had heard and professed the Gospel so long, that it might have been expected they would have been instructors of others in the great doctrine of Redemption by Christ: they had so closed their minds to the truth, or turned aside from the purity of the faith; that they wanted some one to teach them anew the very rudiments of that religion, which were contained in the oracles of God, when rightly understood. They were become such Christians, as had need to be fed with milk, or be taught the plainest and most obvious truths of the Gospel, being incapable of receiving and profiting by its deeper and more spiritual doctrine. (*Notes,* 1 *Cor.* iii. 1,

CHAP. VI.

The apostle purposes to lead the Hebrews forward in the knowledge of Christ, 1---3. *He shows the desperate state of apostates,* 4---6; *and illustrates it by a simile,* 7, 8; *but declares his favourable opinion of the Hebrew Christians, and his desire of their fruitfulness, diligence, and assured hope to the end,* 9---14. *He expatiates on the security of the covenant of grace, as confirmed to Abraham by the promise and oath of God; for the strong consolation of all future believers,* 13---20.

THEREFORE, [a] leaving the * principles of the doctrine of Christ, [b] let us go on unto perfection; not [c] laying again the foundation of [d] repentance from

a *See on.* v. 12—14.
* Or *word of the beginning of Christ* Mark i. 1 John i 1—3. 1 Tim. iii. 16
b vi 11 xii 23. Prov. iv. 18. Mat v. 48. 1 Cor xiii 9. 2 Cor vii 1. Eph. iv. 12 Phil. iii. 12—15. Col. i. 28. iv. 12. Jam. i. 4. 1 Pet v. 10. 1 John iv. 12.
c Matt. vii 25. Luke vi. 48. 1 Cor iii. 10—12 1 Tim. vi 19. 2 Tim ii. 19.——d Is. lv. 6 7. Ez xviii. 30—32 Zech. xii. 10. Matt. iii. 2 iv. 17. xxi. 29 32 Mark vi. 12. Acts ii 38. iii 19 xi 18. xvii. 30. xx. 21. xxvi. 20 2 Cor. vii. 10. 2 Tim ii. 25, 26.

2.) For, indeed, every man who could only receive the simpler and more common truths of religion, without applying his mind to the more experimental and exalted parts of it, must be considered as a babe in Christ, how long soever he had professed the Gospel, being evidently unskilful in the word of righteousness. But the more sublime doctrines of Christianity, which immediately related to the counsels of God for his own glory, and the display of his perfections by the redemption of Christ, and which, indeed, were obscurely intimated in ceremonies of the Mosaic law, when rightly understood, were as strong meat for those who were matured in knowledge, judgment, and experience, being the proper nourishment of their faith, hope, love, and spiritual affections. For such Christians, by reason of use, or habit, acquired by assiduous meditation and unbiassed attention to the truth, had attained to a spiritual taste and relish for divine excellency; they had their spiritual senses exercised to distinguish between good and evil, truth and falsehood; they could readily perceive the nature and tendency of the things proposed to them, and the comparative excellency or worthlessness of them: even as natural men, by a sound judgment and long continued habit, decide at once upon natural things, with great accuracy; or as the bodily senses distinguish and judge of their proper objects. (*Marg. Ref.*) "*Word of righteousness.*" (13.) Or that word by which men are shown the way of righteousness; both "the righteousness of faith," for justification, and "the sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Fallen man cannot approach God, except on a mercy-seat, through a high priest, and by a sacrifice for sin; but a priest, who was compassed with infirmity, and needed to offer sacrifice for himself, however he might compassionate the ignorant and transgressors, could never be an effectual advocate with God for them. Indeed, in the more ordinary work of the ministry, the consciousness of our own wickedness and unworthiness is well suited to render us tender to the weak, the erroneous, the tempted, and the fallen, seeing "we ourselves are compassed with infirmity:" and though this service differs widely from that of the priests under the Law, yet no man should take it upon him, till it appear to others, as well as himself, that he is called of God to it. But Christ alone is qualified and authorized to be our High Priest; his dignity and excellency, as the Son of God, and his appointment by the Father to that office, give efficacy to his ministrations; his voluntary humiliation and sufferings in the days of his flesh, when he offered up prayers and supplications to the Father, with strong crying and tears, assure us of his tender love and compassion to his afflicted people; and the answer given to his meritorious prayers makes way for the granting of our weak and defiled petitions, when offered in his name: his obedience in our nature encourages our attempts to obey, and our expectations of support and comfort under all the temptations and sufferings to which we are exposed; for, being made perfect for this great work, "he is become the Author of eternal salvation to "all them that obey him." But are we of that number? Do we at present, whatever our former conduct has been, obey his instructions as our Prophet, trust in his sacrifice and intercession as our Priest, and make his commandments the rule of our conduct, as the subjects of his kingdom? To those who thus come to him, and yield themselves to him, and to those alone, he will be the Author of eternal salvation. Of this great High Priest, and of his merits, grace, and authority, ministers have many things to say, which they will not be able to utter in a proper manner, unless "he give them a mouth and "wisdom" for that purpose; for men's prejudices are so many, that they are generally more ready to take offence, than to receive instruction. Nor are professed Christians, even old professors of evangelical doctrine, so docile as might be expected: many are far from that spiritual maturity, which is proportioned to the time during which they have attended to the Gospel. Instead of teaching others, they need to be taught themselves "the first principles of the oracles of God;" they "need milk, and "not strong meat;" they are babes in understanding, but not in teachableness; they are unskilful in the word of righteousness, yet often presume to dictate to their pastors! These things are very discouraging; but we should still exercise patience and meekness, and "seek out acceptable "words," in which to convey instructions in the best manner we can. Aged professors of the Gospel, as well as babes in Christ, should beware of prejudice, and pray for a mind open to conviction; we should begin with simpler truths, and so gradually proceed to such as are more deep and perplexing; we ought to employ ourselves peculiarly about such matters, in an experimental and practical improvement of doctrinal truth: thus we shall gradually be matured in judgment, and enabled to digest strong meat, and our spiritual senses will be habituated to a just and exact discernment of good and evil, which will greatly tend to our stability, comfort, and fruitfulness, in the faith of Christ. (*Note, Phil.* i. 9—11.)

[e] dead works, and of [f] faith towards God,

2 Of [g] the doctrine of baptisms, and of [h] laying on of hands, and of [i] resurrection of the dead, and of [k] eternal judgment.

3 And this will we do, [l] if God permit.

4 For [m] *it is* impossible for those who

ix. 14. Gal v. 19—21. Eph ii. 1 5.
John v. 24. xii. 44 xiv. 1 1 Pet. i. 21. 1 John v. 10—13
g ix 10. Mark vii. 4. 8. Luke xi. 33. *Gr.* Matt iii. 11. xx 22 23. xxviii. 19. Mark xvi. 16. Luke iii. 16. xii. 50. John i. 33. iii. 25, 26. iv 1, 2. Acts ii. 38. 41. viii. 12. 13. 16 36—38. x. 47 xvi 15. 33. xix. 2—5. Rom. vi 3 4. 1 Cor. i. 12—17. x. 2. xii. 13 Col. ii. 12. 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21
h *See on*, Acts vi 6. viii. 17, 18. xiii. 3 ——i xi. 35. Is. xxvi. 19. Ez. xxxvii. 1—14. Dan xii. 2. Matt xxii 23—32. Luke xiv. 14. John v. 29. xi. 24, 25. Acts iv 2. xvii. 18 xxiii. 6. xxiv 15. 21. Rom. vi. 5. 1 Cor. xv. 13—57. Phil. iii. 21. 1 Thes. iv. 14—18 2 Tim. ii 18.——k Ec xii. 14. Matt. xxv 31—46 Acts xvii. 31. xxiv 25 Rom. ii. 5—10. 16 2 Cor. v. 10. 2 Pet. iii 7. Jude 14. 15. Rev. xx 10—15.——l Acts xviii. 21. Rom xv. 32. 1 Cor. iv. 19. xvi. 7. Jam iv. 15 ——m x. 26—29. xii. 15—17. Matt. xii 31, 32. 45. Luke xi. 24—26. 2 Tim. ii. 25 iv. 14 2 Pet ii. 20—22. 1 John v. 16.

[n] were once enlightened, [o] and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made [p] partakers of the Holy Ghost,

5 And have [q] tasted the good word of God, and [r] the powers of the world to come,

6 If they shall fall away, [s] to renew them again unto repentance; seeing [t] they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put *him* to [u] an open shame.

n x. 32. Num. xxiv 3 15. 16.
o Matt vii 21, 22. Luke x. 19, 20. John iii 27 iv. 10. Acts viii 20. x. 45. xi. 17. Rom ii. 11. 1 Cor. xiii. 1, 2. Eph iii. 7. iv. 7. 1 Tim. iv. 14. Jam i. 17, 18.
p ii. 4. Acts xv. 8. Gal. iii. 2. 5
q Matt. xiii 20, 21. Mark iv 16, 17 vi. 20. Luke viii. 13. 1 Pet. ii. 3 2 Pet. ii 18.
r 2 5.
s *See on*, m 4. Ps. li. 10. 2 Tim. ii. 25 ——t x 29. Zech. xii. 10, &c Matt. xxiii 31, 32. Luke xi. 43 ——u xii. 2 Matt. xxvii 38—44. Mark xv. 29—32. Luke xxiii. 35—39.

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1—3. The apostle here proposed to lead the Hebrews into a fuller acquaintance with the deep mysteries of redemption, of which he had spoken: (*Note*, v. 11—14:) and, in order thus "to go on to perfection," he would leave the elements of the doctrine of Christ, without especially insisting on them; and he in this way expressed his desire of their attentive and candid perusal of his arguments. The necessity of repentance from dead works, such as are done by men dead in sin, and which expose them to the condemnation of eternal death, was indeed fundamental to true Christianity; but they had been instructed in it from the first dawning of the new dispensation. (*Note Matt.* iii. 2.) Nor would he speak particularly of the nature and necessity of faith towards God, or a belief of his word, and a dependence on his mercy, grace, and faithful promises in Jesus Christ. He did not indeed purpose to discourse concerning "the doctrine of baptisms;" either the various legal washings, whether by immersion, ablution, or sprinkling; or John's baptism, or that of Christ, which were distinct from each other, and much disputed of by many in their nation: nor of the laying on of the apostle's hands, by which miraculous powers were conferred, as evidential of the truth of the gospel; or the laying on of hands in the ordination of ministers, as a significant token of the authority intrusted to them. Nor would he insist upon the important doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, or that of future judgment, the consequences of which will be eternal happiness or eternal misery. But, passing over these subjects for the present, he meant to explain to them the deeper and more spiritual mysteries of redemption by Christ, and he would proceed to execute his design in the subsequent part of the epistle, if the Lord would permit him. Some expositors would explain these "principles of the doctrine of Christ," as relating wholly to instructions contained in the Old Testament, concerning the Messiah's kingdom; and others would confine them exclusively to the new dispensation. Those favouring the former scheme, interpret the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, to signify the legal purifications, and the laying on of the hands of the offerer upon the head of the sacrifice, as typical of repentance and faith; including the words in a parenthesis. But, understanding by *principles*, or the "beginning," not *the most fundamental truths*, or parts of christianity; but *the introductory elements*, the lower and easier beginnings of it, as letters are the first *principles* or *elements* of learning; we may see a propriety in the interpretation above given. Some of the things mentioned were, though most important, yet the more obvious and simple parts of Christianity; and the others were externals connected with their first profession of it, which the Jews were apt to lay far more stress upon, than they ought to have done: and it was obvious for the apostle to mention such things as these, when he would call them off from the introductory elements of Christianity, to its more sublime and spiritual doctrines. 'Interpreters observe, that the doctrine of 'Origen, touching the period of the torments of the 'damned, is here condemned: and indeed, the primitive 'fathers, not Origen himself excepted, taught the contrary. If we do not the will of Christ, says Clemens 'Romanus, nothing will deliver us from eternal punishment. The punishment of the damned, says Justin 'Martyr, is endless punishment, and torment in eternal 'fire. Irenæus, in his symbol of faith, makes this one 'article, That Christ would send the ungodly and unjust 'into everlasting fire. Tertullian declares, that all men 'are appointed to eternal torments, or refreshments; and if 'any man, says he, thinks that the wicked are to be consumed, and not punished, let him remember, that hell-fire is 'styled eternal, because designed for eternal punishment; 'and their substance will remain for ever, whose punishment doth so. St. Cyprian saith, that the souls of the 'wicked are kept with their bodies to be grieved with endless torments. There is no measure nor end of their torments, saith Minutius. Lastly, Origen reckons this among 'the doctrines defined by the Church; That every soul, 'when it goes out of this world, shall either enjoy the inheritance of eternal life and bliss, if its deeds have rendered it fit for bliss; or be delivered up to eternal fire and punishment, if its sins have deserved that state.' (*Whitby.*)

V. 4—6. It was the more proper to write in the manner proposed to the Hebrews: as those who adhered to the principles of Christianity, had dwelt long enough upon the introductory lessons, and they who had renounced them were in a most hopeless condition. The verses that we now consider, have caused immense perplexity and distress, to many timid and conscientious Christians; and they have been supposed to contain a cogent objection to the doctrine of the believer's final perseverance. These things must be adverted to in our examination of them. It should be remembered, that the apostle wrote in an age of miracles; and to the Hebrews, among whom the Holy Spirit was first poured out in his extraordinary operations. The persons, whose case is described, had been enlightened, and had obtained that measure of knowledge con-

7 For [x] the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them * by whom it is dressed, [y] receiveth blessing from God :

x Deut xxviii. 11, 12. Ps lxv 9—13. civ 11—13. Is. lv. 10—13. Joel ii. 21—26 Jam. v 7.
* Or, *for.*
y Gen. xxvii. 27. Lev. xxv. 21. Ps. xxiv. 5 cxxvi. 6. Is. xliv. 3. Ez. xxxiv. 26. Hos. x. 12. Mal. iii. 10.

8 But that which [z] beareth thorns and briers *is* rejected, and *is* nigh unto cursing; [a] whose end *is* to be burned.

9 But, beloved. [b] we are persuaded

z xii. 17. Gen iii. 17, 18 iv. 11. v. 29. Deut. xxix. 23 Job xxxi 40. Ps. cvii. 34. Is. v. 1—7. Jer. xvii. 6 xliv. 22. Mark xi 14. 21. Luke xiii. 7—9.——a x. 27. Is. xxvii. 10, 11. Ez. xv. 2—7. xx. 47 Mal. iv. 1. Matt. iii. 10. vii. 19. xxv. 41. John xv. 6. Rev. xx. 15.——b 4—6. 10 x. 34. 39. Phil. i 6, 7. 1 Thes. i. 3, 4.

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cerning the nature and truth of Christianity, which enabled them to make a satisfactory profession of it, in order to their admission into the Church; "they had tasted the "heavenly gift, and been made partakers of the Holy "Ghost," being at their baptism, or afterwards, by the laying on of the apostle's hands, endued with some measure of spiritual gifts, or miraculous powers, such as speaking with tongues, or discoursing with supernatural fluency on divine subjects, so that, in this respect, their own experience proved to *them* the truth of the Gospel. They had moreover "tasted of the good word of God;" and their convictions, impressions, and transient affections, made them sensible that it was a good word, of a holy and salutary tendency, and that it was for their good to attend to it, and their purposes of doing so had produced such hopes and joys, as have been described in the case of the stony-ground hearer. (*Note, Matt.* xiii. 21, 22.) Thus they had tasted of "the powers of the world to come," in their temporary realizing apprehensions of a future state, and of its happiness or misery, or they had experienced the powers communicated under the dispensation of the Messiah. All these things, (except miraculous powers,) often take place in the hearts and consciences of men, in these days, who yet continue unregenerate. They have knowledge, gifts, convictions, fears, hopes, joys, and seasons of apparent earnestness, and deep concern, about eternal things: but they are not truly humbled, they are not spiritually minded; religion is not their element and delight; they do not cordially receive Christ in all his offices, or sincerely love the spiritual excellency of his people, his ordinances, and commandments. In short, the old nature, the principle of selfishness, is impressed, affected, interested, alarmed, or pleased; but a new nature is not produced, and therefore, in time of temptation, they fall away. In respect of spiritual gifts, or the miraculous powers of the Holy Ghost, Christ will reject many, who had been partakers of them, declaring that "He *never* knew them." (*Note, Matt.* vii. 21—23.) But they, who received such gifts from Christ, through the laying on of the hands of his apostles, had a personal demonstration of the truth of Christianity, which the most enlightened apostates in these days can scarcely be supposed to have had; and therefore but very few cases now occur, in which a conclusion concerning their state can be unreservedly drawn in the apostle's awful words, though the case of some few may be nearly similar, and they alone are immediately concerned in it. If the persons whom the apostle had thus characterized, (for he spake of none else,) had totally apostatized from Christianity, and were become its avowed enemies, it was not the minister's duty to bestow pains about them; it was generally found "impossible to renew "them to repentance," and thus to restore them with the spirit of meekness. For, considering the clear light against which they sinned in so desperate a manner, it might be concluded, that they had committed the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, and had ascribed his operations, by themselves and by others, to a satanical influence. (*Note, Matt.* xii. 31, 32.) In fact, as far as they could, they crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh, despitefully acting, as if they approved the conduct of those who nailed him to the cross, assented to their deed, and apparently wished it in their power to repeat his ignominy and torture; and they put him to an open shame, by renouncing his religion, blaspheming his name, joining his enemies, and doing evil to his disciples. They were therefore to be considered as given up to final obduracy, and left to the awful judgment of God. But this conclusion by no means authorized ministers finally to exclude from the communion of the Church those apostates who professed and appeared to be true penitents, much less did it authorize such rigour in less aggravated cases. In general, encouragement should be held forth to all who appear penitent, and means are in most cases to be used for the recovery of such as have most lamentably turned aside, though ill success will often discourage the benevolent endeavour. The very words, however, of this awful passage show, that all who "are renewed unto repentance" shall be pardoned, and that God leaves all to final impenitence, whom he determines not to save; so that the trembling sinner, who pleads guilty, and cries for mercy, can have no ground for discouragement from this passage, fairly interpreted, whatever his crimes have been, nor does it prove that one, who is "in Christ a new creature," ever becomes a final apostate from him.

V. 7, 8. The different sorts of professed Christians might be compared to fruitful and barren land. The believer resembled a field, which, being well watered by the rain from heaven, yielded an useful produce to repay the husbandman's toil; the fertile appearance and valuable fruits of which showed, that it had received a blessing from God; thus, by divine grace, being enabled to improve ordinances and advantages, so as to become fruitful in genuine good works, honourable to the Lord and profitable to men, he was blessed, and would be still more so. But as the sterile soil would, neither by the rain nor the husbandman's labour, be made to produce any thing but thorns and briers, and was therefore generally left as a neglected desert, under the original curse, being fit for nothing, with all its produce, but to be burned; so the mere professor of the Gospel, continuing unfruitful under the means of grace, or producing nothing but hypocrisy, selfishness, and iniquity, was likely to be left under the curse of the law, was near to the awful state above described, and everlasting misery in the flames of hell was the end reserved for him, if he continued in his present unfruitfulness. This was a solemn warning to professed Christians to beware that they were not left to apostatize, as a punishment of their unfruitfulness.

better things of you, and [c] things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

10 For [d] God *is* not unrighteous [e] to forget your [f] work and labour of love, [g] which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

[c] ii. 3. v 9 Is. lvii. 15. Matt. v 3–12. Mark xvi. 16 Acts xi 18. xx. 21 2 Cor. vii. 10. Gal v. 6. 22, 23 Tit. ii 11–14

[d] Deut. xxxii 4. Rom. iii 4 2 Thes. i 6, 7. 2 Tim. iv. 8 1 John i 9.

[e] Neh v 19. xiii. 22. 31 Ps. xx. 3 Jer. ii. 3, 4. xviii. 20 Acts x 4. 31.——[f] 1 Cor xiii. 4–7. Gal. v 6. 13. 1 Thes. i. 3. 1 John iii. 18.

[g] xiii. 16 Prov xiv 31. Matt. x. 42. xxv. 35–40. Mark ix. 41. Acts ii 44, 45 iv. 34, 35. ix. 36 39. xi 29 Rom xii. 13. xv 25, 26 1 Cor. xvi. 1–3 2 Cor. viii 1–8 ix 1 11–15. Gal. vi. 10 Phil iv 16–18 Col iii. 17. 1 Tim. vi. 18. 2 Tim. i. 18. Philem 5–7. Jam. ii. 15–17. 1 John iii. 14–17.

11 And [h] we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence, [i] to the full assurance [k] of hope [l] unto the end:

12 That [m] ye be not slothful, [n] but followers of them, who through [o] faith and patience [p] inherit the promises.

[h] Rom. xii. 8. 11. 1 Cor xv. 58. Gal. vi. 9 Phil. i 9–11. iii. 15. 1 Thes. iv. 10. 2 Thes iii 13. 2 Pet. i. 5–8. iii. 14

[i] x 22 Is. xxxii. 17. Col. ii. 2. 1 Thes. i. 5. 2 Pet. i. 10. 1 John iii. 14. 19.

[k] 18–20. Rom v. 2–5 viii 24. 25. xii. 12. xv. 13 1 Cor. xiii. 13. Gal v 5 Col. i. 5. 23. 2 Thes ii 16, 17. 1 Pet. i 3–5. 21 1 John iii. 1–3.——[l] iii 6. 14. x. 32, 35. Matt. xxiv. 13. Rev. ii. 26.

[m] v. 11. *Gr.* Prov xii 24. xiii 4. xviii 9. xxiv. 30 Matt. xxv. 26. Rom. xii. 11,

[n] xii. 1 xiii. 7. Cant i 8 Jer. vi. 16. Rom. iv. 12. Jam v 10, 11. 1 Pet iii 5, 6.

[o] 15. x. 36. xi 8–16. Luke viii. 15 Rom. ii 7. viii. 25, 26 1 Thes. i 3 Rev. xiii 10. xiv. 12.——[p] i. 14. x. 36. xi. 9. 16. 33. Matt xxii. 32. Luke xvi 22. xx. 37, 38. 1 John ii. 25. Rev. xiv. 13.

V. 9, 10. While the apostle spake such awful and alarming truths, with reference to the case of those to whom he knew them to be seasonable, he would not have it thought that he had so unfavourable an opinion of the Hebrew Christians in general, or of those whom he immediately addressed in particular; on the contray, he and his fellow-labourers were "persuaded better things of them, even "things which accompany salvation;" namely, that they were real penitents, humble believers, spiritually minded, and grounded in the love of Christ, and of his cause and people. The expression is remarkable and emphatical; the things before spoken of, might or they might not accompany, or be inseparably connected with salvation; but those things which he now spake of were always found in true converts, and never in others. 'Nothing 'availeth in Christ but "faith that worketh by love;" "but a new creature." "Hereby we know that we are "passed from death unto life, because we love the bre"thren." "To be spiritually minded is life and peace." There is no intimation in the whole Bible, that any one, who ever had these things, came short of eternal salvation, or that any apostate ever possessed them. The apostle especially referred, in this, to those Jewish converts, who had manifested their love to the name of God, as revealed in Christ, by their works, yea, their laborious services, and in ministering to the saints for his sake. Of this, a most admirable specimen had been given, after the day of Pentecost, and many of them still continued the same disinterested self-denying conduct. These genuine evidences of faith working by love, God would not reject nor forget; he was not unrighteous, and therefore he would not fail to deal with them according to his promises and covenant engagements to believers, who have, through grace, a claim upon him on that ground.

V. 11, 12. The apostle earnestly desired and longed, that every one of those whom he addressed, whatever he had formerly done, might thenceforth show the same attentive and disinterested diligence in good works, which some of them had heretofore shown; that so, evidencing their faith to be genuine, beyond all reason for doubt or hesitation, they might obtain and possess the full assurance of hope, in respect of their final salvation, to comfort them under all trials, even to the end of their lives. Thus they would be distinguished from slothful unfruitful professors of Christianity, and be approved as imitators of their pious progenitors; and of those Christians, who, by faith in the promises of God, and "patient continuance in well"doing," and in waiting his time of deliverance from their trials, had at length entered into rest, and were actually enjoying that perfect felicity, in which all the promises of God to his people centered. This is a conclusive proof of the *immediate* happiness of believers after death; if this be the true interpretation, and after having maturely considered the other interpretations of the passage which some learned men have given, the author hesitates not to say that he considers them as absurd, and has no doubt but the apostle meant to lead his readers to meditate on the happiness of Abraham, Moses, Joshua, and Job, and all others, who had on earth lived by faith in the promises of God, especially the great promise of a Saviour, and eternal salvation by him; had patiently waited, laboured, and suffered, in the obedience of faith, and in consequence were, at the time when the apostle wrote this, inheriting the promises of God, of blessings through Christ to all believers. "Assurance of hope," should be distinguished from "the assurance of understanding," and "the assurance of faith." He, who so understands the Gospel as to perceive the relation of each part to all the rest, and its use as a part of one grand design, in something of the same skilful manner that an anatomist understands the use and office of every part of the human body in relation to the whole, has "the full assurance of "understanding;" and those things which appear inconsistent, useless, or superfluous, to others, he perceives essentially necessary to the system, or great design. The man who is fully convinced, that this consistent and harmonious, though complicated, design, is the work and revelation of God, and has no doubt but the things testified are true, that the promises and threatenings will be fulfilled, and that Christ will certainly save all true believers, has "the full assurance of faith;" though he may, through misapprehension, or temptation, or other causes, doubt of his own personal interest in this salvation. But he who, beyond doubt or hesitation, is assured that he himself is a true believer, interested in all the precious promises, sealed by the sanctifying Spirit, and "a par"taker of the glory that shall be revealed," has "the "full assurance of hope." The "full assurance of "faith" is the duty of every one; for he who doubts the truth of the testimony, or the faithfulness of the promises of God, questions his veracity; but "the full assu"rance of hope" must be obtained and preserved by diligence; and, though the want of it may generally be traced to a criminal source, yet it is not the *proximate* duty of every one; indeed of a very few. A man may question, whether the paper in his possession be a genuine bank-bill, or a counterfeit; and yet have no doubt, either of the ability, or willingness, of the directors of the Bank

13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, [q] he sware by himself,

14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and [r] multiplying I will multiply thee.

15 And so, [s] after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

16 For men verily [t] swear by the greater: and [u] an oath for confirmation *is* to them an end of all strife.

17 Wherein God, willing [x] more abundantly to shew unto [y] the heirs of promise, [z] the immutability of his counsel, * confirmed *it* by an oath;

q 16—18. Gen. xxii 15—18. Ex. xxxii 13. Ps. cv. 9, 10. Is. xlv 23. Jer. xxii. 5. xlix. 13. Mic vii. 20. Luke i 73

r Gen xvii. 2 xlviii. 4 Ex xxxii. 13 Deut. i 10. Neh. ix. 23

s *See on*, 12 Gen. xii. 2, 3. xv. 2—6. xvii. 16, 17. xxi 2—7. Ex i. 7. Hab. ii. 2, 3. Rom. iv. 17—25

t 13. Gen. xiv 22. xxi 23 Matt. xxiii 20—22

u Gen xxi 30, 31. xxxi. 53. Ex. xxii. 11. Josh. ix. 15—20. 2 Sam xxi 2 Ez. xvii. 16—20.

x Ps. xxxvi. 8. Cant. v. 1. Is. lv. 7. John x 10 1 Pet. i. 3.——y 12. xi. 7 9. Rom. viii. 17 Gal. iii. 29. Jam ii. 5. 1 Pet iii 7.——z 18 Job xxiii. 13, 14. Ps. xxxiii. 11. Prov. xix 21. Is. xiv. 24 26, 27 xlvi. 10. liv. 9, 10 lv 11 Jer xxxiii. 20. 21. 25, 26. Mal. iii. 6. Rom. xi. 29. Jam i. 17.——* Gr *interposed with an oath.* 16 Gen. xxvi. 28. Ex. xxii. 11.

18 That by [a] two immutable things, in which *it was* [b] impossible for God to lie, [c] we might have a strong consolation, [d] who have fled for refuge to [e] lay hold on [f] the hope [g] set before us:

19 Which *hope* we have [h] as an anchor of the soul, [i] both sure and steadfast, and which [k] entereth into that within the veil;

20 Whither [l] the Forerunner is [m] for us entered, *even* Jesus, made [n] an High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

a iii. 11. vii. 21. Ps. cx. 4. Matt. xxiv. 35.

b Num. xxiii. 19. 1 Sam. xv. 29. Rom. iii 4. 2 Tim. ii. 13 Tit. i. 2. 1 John i 10 v 10.

c Is. li. 12. lxvi. 10—13. Luke ii. 25. Rom. xv. 5 2 Cor. i. 5—7. Phil. ii. 1. 2 Thes. ii. 16, 17.

d xi. 7. Gen. xix. 22 Num. xxxv. 11—15. Josh. xx 3 Ps. xlvi. 1 lxii. 8. Is. xxxii. 1, 2. Zech. ix 12. Matt. iii 7 2. Cor v. 18—21. 1 Thes. i. 10.

e 1 Kings ii 28 Prov. iii. 18, iv. 13. Is xxvii. 5. lvi 4. lxiv. 7. 1 Tim vi. 12.——f Col. i 5. 23 27. 1 Tim. i. 1.——g xii. 1, 2. Rom. iii. 25.——h Acts xxvii. 29, 40——i Ps. xlii. 5. 11. xliii. 5 lxii 5, 6 cxlvi. 5, 6. Is xii. 2. xxv. 3. 4 xxviii 16 Jer. xvi. 7, 8. Rom iv. 16. v. 5—10. viii 28—39 1 Cor. xv 58 2 Tim. ii 19——k iv 16. ix 3 7 x. 20, 21. Lev xvi 2. 14. Matt xxvii 51. Eph. ii. 6 Col iii 1——l ii. 10. John xiv 2, 3. m i. 3 iv. 14. viii 1 ix 13. 24. xii 2. Rom. viii 31. Eph. i. 3. 20—23. 1 Pet. iii. 22. 1 John ii 2.——n *See on*, v. 6. 10 vii 1—21.

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to honour every genuine bank-bill. "The full assurance "of hope," in the highest meaning of the words, is attained by comparatively few, and is seldom, if ever, preserved, without some degree of diminution, or variation, through the remainder of life; but a prevailing assurance of acceptance, and of final salvation, is the privilege of all diligent and consistent Christians; and is, in them, seldom greatly interrupted, except by misapprehension, or by peculiar temptations and conflicts, or by being betrayed into sin.

V. 13—15. There could be no reason to doubt of the Lord's performing his promises to those who trusted in him, and waited for him; for the covenant ratified with Abraham in some respects typified, and in others was substantially the same with, that made with every believer; and when God gave the promises to "the father of the "faithful," he at length was pleased to confirm them with an oath, showing his irrevocable purpose of accomplishing them; and, as he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, and so pledged the honour of his great name and all his perfections, as the security of that engagement. (*Notes, Gen.* xii. xv. xvii. xxii. 16—18.) Accordingly, Abraham patiently waited the Lord's time; and the promised blessings to him and his seed were at length vouchsafed. When old and full of days, he died, and was personally blessed in God as his "exceeding great Reward;" his posterity also increased; the promises made to them were accomplished; the Messiah at length came, and all the nations of the earth were about to be blessed in him.

V. 16—18. It is customary for men to swear by those that are greater than themselves, whom they call on to witness their attestations or engagements, or to avenge their unfaithfulness, if they fail of them. When important concerns require it, and the omniscient God is thus reverently and uprightly appealed to, it may be considered as an act of worship to him; and an oath, for the confirmation of covenants and treaties, is the means of terminating disputes of every kind, by establishing mutual confidence between the parties, from the persuasion, that men in general will not defy the vengeance of heaven by deliberate perjury. The Lord therefore, in condescension to the weakness of man and his proneness to unbelief, and purposing to give his people the most abundant assurance, that his counsel respecting their salvation was immutable, confirmed the promise and covenant respecting it with the most solemn ratification of an oath. That so by two immutable things, even the Word and the Oath, or, as others understand it, 'by the immutable *counsel* and inviolable '*oath*' of "God, who cannot lie," either by being deceived, or induced to deceive others, or by seeing cause to alter his purposes, they all, (in the apostle's time, and consequently in all times,) who had fled for refuge from the wrath to come, to lay hold on the hope of pardon and eternal life set before them in the Gospel, might have a firm ground for assured hope, and the powerful consolations which spring from it. These persons, to whatever nation they belonged, were the "heirs of promise," the spiritual children of Abraham, and interested in the covenant ratified to him and to his seed, (*Notes, Rom.* iv. *Gal.* iii.) and therefore the oath sworn to Abraham irrevocably confirmed the spiritual blessings of that covenant to each of them. (*Note, Luke* i. 67—80.) In order to ascertain that they were of this number, it was needful to inquire whether they, having discovered their danger of falling under the curse of the broken law, and under the wrath of God, had renounced all other confidences, and broken through all hinderances, to flee for refuge, (as the man-slayer speeded towards the appointed city,) to the free mercy of God, through the redemption of Christ, according to the covenant of grace; laying hold on this Object of a sinner's hope by faith, and by a humble persevering reliance on the promises of God through Jesus Christ, manifested by its genuine effects. They who had thus "fled for refuge, "to lay hold on the hope set before them," had a source of strong consolation given them in the oath and covenant of God; and their conscious unworthiness, depravity, and weakness; their experience of the deceitfulness of their hearts; their conflicts with inward and outward enemies; and the various temptations, trials, and persecutions, to which their profession would expose them, rendered such security, consolation, and hope in God, needful to them even as the anchor is to the ship. By this hope they would

CHAP. VII.

The superiority of Melchisedec's typical priesthood, above that of Aaron, proved and illustrated, 1—10. *It was intended that the priesthood should be changed, and consequently, that the ritual law of Moses should be disannulled, when the Messiah came, that a better covenant and priesthood might take place,* 11—18. *This was needful; for the more perfect state of the church, and for the salvation of sinners, to the uttermost, and for ever,* 19—28.

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be preserved in their proper station, without being driven from their profession, or duty, by any storms; while others would be induced to apostacy by worldly fears and hopes, or be drawn aside by manifold delusions, even as the ships that have no anchor, will be driven by the tempest from their station, on the rocks or sands, forced out to sea, or dashed in pieces one against another. No anchors, however, can at all times secure the ship from driving or being wrecked; but this hope in the divine promise, oath, and covenant, was so sure in itself, and kept the possessor so steadfast in his adherence to the truth and cause of God, that it always ensured him from final ruin, and in proportion to its vigorous exercise, secured him from temporary failures, and against the storms of incumbent temptations. For it "entered into that within "the veil," and fixed the heart in a stable union with, and joyful expectation of, those things which were in the true Holy of Holies, in heaven itself, and caused the believer to stay himself on the power, truth, and love of God to sinners in Christ Jesus, to bring him to the enjoyment of that felicity. For thither its great Object, Jesus the divine Saviour, had already entered, and continually ministered in the Father's presence, for the benefit of all believers, being their Fore-runner and Representative, who, as their High Priest, had on earth atoned for their sins, by the sacrifice of himself; and who, being risen from the dead, was gone before them to heaven, to prepare a place for them, to remove all obstacles to their admission, to take possession in their stead, and to reign and plead in their behalf, being constituted a High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec, of which order the apostle was about to discourse more fully.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

The principles and rudiments of the doctrine of Christ should be accurately understood, before men attempt to learn the sublimer mysteries of the Gospel; yet they ought not always to be confined to them, but should be led on towards perfection, in knowledge, experience, and holiness. Even the fundamentals of "repentance from "dead works, faith towards God, the resurrection of the "dead, and eternal judgment," should not always engross men's whole attention, but every part of the truth and will of God should, in due order and proportion, be set before, and enforced on, the professors of the Gospel. Much less then should we perpetually be discoursing or disputing about "baptisms and laying on of hands," and other externals, which have their place and use, but often occupy far too much of the attention and time of those who might be more profitably employed. We cannot but lament to see those, who once made a credible profession of the Gospel, turn back into the world and sin, and thus in a measure "crucify to themselves the Son of God "afresh, and put him to an open shame;" as if upon trial they found nothing in his salvation worthy of their constant regard! In general, we should warn and pray for such persons; but there are cases, in which we must let them alone, as having no prospect of their being renewed to repentance. We should beware, and we ought to caution others, of every approach to so tremendous a precipice; yet, in doing this, we should keep close to the word of God, and be careful not to wound and terrify the weak, or discourage the fallen and penitent. Knowledge, gifts, convictions, and very strong impressions, must *precede* or an apostacy of this kind cannot take place; great obstinacy and malignity must *follow*, before we are warranted to conclude it fatal or final. The general invitations and promises of the Gospel include all who are humbly willing to embrace them; humiliation and self-condemnation, when united with some hope and cries for mercy, are such tokens of God's renewing a man to repentance, as should be pointed out to him for his encouragement in expecting forgiveness; on the other hand, the self-confident should be taught, that knowledge, gifts, terrors, subsequent joys, and high affections, are no certain evidence of a man's conversion, without brokenness of heart, hatred of sin, a spiritual mind, and faith which worketh by love; and that they who do finally apostatize were never created in Christ Jesus, whatever man might judge of them. But they, whom it is indeed impossible to renew unto repentance, are commonly the last to think themselves in so awful a state; and such as are most harassed by fears of this kind may generally be assured that this is not their case, whatever they have been, or done, unless they actually run into ungodliness and wickedness through total desperation.

V. 7—12.

A negligent and unfruitful profession of the Gospel tends directly to the brink of that dreadful precipice above described; for when abundant means of grace, and even the ordinary strivings of the convincing Spirit of God, leave men unchanged, and produce not the fruits of holiness, which prove that they have received blessing from God, and are blessed of him; they are often given up, like waste land, to bear briers and thorns only; their state is nigh unto cursing; and the end of all unfruitful profession will be "the furnace of fire, where is wailing "and gnashing of teeth." Let us then fear, with humble caution and watchful prayer, in respect of ourselves, and let us hope the best of others that the case will admit.

FOR [a] this Melchisedec, king of [b] Salem, priest of [c] the most high God, who met Abraham returning from [d] the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;

2 To whom also Abraham gave [e] a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation [f] king of righteousness, and after that also king of Salem, which is, king of peace;

3 Without father, without mother, without * descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God, abideth [g] a priest continually.

a vi. 20 Gen xiv. 18—20
b Ps. lxxvi. 2.
c Ps. lvii. 2. lxxviii 35. 56 Dan. iv. 2. v 18. 21 Mic vi. 6. Mark v. 7. Acts xvi. 17
d Gen. xiv. 14—16. Is xli. 2, 3.
e Gen. xxviii 22. Lev. xxvii 32. Num. xviii. 21. 1 Sam. viii. 15. 17.
f 2 Sam. viii 15. xxiii. 3 1 Kings iv. 24, 25 1 Chr. xxii. 9. Ps. xlv. 4—7. lxxii. 1—3. 7 lxxxv. 10, 11. Is ix. 6, 7. xxxii 1, 2. xlv. 22—25. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. xxxiii. 15. 16. Mic. v. 5. Luke ii. 14. Rom. iii 26. v 1. 2. Eph. ii. 14—18.
g 17. 23—28

* Or, *pedigree.* Ex. vi. 18 20—27. 1 Chr vi. 1—3.

Whilst we warn such as are in evident danger, we should encourage those, in whom we see the things which accompany salvation. Ministers should frequently specify these in an experimental and distinguishing manner; and concerning such matters their hearers should examine themselves frequently and seriously, instead of perplexing them selves about those texts, which were inserted to serve as beacons to warn the presumptuous against fatal rocks, and not to affright the humble and cautious. Of those "things which accompany salvation," none is more free from ambiguity, than laborious, self-denying love to the name of the Lord shown by ministering with persevering affection to his saints: and, though God is no man's debtor, and will reward no works which proceed from pride and self-righteousness, however splendid and laborious they are, yet he is not unrighteous, nor will he forget one service, that springs from humble grateful love: he hath spoken, and will be as good as his word, that "not a cup of cold water, given to a disciple from regard "to his Lord, shall in any wise lose its reward." We should therefore desire, that we, and all who are called Christians, may give the same diligence in such good works, as the most eminent saints in the primitive ages did. This is the scriptural way of acquiring and preserving the full assurance of hope, to the end of our lives. Many have thus by faith and patience inherited the promises; but no slothful professor of Christianity has any evidence that he is following them.

V. 13—18.

The privileges of the Gospel belong to the diligent and fruitful, who walk in the steps of Abraham, to whom the promises were made. These obtain an inward testimony, by the powerful operation of the Holy Spirit; and give abundant proof in their lives, that they are the children of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise. This inward seal confirms to them *personally* that covenant, which God hath ratified with an oath to the heirs of promise in general. Because their infirmities are many and their trials great, their condescending and compassionate Father is "willing more abundantly to show them the immu-"tability of his counsel;" that, by his faithful word and irrevocable oath, "they might have a strong consolation, "having fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before "them." Indeed, the Lord having sworn by himself, that he hath no pleasure in the death of a sinner, but that he should repent and live, holds out abundant encouragement to all, whom he warns to flee from the wrath to come, and invites to "lay hold for refuge on the hope set "before them." And, as he "cannot lie," the destruction of the unbeliever, and the salvation of the believer, are alike certain. Let then such, as have fled to Christ, and have their hope sealed to them, in "the love of God "shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Spirit," rely confidently on the power, truth, mercy, and covenant, of God, amidst all the opposition of earth and hell. (*Notes, Rom.* viii. 29—39:) let them pray for faith and hope equal to their security: thus let them cast anchor within the veil, staying their souls on the word of God, and on the mediation of their great High Priest, in all dangers, afflictions, and temptations: let them follow the steps, as well as trust in the merits, of the great Fore-runner of his people: let them by faith realize his appearance before the Father's throne for them, as their constituted High Priest and King: and thus let them "set their affections on things above," and wait patiently for his appearance, when they also shall most certainly appear with him in glory.

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1—3. The apostle had repeatedly referred to the prophecy, that the Messiah should be "a "Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec," (*Ps.* cx. 4;) signifying that his priesthood would resemble that of Milchisedec, and not that of Aaron: he therefore next proceeded to illustrate that prophecy, and argue more explicitly from it, as compared with the scriptural account of this extraordinary person. (*Note, Gen.* xiv. 18.) Being king of Salem, probably Jerusalem, and priest of the most high God, by an appointment of which we have no information, he came to meet Abraham, after he had vanquished the invading kings who had carried Lot captive from Sodom: and, as the priest of the most high God, he blessed Abraham, and received of him a tenth part of the spoils taken from his conquered enemies. His very name, being, by interpretation, "king of righteousness," and doubtless corresponding with his character and administration, marked him out as a type of the Messiah and of his kingdom. (*Note*, i. 8, 9.) The name of his city signified *Peace*, and, as king of peace, he typified Christ, "the Prince of peace," the great reconciler of God and man, and of men to one another, in perfect consistency with the interests of righteousness, and the honour of the divine justice: and the union of royal authority with the priestly office, (which were divided between the family of Aaron and that of David, in the case of Israel,) plainly pointed to the royal priesthood of the Messiah. We have no account of Melchisedec's parentage, or pedigree, as in the case of the priests appointed by the law, who were all required to prove their descent from Aaron; and exact rules were given concerning their marriages, for this, as well as for other reasons. But Melchisedec was introduced into the sacred history as a priest of the most high God, who had no father, or mother, or

4 Now consider how great this man *was*, unto whom even [h] the patriarch [i] Abraham [k] gave the tenth of the spoils.

5 And verily, they that are of the sons of Levi, [l] who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment [m] to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they [n] come out of the loins of Abraham:

6 But he, whose * descent is not counted from them, [o] received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that [p] had the promises.

7 And, [q] without all contradiction, [r] the less is blessed of the better.

8 And here [s] men that die receive tithes: but there he *receiveth them*, of whom it is witnessed that [t] he liveth.

9 And, as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, [u] payed tithes in Abraham.

10 For he was yet [x] in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.

11 If therefore [y] perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) [z] what further need *was there* that [a] another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?

12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity [b] a change also of the law.

13 For he of whom these things are spoken, pertaineth to another tribe, [c] of which no man gave attendance at the altar.

14 For *it is* evident that [d] our Lord [e] sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.

h Acts ii. 29. vii. 8, 9.
i Gen. xii. 2 xvii. 5, 6. Rom. iv. 11—13. 17, 18. Gal. iii. 28, 29. Jam ii. 23.
k Gen. xiv. 20.
l v. 4. Ex. xxviii 1 Num xvi. 10, 11. xvii. 3—10 xviii. 7.
m Lev xxvii 30—33. Num. xviii 26—32. 2 Chr. xxxi 4—6. Neh xiii 10.
n 10 Gen. xxxv. 11. xlvi. 26. Ex. i 5. 1 Kings viii. 19.
* Gr. *pedigree*. 8.
o 4.
p vi 13—15 xi 13. 17. Gen xii 2 13. xiii 14—17 xvii 4—8 xxii. 17, 18. Acts iii 25 Rom iv. 13. Gal. iii. 16.
q 1 Tim. iii 16.
r xi 20, 21 Gen xxvii. 20—40. xxviii. 1—4. xlvii 7—10. xlviii. 15—20. xlix 28. Num. vi. 23—27. Deut. xxxiii. 1. 2 Sam. vi. 20. 1 Kings viii 55. 2 Chr xxx. 27 Luke xxiv. 50 51. 2 Cor. xiii. 14.——s 23 ix. 27 ——t 3 16. 24, 25. John xi 25, 26. xiv. 6. 19. Rev. i. 18.
u 4. Gen. xiv. 20. Rom. v. 12. *Marg.*
x 5. Gen. xxxv. 11 xlvi 26. 1 Kings viii. 19.
y 18, 19. viii. 7. 10—13. x. 1—4. Gal. iv 3.9. Col. ii. 10—17.
z 26—28
a 15. 17. 21. *See on*, v. 6. 10. vi. 20.
b Is. lxvi 21. Jer xxxi. 31—34. Ez xvi. 61. Acts vi 13, 14.
c Num. xvi. 40. xvii. 5. 2 Chr. xxvi 16—21
d Luke i 43. John xx 13 28 Eph. i 3. Phil iii 8.
e Gen. xlvi 12. xlix 10. Ruth iv. 18—22 Is. xi. 1 Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Mic v 2. Matt i. 3—16. Luke iii. 23—33. Rom i. 3. Rev v. 5. xxii. 16.

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genealogy, that he might the more exactly typify that High Priest, who, as the Son of man, had no human father, as the Son of God was without mother, and who was appointed to the priesthood, and without deducing his pedigree from Aaron. Moreover, nothing was said of Melchisedec respecting the beginning of his life, or the end of his days, and priesthood, that he might resemble the Son of God, whose existence is from eternity, to eternity, and who hath had no predecessor, and will have no successor in his efficacious, meritorious, and perpetual Priesthood. In all these respects the silence of the Scripture being intentional, and referring to the great Antitype, is mentioned in language taken from the instruction to be conveyed, rather than from historical fact, of which learned men have brought instances from other writers of antiquity. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4—10. The argument, arising from the fact that one of Abraham's contemporaries was superior to him, was very conclusive against the perpetual obligation of the Levitical law, and the perpetuity of the Aaronic priesthood, and that of the covenant made with the nation of Israel at Sinai. The apostle, therefore, exhorted the Hebrews to *consider* how great a person their inspired lawgiver had represented Melchisedec to be, not so much in respect of his regal authority, as of his priesthood, when even Abraham the patriarch, and honoured father of their whole nation, who was not one of Melchisedec's subjects, or in any other way connected with him, owned his superiority, and paid him tithes as the representative of the most high God! The Levites indeed were ordered in the law, as the Lord's tribe, to take tithes of their brethren the descendents of Abraham, of which the priests had a tenth part for their portion: but Melchisedec, who was not of Abraham's family, received tithes of that patriarch himself: nay, as the priest of God, he pronounced the benediction upon him, to whom the promises concerning the Messiah, and all nations being blessed in him, were made. Now it was well known and certain beyond contradiction, that the inferior character was to be blessed, in this authoritative manner, by the superior and more honourable, as children by their parents, and the people by the priests. (*Marg. Ref.*) So that some one higher than Abraham, or Aaron, or any mere man of his race, was evidently to be expected, as a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. Under the law indeed mere sinful dying men took tithes of their brethren, and so one generation after another rose up to receive them: but in the case of Melchisedec, one received tithes of Abraham, the Representative of all his posterity, concerning whom it was only witnessed that he lived; by which it was intimated, that a Priest should arise, to whom the whole Israel of God would pay their devoted homage, and from whom they would receive the blessing; so that, "to speak it in "a word," the apostle might say, that even Levi, and all the priests descended from him, paid tithes to Melchisedec, for they were in the loins of their father and representative when Melchisedec met him. This sufficiently proved the inferiority of the Levitical priesthood to that of the Messiah; yea, its absolute dependence on him, and subserviency to him. Indeed, it may be said, that CHRIST also was in the loins of Abraham; but his divine nature, his miraculous and immaculate conception, and his being the intended and predicted Antitype, sufficiently show that he was excepted, as the seed to whom especially the promises were made. This argument of the apostle illustrates the nature of our union with Adam, and representation by him, and our participation of the consequences of his apostacy, as well as the method of our recovery by "the second Adam, the Lord from "heaven."

15 And it is yet far more evident: for that [f] after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest,

16 Who is made, not after [g] the law of a carnal commandment, but after [h] the power of an endless life.

17 For he testifieth, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

18 For there is verily [i] a disannulling of the commandment going before, for [k] the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.

19 For [l] the law made nothing perfect, but * the bringing in of [m] a better hope *did*; by the which [n] we draw nigh unto God.

20 And inasmuch as not without an oath *he was made Priest*:

f 3. 11. 17. 21 Ps. cx. 4.

g ix 9, 10. x. 1. Gal. iv. 3 9 Eph ii 15 Col ii. 14. 20.

h 3. 17. 21. 24, 25. 28. Rev. i. 18.

i 11, 12. viii. 7—13. x 1—9. Rom. iii. 31. Gal. iii 15. 17.

k 19. viii 7, 8. ix. 9, 10. x. 1—4. xiii 9 Acts xiii. 39. Gal. iv 21. 1 Tim iv 8.

l *See on.* 11.

* Or, it was *the bringing in.*

m vi 18 viii. 6. xi. 40. John i. 17 Rom. viii. 3. Col. i. 27. 1 Tim i. 1.

n iv. 16 x. 19—22. Ps lxxiii. 28. John xiv. 6. Rom v. 2 Eph. ii 13—18. iii. 12.

V. 11—17. If God had designed that the most perfect state of the church on earth should be under the Levitical priesthood, and if complete salvation could have been obtained by that institution, without reference to the priesthood of the Messiah, what occasion was there for another Priest to arise, and of another order? Or why should the Holy Spirit dictate such a prediction, and excite such an expectation? The ten commandments, indeed, and many other parts of the law, were given before Aaron was appointed to the priesthood, or expressly mentioned as the intended high priest and progenitor of the sacerdotal race; but the Aaronic priesthood was introduced before the whole was completed, and received its final confirmation: the appointment of that priesthood constituted an essential part of it, and was so inseparably connected with its ministrations, that scarcely any part of it could be exactly performed without them. Thus the people received the law, along with the Aaronic priesthood, the termination of which must render the observance of it impracticable by necessary consequence. The change of the priesthood must therefore imply a change of the law too; and the appointment of a High Priest after the order of Melchisedec must abrogate the ceremonial law, and terminate the legal dispensation. For it had been expressly and repeatedly predicted that the Messiah should arise from another tribe, even that of Judah; (*Marg. Ref.*) and though most of their kings had been of that tribe, yet none of them had ever presumed to officiate at the altar, except Uzziah, who was severely rebuked for his temerity. (*Note,* 2 *Chr.* xxvi. 16—21.) Thus distinct were the kingdom and the priesthood kept under the law, whilst their union, in the Person of the Messiah, of the tribe of Judah, was also predicted in the most explicit manner. Indeed, it was evident, and sufficiently proved, that "Our Lord" and Saviour, to whom the apostle called his brethren's attention, was descended from Judah, and of the family of David, of which Moses in the law had said nothing concerning their admission to the priesthood; so that the prediction and its accomplishment concurred in proving that the Aaronic priesthood and the Mosaic law were abrogated, and of no further validity or efficacy. The prophecy of the Messiah, as a Priest after the order of Melchisedec, made this evident, even to a demonstration; yea, more evident than any other argument could do; as this Priest was not constituted after, or according to, the law of Moses, or any of its prescriptions, which were in themselves carnal commandments relating to mere externals, and incapable of securing spiritual excellency to the appointed high priests; but He was constituted, "according to the power of an endless "life." For though Christ willingly died for the sins of the people, yet that was a part of his priestly office, and he had power to resume his life, and to preserve it for ever; that so he might perpetually execute his office, as the only one to whom it belonged, and who alone was capable of duly performing it.

V. 18, 19. This prediction before-mentioned, and its accomplishment, implied a disannulling, or abrogating, of the preceding commandment, concerning the priesthood, sacrifices, and purifications. And this was intended by the Lord, because they were in themselves weak and unprofitable: for though they had a temporary and typical use and benefit, in respect of the nation of Israel, till the coming of the Messiah, and to believers as means of faith and grace, yet they had no inherent efficacy to purge the conscience or the affections, and they did not at all profit those who rested in them. For the ceremonial law made nothing perfect, either in the state of the church, or the hearts and consciences of the worshippers; but the introduction of a better hope, even that of acceptance with God, through the sacrifice and intercession of Christ, brought the church to its highest state of liberty, and its worship to the most entire spirituality, which its condition in this world admits of, and provided most effectually for the complete justification, the inward peace, and the sanctification of all believers. For by that hope men are allowed to draw near to God, even to his mercy-seat, with humble boldness, and are not wholly excluded, as the Gentiles during the law, or kept at a great distance, as the Israelites themselves were. The concluding words may be rendered, "The bringing in of a better hope *is* "that, by which we draw near to God." The original word signifies something more than *bringing in,* and implies that this "better hope" was brought in, even under the old dispensation, by the promises and prophecies of the Messiah, and by the types of the law, though more fully and clearly when Christ had actually come, and finished his work on earth, and entered into his glory. "The weakness and unprofitableness of the ceremonial "law," either to justify or sanctify those who rested in the outward observance of it, and did not by faith look to the things prefigured by them, was exactly parallel to the Christian sacraments, when the *opus operatum,* the mere attendance on the 'outward and visible sign,' is depended on, while 'the inward and spiritual grace,' the things signified in them, are disregarded. To such persons they are "weak and unprofitable," but to believers they are means of grace, and solemn and acceptable acts of spiritual worship.

21 (For those priests were made without * an oath; but this with an oath, by him that said unto him, [o] The Lord [p] sware, and will not repent, Thou *art* a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec:)

22 By so much was Jesus made [q] a Surety [r] of a better testament.

23 And they truly [s] were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death:

24 But this *man*, because [t] he continueth ever, hath an † unchangeable priesthood.

25 Wherefore [u] he is able also to save them ‡ to the uttermost that [x] come unto God [y] by him, seeing he [z] ever liveth [a] to make intercession for them.

26 For [b] such an High Priest [c] became us, *who is* [d] holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and [e] made higher than the heavens;

27 Who needeth not [f] daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, [g] first for his own sins, [h] and then for the people's: for [i] this he did once, when he offered up himself.

28 For [k] the law maketh men high

* Or, *the swearing of an oath.*
o Ps. cx. 4.
p See on, vi. 16—18.
q Gen. xliii. 9. xliv. 32. Prov. vi. 1. xx. 16.
r viii. 6—13. ix. 15. 23. xii. 24. xiii. 20. Dan. ix. 27. Matt. xxvi. 28. Mark xiv. 24. Luke xxii. 20. 1 Cor. xi. 25.
s 8. 1 Chr. vi. 3—14. Neh. xii. 10, 11.
t *See on*, 8—25. 28. xiii. 8. Is. ix. 6, 7. John xii. 34. Rom. vi. 9. Rev. i. 18.
† Or, *a priesthood, which passeth not from one to another.*
u ii. 18. v. 7. Is. xlv. 22. lxiii. 1. Dan. iii. 15. 17. 29. vi. 20. John vi. 37—40. x. 29, 30. Eph. iii. 20. Phil. iii. 21. 2 Tim. i. 12. Jude 24.
‡ Or, *evermore.*
x 19. xi. 6. Job xxii. 17. xxiii. 3. Ps. lxviii. 31, 32. Is. xlv. 24. Jer. iii. 22.
y xiii. 15. John xiv. 6. Rom. v. 2. Eph. ii. 18. iii. 12. 1 John ii. 1, 2.
z *See on*, 8. 16. 24.
a ix. 24. Is. liii. 12. lix. 16. Dan. ix. 24. John xiv. 13. 16. xvi. 23, 24. xvii. 9—26. Rom. viii. 34. 1 John ii. 1, 2. Rev. viii. 3, 4.
b 11. viii. 1. ix. 23—26. x. 11—22.
c ii. 10. Luke xxiv. 26. 46.
d iv. 15. ix. 14. Ex. xxviii. 36. Is. liii. 9. Luke i. 35. xxiii. 22. 41. 47. John viii. 29. xiv. 30. Acts iii. 14. iv. 27. 2 Cor. v. 21. 1 Pet. i. 19. 1 John ii. 2. iii. 5. Rev. iii. 7.——e i. 3. iv. 14. viii. 1. xii. 2. Ps. lxviii. 18. Matt. xxviii. 18. Mark xvi. 19. Eph. i. 20—22. iv. 8—10. Phil. ii. 11. 1 Pet. iii. 22. Rev. i. 17, 18.——f x. 11. Ex. xxix. 36—42. Num. xxviii. 2—10.——g v. 3. ix. 7. Lev. iv. 3, &c. ix. 7, &c. xvi. 6. 11.——h Lev. iv. 13—16. ix. 15. xvi. 15.——i ix. 14. 25. 28. x. 6—12. Is. liii. 10—12. Rom. vi. 10. Eph. v. 2. 25. Tit. ii. 14.——k *See on*, v. 1, 2. Ex. xxxii. 21, 22. Lev. iv. 3.

V. 20—22. The very great superiority of the Priesthood of Christ, to that of Aaron, was evident from another particular. JEHOVAH appointed the Levitical priesthood "without an oath," by which he showed that that appointment was revocable, and that it would not always continue. But, in constituting the Messiah to be a perpetual High Priest, he most solemnly confirmed the appointment with an oath; thus declaring most evidently that it was never to be disannulled. In proportion therefore to this immense difference, it was to be concluded that Jesus was the Surety of a better covenant than that of Aaron. The word rendered "Surety" signifies a person that is bound with another for the payment of a debt, or the performance of an engagement. Jesus, the Surety of his people, became answerable for their debt of sin, and engaged to satisfy divine justice, and magnify the holy law, as their representative, as well as to bring them to that repentance, faith, and holiness, which are requisite to their participation of the blessings of his covenant, and, by entering into this engagement, and fulfilling it in their behalf, he became the Surety of the Father to them for the performance of all the promises of the covenant, being authorized and exalted, in human nature, to confer on them all the blessings stipulated therein. The word, rendered *testament*, is commonly rendered *covenant*: its import hath been repeatedly considered, and we shall have occasion shortly to speak of it as used for a testamentary appointment. The better covenant, of which Jesus is the Surety, is not here contrasted with the covenant of works, by which every transgressor is shut up under the curse; but distinguished from the Sinai-covenant with Israel, and the legal dispensation under which the church had so long continued; for the covenant of works had no connexion with the Aaronic priesthood or the ceremonial law, which exhibited in shadows the blessings of the covenant of grace. But the covenant, of which Jesus was Surety, was far better than that of which the high priests of Israel were typical sureties, and brought the church, and every believer, into far clearer light, more perfect liberty, and more abundant privilege, than that could do. The temporary legal covenant with Israel must therefore be abrogated; or, being fulfilled, and having answered the purposes for which it was appointed, it must become invalid; as a lease, when the term of it is expired, or a bond, when it is paid and cancelled. This was requisite, in order that the irrevocable priesthood of Christ, and the better covenant ratified to him, might be openly introduced, and established for the benefit of the nations of the earth. (*Notes, Ex.* xix.)

V. 23—25. The sacred writer here adduced another proof of the superiority of the Messiah's priesthood above that of Aaron: in the latter case there were many priests; because, being sinful, dying men, they were soon removed from their station, and others succeeded them in it; and the office passing so frequently from one to another strongly marked its weakness and inefficacy. But the Person of whom the prophet had spoken, and concerning whom the apostle was discoursing, possessed an unchangeable priesthood, that was never to pass out of his hands, and never would be liable to interruption or cessation. For as his death was the appointed sacrifice for the sins of all his people, so heaven was the true sanctuary, in which his subsequent ministrations were to be performed, and there possessing immortality, he must exercise his priestly office in the most perfect manner, till the consummation of all things. On which account he is able, not only by his omnipotence, but in virtue of his priestly character and sacrifice, to save *perfectly, to the end*, in all possible emergencies and extremities, from all guilt, pollution, and temptation, in all dangers, and against all enemies; every one, and the whole company, of those through all ages and nations, who come to God as sinners for salvation by him, believing in his name, depending on his atonement and intercession, and asking all blessings for his sake, and as the free gift of God through him. This he is able to do, because he is not like a mere man, who undertakes to protect or deliver another, and perhaps dies in the critical season; but he ever liveth and reigneth as a Priest upon his throne, to make intercession for those who come to God by him; to plead his merits and sacrifice in their behalf; to present their persons, services, and prayers, for acceptance, through the ransom of his blood; to interpose between them and every one that would lay any thing to their charge; to protect and deliver them by his almighty power, and to give all things to them from his unsearchable riches.

priests which have infirmity; but [l] the word of the oath, which was since the law, [m] *maketh* the Son, [n] who is * consecrated for evermore.

[l] See on, 21. Ps. cx 4.
[m] See on, 3. i. 2. iii. 6. iv 14. v. 5. 8.
[n] 21. 24.
* Gr. *perfected* ii. 10 v. 9. Luke xiii. 32. John xix. 30. *Gr.*

CHAP. VIII.

Further evidence of the superiority of the Messiah's priesthood to that of Aaron, 1—6; and that the Sinai-covenant was to be abrogated, to make way for a new

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V. 26—28. The considerate inquirer into this most interesting subject would perceive, that such a High Priest as Christ could alone suit the case of lost sinners, who were to be restored to the favour and image of a holy God, in a manner consistent with the glory of his name, and peculiarly suited to display that glory. Such a one *became*, or was proper for, them, as was perfectly holy in his nature, harmless and spotless in his own obedience, that no charge might be brought against him; undefiled in his ministrations, separate in disposition and conduct from the sinners in whose behalf he was to interpose, and made higher than the heavens, and all their glorious inhabitants: that the dignity of his Person and the pre-eminence of his exaltation might give efficacy to his ministrations, and manifest the justice and holiness of God in saving sinners for his sake, and through his merits. He must be one, who had no need to offer sacrifices for himself at all, or repeatedly in behalf of others, as the Levitical priests, (who were the coadjutors of the high priest,) did *daily*, and the high priest did on every return of the great day of expiation. But such a High Priest could not be found, except Jesus, whose one oblation of himself, being of infinite value, rendered further sacrifices for ever needless. For the law made infirm and sinful men high priests, whose persons and services always needed atonement and forgiveness, and many of whom were men of very bad characters; but the word of the Lord, which he had ratified with an oath, and which had been spoken long after the giving of the law, and reached far beyond it, had appointed the eternal Son of God to that office, who was in all respects competent to it, as he alone could be; and he was moreover consecrated or perfected to it for evermore. It was therefore evident, that the Levitical priesthood was intended to typify, and prepare the way for, that of Christ; which was purposed in due time to supersede and disannul it.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—18.

Every part of scripture was intended, in one way or another, to honour our King of Righteousness and Peace, our glorious High Priest and Saviour; and the more accurately we examine it, the fuller will be our conviction that "the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy." May we then learn in simplicity to trust in him, and submit to him, to copy his righteousness, to seek the peace of his kingdom, to devote all that we are and have to his service, and to expect blessings from him alone! May we go forth in our spiritual conflicts, at his word, and in his strength; ascribe all our victories to his grace; and desire to be met and blessed by him in all our ways! Patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and angels, own him to be far better and greater than they all; preceding events and dispensations, from the beginning, prepared the way for his appearance, and introduced his royal priesthood: those institutions, which had divine authority and eminent usefulness for the time, after his coming were disannulled, "because of the weakness and unprofitableness of them;" for a better hope was then introduced, by which we draw nigh to our offended God, and call him, "Abba, Father." No further change shall now take place in the priesthood, or the worship of the Church, by any future revelation from God; but he will "overturn, overturn, overturn," the kingdoms of the earth, till that of our Melchisedec be every where established. As the Surety of a far better covenant than that connected with the Levitical priesthood, he hath given his Church and every believer the greatest advantages for following after perfection. May he stir up the hearts of his ministers and people, and pour out his Spirit, throughout all his Church, that more spiritual worship and holy obedience may every where abound; and that the congregations and services of his saints on earth may more resemble those of heaven!

V. 19—27.

It becomes us to aspire after a degree of spirituality and holiness, as much superior to those of old testament-believers, as our advantages exceed theirs. No man who knows God, and his holy law of love, and who understands the evil of sin, and the difficulty of saving sinners to the glory of God, could desire the continuance of a priesthood, "according to a carnal commandment;" which appointed those to that office who were themselves sinners, and needed to "offer sacrifices for themselves first, and "then for the people;" nor could they wish those to retain that station, who generally filled it. But now, that the Son of God is made the High Priest of his believing Israel, even such a High Priest as became us, being "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and "made higher than the heavens," we may well rejoice that he is consecrated for evermore, and that he hath an unchangeable priesthood. As he is "able to save to the "uttermost, all who come to God through him," let the vilest of sinners approach in this way to the mercy-seat of our forgiving God, seeing "he ever liveth to make inter-"cession for them." None need be dismayed, but they who will not come unto God, or who will not come in the name of his beloved Son; and the case of those will soon become hopeless, how great soever their present presumption may be. But let believers meditate on the power and grace of their great High Priest, and on his universal and absolute sovereignty; and let them copy his holy, harmless, and undefiled conduct, and separation from sinners; then they may confidently expect, that he will "save them to the uttermost," and 'deliver them, 'in all time of their tribulation, in all time of their wealth, 'in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment.'

and better covenant, through a superior Mediator, 7—13.

NOW of the things which we have spoken, *this is* the sum: [a] We have such an High Priest, [b] who is set on the right hand of the throne of [c] the Majesty in the heavens;

2 A [d] Minister of * the sanctuary, and of [e] the true tabernacle, [f] which the Lord pitched, and not man.

3 For [g] every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore *it is* of necessity that this man [h] have somewhat also to offer.

4 For if he were on earth, [i] he should not be a priest, seeing that † there are priests that offer gifts according to the law;

5 Who serve unto [k] the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, [l] See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

6 But now hath he [m] obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is [n] the Mediator of a better ‡ covenant, which was established [o] upon better promises.

a *See on*, vii. 26—28.
b *See on*, i. 3. 13. xii. 2. Rev. iii. 21.
c 1 Chr. xxix. 11. Job xxxvii. 22. Ps. xxi. 5 xlv. 3. 4 civ. 1. cxlv. 12. Is. xxiv. 14. Mic v. 4.
d ix. 8—11. x 21. Ex xxxvii 1.35 xxix 44 Rom. xv. 8.
* Or, *holy things*.
e ix. 11. 23 24
f xi. 10 2 Cor. v. 1. Col ii 11.
g *See on*, v. 1. vii. 27.
h ix. 14 x. 9—11. John vi.51 Eph. v 2 Tit ii. 14.
i vii. 11—15 Num xvi 40. xvii. 12, 13. xviii. 5. 2 Chr. xxvi. 18, 19.
† Or, *they are priests*.
k ix. 9. 23, 24. x. 1. Col. ii, 17.
l Ex. xxv. 40. xxvi. 30. xxvii. 8. Num. viii. 4. 1Chr. xxviii. 12. 19. Acts vii. 44.
m 7—13. 2 Cor. iii. 6—11
n vii 22. xii. 24. Gal. iii. 19, 20
‡ Or, *testament*. *See on*, vii. 22. ix 15—20.
o 10—12 Rom. ix. 4. Gal. iii. 16—21. Tit. i. 2. 2 Pet i. 4.

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1, 2. The principal matter, or the substance, of what had been discoursed on was this, that Christians had such a High Priest as became, and was needful for them; who, having finished his work on earth, had ascended into the heavens, and was exalted to pre-eminent dignity and authority, at the right hand of God, in that place where he displays his glorious majesty, and which may be called his royal throne; (*Note, Is.* lxvi. 1.) Thus Christ was constituted the minister, to officiate *in holy things*, or in the most holy place, of which that in the tabernacle had been a type; and in this office he presided over the "true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched," by his almighty power, and which was not constituted by human skill or labour, as the tabernacle in the wilderness had been. Some explain "the true tabernacle," of heaven exclusively, as signifying the same with the sanctuary; others interpret it of the human nature of Christ, in which he tabernacled among men, and in which he officiates as High Priest in the holy of holies above; yet, as his human nature is needful to constitute his Person as High Priest, rather than to be the place of his ministrations, the figure seems harsh. But as the whole tabernacle comprised the inner and the outer sanctuary, and as the high priest alone went into the former, while the other priests officiated in the latter, in subordination to him, whose typical services rendered theirs accepted; and as the tabernacle was an emblem of the whole Church of God, (though it typified the human nature of Christ also;) it seems most obvious to explain "the true tabernacle," to signify the whole Church of the redeemed on earth and in heaven as one, by its union with Christ Jesus; for believers, separately and collectively, "are the habitation of God through the Spirit." Christ ministers personally in the holy place above, as sole High Priest; he presides over the whole true tabernacle, and so the prayers and services of the spiritual priesthood on earth are rendered acceptable and efficacious, through his meritorious intercession in heaven.

V. 3—6. (*Note*, v. 1.) As every high priest, according to the law, was appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices. so it was requisite that this Person, even Christ, should have somewhat to offer, that the Antitype might correspond with the type; and indeed for still more cogent reasons. He therefore assumed human nature, appeared on earth, and there gave himself a Sacrifice to God for the sins of his people, and then he ascended into heaven, to appear before God, as with the blood of the sacrifice, in their behalf; all which exactly corresponded to the method prescribed to the high priest on the great day of expiation. (*Notes, Lev.* xvi.) It was not proper for him to continue on earth, after he had offered his one all-sufficient sacrifice; for in that case he would not have been a priest; seeing, in respect of the legal services, there were priests appointed to perform them: Christ, not being of the priestly tribe, could not properly have interfered in them; and heaven was the appointed sanctuary, in which he must perform the rest of his meritorious and efficacious ministrations; being the true holy of holies, the place in which JEHOVAH displays his glory, and dispenses his blessings from the mercy-seat. The priests, indeed, who offered sacrifices in the earthly sanctuary, ministered in the worship of God after a ritual, which was formed to be an exemplar and shadow of heavenly things; this had been intimated to Moses, when he was charged to form every thing relative to the tabernacle according to the exact pattern shown to him in the mount. (*Note, Ex.* xxv. 40.) The various particulars respecting Christ and his salvation, which were typified by the tabernacle, its furniture, and worship, have already been explained. (*Notes, Ex.* xxv. xxxi.) There seems no reason for restricting the meaning of this charge to the human nature of Christ, seeing his Person, priesthood, sacrifice, and intercession, were evidently predicted in the directions given to Moses on that occasion. Instead of interfering with the priests in the typical services of the temple, Christ had obtained a far superior ministry, of real intrinsic value and efficacy, in the heavenly sanctuary, in which he was as much superior to the priests after the order of Aaron, as the covenant, of which he was the Mediator was a better covenant, founded and established on better promises, than the Sinai covenant with Israel. It has repeatedly been observed, that all unbelievers continued *personally* under the covenant of works, and that believers were *personally* interested in the covenant of grace, by faith in the Messiah that was to come. The Mosaic dispensation contained in it a typical Gospel, and its ordinances were to believers means of grace, 7 For if that first *covenant* [p] had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.

8 For finding fault with them, [q] he saith, Behold, [r] the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make [s] a new [t] covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

9 Not according to [u] the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day when [x] I took them by the hand, [y] to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because [z] they continued not in my covenant, and I [a] regarded them not, saith the Lord.

10 For [b] this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; [c] I will * put my laws into their mind, and write them † in their hearts: and [d] I will be to them a God, and [e] they shall be to me a people:

11 And [f] they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, [g] Know the Lord: [h] for all shall know me, [i] from the least to the greatest.

12 For [k] I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

13 In that he saith, [l] A new *covenant*, [m] he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old *is* [n] ready to vanish away.

p 8. vii. 11. 18. Gal. iii. 21.
q *See on* Jer xxxi. 31—34.
r x 16, 17. Jer. xxiii. 5. xxx 3. xxxi 27 31 38 Luke xvii. 22
s ix 15. xii. 24. Matt. xxvi. 28 Mark xiv. 24. Luke xxii. 20. 1 Cor. xi. 25. 2 Cor. iii 6.
t Is. lv. 3. Jer. xxxii 40. xxxiii. 14—16 Ez. xvi. 60. 61 xxxvii 26
u ix 18—20 Ex xxiv. 3—11. xxxiv. 10. 27, 28. Deut v. 2, 3. xxix. 1. 12 Gal. iii. 15—19. iv 24
x Gen. xix. 16 Job viii. 20. *Marg.* Cant. viii 6. Is. xli. 13. li 18. Mark viii. 23. Acts ix. 8 xiii 11.
y Ex xix. 4, 5. Ps lxxvii. 20. lxxviii. 52—54. cv 43 cxxxvi. 11—14. Is. xl. 11. lxiii. 9 11—13 ——z Ex. xxxii. 8. Deut xxix. 25. xxxi. 16—18. Josh. xxiii. 15, 16. 2 Kings xvii. 15—18 Ps lxxviii. 10, 11 57. Is. xxiv. 5, 6. Jer xi. 7, 8 xxii. 8, 9. xxxi. 32. Ez. xvi. 8. 59 xx 37, 38.——a Judg x 13, 14. Lam iv. 16. Am. v. 22. Mal. iii 13
b x 16, 17.

c Ex xxiv. 4 7. xxxiv. 1. 27 Deut. xxx. 6. Jer. xxxi. 33. xxxii. 40 Ez. xi 19 xxxvi. 26, 27. 2 Cor. iii 3. 7, 8. Jam. i. 18. 21. 1 Pet. i. 23.
* Gr *give.*
† Or, *upon.*
d xi 16 Gen. xvii. 7. 8 Cant. ii. 16 Jer. xxiv. 7. xxxi 1 33. xxxii. 38 Ez. xi. 20. xxxv. 28. xxxvii. 27. xxxix. 22 Hos. i 10: ii. 23 Zech. viii. 8, xiii. 9. Matt xxii. 32. 2 Cor. vi 16.
e Ex. xix. 5, 6. Rom ix. 25, 26. Tit ii. 14. 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10.
f Is ii. 3. liv. 13. Jer. xxxi 34 John vi. 45. 1 John ii 27.
g 2 Kings xvii. 27, 28. 1 Chr. xxviii 9. 2 Chr. xxx. 22. Ezra vii 25.——h Jer xxiv. 7. Ez. xxxiv. 30. Hab ii. 14. 1 John v. 20.——i Jer. vi. 13. xlii. 1. 8 xliv. 12. Acts viii. 10 ——k x. 16, 17. Ps xxv. 7. lxv. 3 Is. xliii. 25. xliv. 22. Jer xxxiii 8.——l 20 Mic. vii. 19. Acts xiii. 38, 39. Rom xi. 27 Eph. i. 7. Col. i. 14. 1 John i 7–9 ii 1, 2 Rev. i. 5.——l *See on*, 8 ——m vii. 11, 12. 18, 19. ix. 9, 10.——n Is. li 6. Matt. xxiv. 35. 1 Cor. xiii 8 2 Cor. v. 17.

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as well as acts of worship. But the covenant here referred to was that made with Israel as a nation, securing the possession of Canaan, and various temporal benefits, to them on prescribed conditions; and the promises of all spiritual blessings, and of eternal life, to believers of all nations, and through all succeeding ages, which were openly revealed by the Gospel, and ratified through Christ, are of infinitely greater value than any temporal advantages to a single nation could be.

V. 7—13. The Hebrews might learn from their own prophets, that their national covenant and the legal dispensation were not intended to be perpetual; for if that covenant had been free from defect, and suited to bring the Church to the highest state of perfection, to which it was to be advanced on earth, there would have been no place for a second, or occasion of introducing it, or proposing any plans for another covenant, as the Lord never changes his methods without reason. The Mosaic law, indeed, and the Sinai-covenant, were well suited to introduce the promised Messiah and the Gospel dispensation, and to form, as it were, a proper scaffolding for that magnificent edifice; yet they did not secure the sanctification and salvation of the people; nor did they even prevent such national apostacies, as were a forfeiture of all their privileges. About the time of the Babylonish captivity, therefore, the Lord, by his prophet Jeremiah, reproved the nation of Israel for their violations of his covenant, and promised to make a new covenant with his people. The passage here quoted has already been fully explained, and a few hints must here suffice. (*Note, Jer.* xxxi. 31—34.) The words translated from the Hebrew, "although I was "a husband unto them," are here rendered, "and I re-"garded them not." Learned men have endeavoured to prove, that they may be rendered either way; but the translation here adduced from the Septuagint is not the most obvious meaning of the original; as, however, both propositions contain truth and instruction, the difference is to us immaterial. The prophecy was fulfilled in the conversion of multitudes of Judah and Israel, in the primitive times of the Gospel: but it is also fulfilled to all the spiritual Israel, who are *really* a holy nation, as Israel according to the flesh was *relatively:* the repentance, faith, divine and efficacious teaching, and sanctification of the chosen people of God, as well as their complete forgiveness, were provided for, in the better promises of this new covenant, and thus their holy obedience, their final perseverance, and their eternal salvation were secured.—The apostle, therefore, inferred conclusively from this prediction, that the promise of a new covenant had in effect made the first old, or antiquated; and this was as much as to say, that it was decaying, and about to vanish away. So that the abolition of the national covenant made with Israel, and the abrogation of the Mosaic law, should have been expected at the coming of the Messiah, according to their own prophets.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

Whilst we bless God, that of his plenteous mercy he hath provided for us lost sinners such a High priest, as suited our helpless condition; that he hath accepted his one oblation of himself; that he hath exalted him to the right hand of his Majesty in the heavens, to be a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle; and that he hath made a better covenant with him, in behalf of his true people, and established it on better promises, than those given to Israel; let us see to it, that we draw nigh to him in this appointed way, as spiritual worshippers, in humble faith, and submission to his righteousness, relying on his mercy and truth, and praying for all his promised blessings. If it were dangerous for those who had the example and shadow of heavenly things to deviate in the least from the divine prescriptions, how can they escape condemnation, who have the clear discovery of the heavenly things themselves, yet worship other mediators, prefer human traditions, come to God in their own name, as if righteous persons, or refuse to come at all, as if sufficient

CHAP. IX.

The tabernacle and its furniture, and the typical meaning of its ordinances, 1—10. *An application of the subject to the Priesthood, sacrifice, and covenant of Christ,* 11—28.

THEN verily [a] the first *covenant* [b] had also * ordinances of divine service, [c] and a worldly sanctuary.

2 For there was [d] a tabernacle made: [e] the first, wherein *was* the candlestick, and the table, and the shew-bread; which is called † the sanctuary:

3 And after [f] the second veil, the tabernacle which is called [g] the Holiest of all;

4 Which had [h] the golden censer, and [i] the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein [k] *was* the golden pot that had manna, [l] and Aaron's rod that budded, [m] and the tables of the covenant;

5 And [n] over it the cherubims of glory shadowing [o] the mercy-seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.

6 Now when these things were thus ordained, [p] the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service *of God:*

7 But [q] into the second *went* the high priest alone, once every year, [r] not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the [s] errors of the people.

[a] viii. 7. 13.
[b] 10. Lev. xviii. 3, 4 30 xxii. 9. Num ix. 12. Ez. xliii. 11. Luke i. 6.
* Or, *ceremonies.*
[c] 10, 11. viii. 2. Ex. xxv. 8. Col. ii. 8.
[d] Ex. xxvi. 1—30. xxxvi. 8—38. xxxix. 32—34. xl. 2 18—20.
[e] Ex. xxv. 23—40. xxvi 35. xxxvii 10—24 xxxix 36—38. xl. 22—24.
† Or, *holy.* Ex. xxvi. 33.
[f] vi. 19. x. 20. Ex. xxvi. 31—33. xxxvi. 35—38. xl. 3. 21. 2 Chr. iii. 14. Is xxv. 7. Matt. xxvii. 51.
[g] 8. x. 19. 1 Kings viii 6.
[h] Lev. xxvi. 12. 1 Kings vii 50. Rev. viii. 3.
[i] Ex. xxv. 10—16. xxxvii. 1—5. xxix. 35. xl. 3.
[k] Ex. xvi. 33, 34.
[l] Num. xvii. 5. 8. Ps. cx 2, 3.
[m] Ex. xxv. 16. xxvi. 33 xl. 3. 21. Deut. x. 2—5. 1 Kings viii. 9. 21. 2 Chr. v 10.
[n] Ex. xxv. 17—22. xxxvii. 6—9. Num. vii. 89. 1 Sam. iv. 4. 1 Kings viii. 6, 7. 2 Kings xix. 15. Ps. lxxx. 1. xcix. 1. Eph. iii. 10. 1 Pet. i. 12.
[o] iv. 16 Lev. xvi. 2. 13. 1 Chr. xxviii. 11.
[p] Ex. xxvii. 21. xxx 7, 8. 2 Chr. xxvi. 16—19. Dan. viii. 11. Luke i. 8—11.
[q] 24, 25 Ex. xxx. 10. Lev. xvi. 2—20.
[r] v. 3 vii. 27. x. 19, 20.——[s] Lev. v. 18. 2 Sam vi. 7. 2 Chr. xxxiii 9 Ps. xix. 12. xcv: 10. Is. iii. 12. ix. 16. xxviii. 7. xxix. 14. Hos. iv. 12. Am. ii. 4.

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or their own felicity? In every part of our worship and obedience, we should keep close to the only and perfect standard of Scripture, and every deviation must be proportionably injurious: but mistakes in the way of a sinner's access and acceptance cannot but prove fatal in the end, if not previously discovered and rectified.

V. 7—13.

We should often inquire, whether the new covenant be really sealed and ratified to us? for, though the Gospel-dispensation is faultless, and though the Lord hath, as it were, taken us by the hand, to lead us forth from pagan and antichristian idolatry, yet he will have no special regard to us at last, unless he now put his laws into our minds and write them in our hearts, as the principle of genuine repentance and willing obedience, unless we expect our happiness from him as our God, and worship him spiritually as his people; and unless we are taught by his Holy Spirit to know him in such a manner, as uprightly to fear, love, trust, and obey him. Thus all true Israelites, from the least to the greatest, are taught of God, and sealed as his people; and thus they are assured, that he hath been merciful to their sins, and will remember their iniquities no more. This "righteousness shall be for "ever, this salvation shall not be abolished," and the blessings of this irrevocable covenant will be the eternal portion of every true believer. But all other things, whether they be worldly vanities, external privileges, or forms and notions of religion, will soon decay, wax old, vanish away, and leave those who have trusted in them most miserable for evermore.

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1—5. The apostle, knowing the excessive and dangerous attachment of the Hebrews to the legal ceremonies, proceeded more particularly to show their typical reference to Christ. The first covenant had indeed ordinances of divine worship, the observance of which constituted a considerable part of the legal righteousness of Israel, as a nation: and it had a sanctuary, built of such materials, and decorated with such magnificence, as this present world affords, and as carnal men admire. For Moses, at God's command, caused the tabernacle to be erected, which, besides the courts, and the porch, consisted of two parts: in the first division, called "the holy place," or the sanctuary, were the candlestick, the table, and the shew-bread; and within the second veil, in the holiest of all, were the ark, and the other things here mentioned. (*Notes,* &c. *Ex.* xvi. 32—34. xxv—xxvii. xxxvii—xl. *Num.* xvii.) The golden censer, on which the high priest burned incense within the veil, on the day of expiation, seems to have been left in the most holy place during the rest of the year. The rod of Aaron and the golden pot of manna were *within* the holy of holies, and *by,* or *near,* the ark, as the word may be rendered; but they seem not to have been put *within it.*—(1 *Kings* viii. 9.) The typical import of all these things has been shown; and it is not necessary to speak of them particularly in this place, even as it was not for the apostle. The golden altar of incense is not mentioned in this catalogue; for what reason we know not; but the conjecture of some expositors, that the words, rendered the golden "censer," meant that altar, is groundless; for that was stationary in the first sanctuary, and was not used by the high priest on the day of atonement, who burned incense on a portable censer within the veil.

V. 6, 7. When all the particulars above mentioned had been prepared, according to God's appointment, the ordinary priests performed the several parts of their office in the first sanctuary at all times, without further limitation. But the high priest alone was allowed to go into the most holy place; nay, he was not allowed to enter thither more than once, or on one day, in the year; nor even on that day, till he had offered sacrifices for his own transgressions, and those of the nation, and then he took the blood of the sin-offering within the veil, to sprinkle before the mercy-seat. (*Notes, Lev.* xvi.) Thus, out of Israel, that holy nation, one holy tribe was selected; of that tribe, one holy family; and of that family one person to be "holiness to the LORD:" yet even this person, so carefully selected from the whole race of men, might not

8 The [t] Holy Ghost this signifying, that [u] the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:

9 Which *was* [x] a figure for [y] the time then present, in which were offered both [z] gifts and sacrifices, [a] that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;

10 *Which stood* only [b] in meats and drinks, and [c] divers washings, and [d] carnal * ordinances, imposed *on them* [e] until the time of reformation.

11 But [f] Christ being come [g] an High Priest [h] of good things to come, [i] by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, [k] not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

12 Neither [l] by the blood of goats and calves, but [m] by his own blood, [n] he entered in [o] once into the holy place, [p] having obtained eternal redemption *for us.*

13 For if the blood of bulls, and of goats, [q] and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to [r] the purifying of the flesh;

14 [s] How much more shall [t] the blood of Christ, [u] who through the [x] eternal Spirit [y] offered himself [z] without † spot to God, [a] purge your conscience from [b] dead works, [c] to serve [d] the living God?

t iii. 7. x 15. Is. lxiii. 11. Acts vii 51,52. xxviii. 25. Gal. iii. 8. 2 Pet i. 21.
u 3. iv. 15, 16. x. 19—22 John x. 7. 9. xiv. 6. Eph. ii. 18
x 24 xi. 19. Rom. v. 14. 1 Pet. iii 21.
y vii. 11. xi. 39,40. 1 Pet. i. 11, 12.
z *See on*, v 1.
a 13, 14. vii 18,19 x. 1—4. 11. Gal. iii. 21.
b xiii. 9. Lev. xi. 2, &c Deut. xiv. 3—21. Ez iv 14. Acts x. 13—15. Col. ii. 16.
c vi 2: *Gr.* x. 22 Ex xxix. 4. xxx. 19—21. xl. 12. Lev. xiv 8, 9. xvi. 4. 24. xvii. 15, 16. xxii. 6. Num. xix. 7—21. Deut. xxi. 6. xxiii. 11.
d 1. vii. 16 Gal iv 3 9. Eph ii 15. Col. ii. 20—22.——* Or, *rites*, or *ceremonies*.
e ii 5. vi 5 Gal. iv. 4 Eph i. 10 ——f Gen. xlix. 10. Ps. xl. 7. Is. lix. 20 Mal. iii. 1. Matt ii 6. xi 3. John iv. 25. 1 John iv 2, 3. v. 20. 2 John 7.——g *See on*, ii. 17. iii. 1. iv. 15 v. 5, 6 vii 1—11 26, 27. viii. 1.——h x. 1.——i 1—9. viii. 2. John i. 14. *Gr.*
k 23, 24. Acts vii 48. xvii. 24, 25. 2 Cor. v. 1. Col. ii. 11.

l 13 x 4. Lev viii 2. ix 15 xvi. 5—10.
m i. 3 x 9—14 Acts xx 28. Eph i 7. Col i. 14. Tit ii. 14. 1 Pet i 19. Rev. i. 5. v. 9.
n *See on*, 7. 24—26. x. 12.
o Zech. iii. 9.
p 15. v. 9. Dan. ix. 24 Mark iii. 29. Gal. iii. 13, 14. 1 Thes. i. 10.
q Num. xix. 2—21.
r Num viii. 7. xix. 12. 2 Chr xxx. 19 Ps li. 7. Acts xv 9. 1 Pet. i 22.
s Deut. xxxi. 27. 2 Sam. iv. 11. Job xv. 16. Matt. vii. 11. Luke xii. 24 28. Rom xi. 12 24.
t *See on*, 12. 1 John i. 7.
u Is. xlii 1. lxi. 1. Matt. xii. 28. Luke iv. 18. John iii. 34. Acts i 2. x. 38. 1 Pet. iii 18.——x Deut. xxxiii 27. Is. lvii. 15. Jer. x. 10. Rom. i. 20. 1 Tim. i 17.——y *See on*, 7. vii. 27. Matt. xx 28. Eph v. 2. Tit. ii. 14. 1 Pet. ii 24 iii. 18.——z Lev. xxii. 20. Num xix. 2. 11. xxviii 3 9. 11. Deut. xv. 21. xvii. 1 Is liii. 9 Dan ix 24—26. 2 Cor. v. 21. 1 Pet. i. 19. ii. 22. 1 John iii 5.
† Or, *fault* ——a 9. i. 3. x. 2. 22.——b *See on*, vi. 1.——c Luke i. 74. Rom vi. 13. 22. Gal. ii. 19 1 Thes i. 9. 1 Pet. iv. 2.——d xii. 22. Deut v. 26. 1 Sam. xvii. 26. 2 Kings xix. 16. Jer. x. 10, Dan. vi. 26. Acts xiv. 15. 2 Cor. vi. 16. 1 Tim iii. 15.

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approach God on a *mercy-seat* without atoning blood, and only one day in a year, on pain of death for his presumption, if he transgressed these rules! The word rendered *errors* seems to denote all those sins, for which sacrifices were appointed; indeed, all but those presumptuous sins which were punished by death. Some commentators mention carrying the blood of the sacrifices into the temple, to sprinkle it before the veil, as one of the services performed by the ordinary priests; but no blood was carried into the tabernacle, except that of the sin-offerings for the high priest, or for the congregation; and this was done by the high-priest himself. (xiii. 11. *Notes, Lev.* iv.)

V. 8—10. By all those restrictions and limitations, which kept even the worshippers of Jehovah at so awful a distance, the Holy Spirit, by whose inspiration they were revealed and recorded, conveyed this important instruction; namely, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest. This instruction must be constantly inculcated, as long as the first tabernacle was standing, and the ceremonies of that worship continued in force. For the temple, being formed after the pattern of the tabernacle made by Moses, and having the same ministrations performed at it, might be considered as the continuation of it; and "the first tabernacle" is distinguished from that "greater and more perfect tabernacle," afterwards mentioned, (11, 12.) So that the holy places, in which the priests of Aaron's family ministered till the coming of Christ, are evidently meant. A few believers indeed, under the divine teaching, saw a little concerning the way of access to God, of communion with him, and of admission into heaven, through the promised Redeemer; but the Israelites in general looked no further than the external forms; and scarcely any person conceived an idea, that sinners of every nation should have that boldness of access to God through Christ, and all the privileges and hopes, which believers enjoy under the Christian dispensation. The difficulty, of guilty polluted rebels being thus admitted into the presence and favour of a holy God, was declared by those appointments; but the sacrifice and priesthood of the incarnate Son of God at once disannulled them all; when he hung upon the cross, the veil of the temple was rent, his ascension into heaven, and intercession there, opened the way to the mercy-seat; by his doctrine the way into the holiest was made manifest, and thenceforth it was only necessary that sinners should be made willing, by regenerating grace, to avail themselves of such an invaluable privilege. The legal ordinances therefore, especially those of the great day of atonement, were figures for the time that they lasted, (or, as some render it, "of the present time," the happy period thus prefigured being then arrived;) in which were offered various gifts and sacrifices, that could not give the worshippers genuine solid peace of conscience, or make a perfect reconciliation between the sinner and his offended Judge. The offerers, who rested in them, and did not by faith rely on the promised Saviour, could not obtain forgiveness of sins, or spiritual blessings; but were only exempted from temporal punishment, and admitted to external privileges, as members of the kingdom and Church of Israel, which was in a peculiar sense under the government of Jehovah. And as to the other ordinances of that covenant, which were connected with its sacrifices, they consisted principally of regulations concerning meats and drinks, and divers *baptisms*, or washings *with* or *in* water, as typical of sanctification, and such like institutions, which were carnal in themselves, though for wise purposes they were imposed till the coming of the Messiah, which was to be a time of reformation, by the introduction of a more simple and spiritual worship. They could therefore be of no use to the Jews, who rejected Christ out of zeal for them, and it was absurd for the Hebrew Christians to adhere so pertinaciously to them. *The Holy Ghost*, &c. This is a most express attestation to the divine inspiration of Moses, which should not pass without special notice, in these days of skepticism on this subject.

V. 11—14. After long expectation, the promised Redeemer was come, to be a High Priest, capable of procuring and bestowing to future ages, and to all eternity, 15 And for this cause he is [e] the Mediator of [f] the New Testament, that by [g] means of death, [h] for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under [i] the first testament, [k] they which are called might receive the [l] promise of [m] eternal inheritance.

16 For where a testament *is*, there must also of necessity * be the death of the testator.

17 For [n] a testament *is* of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.

e vii. 22. viii. 6. xii. 24. 1 Tim. ii. 5.
f *See on*, viii. 8 2 Cor. iii. 6.
g 16 28 ii. 14. xiii. 20. Is liii. 10—12. Dan. ix. 26.
h 12. xi. 40. Rom. iii. 24—26. v. 6 8 10. Eph. i. 7. 1 Pet. iii. 18. Rev. v. 9. xiv. 3, 4.
i 1. viii. 7 13.
k iii. 1. *See on*, Rom. viii. 28 30 ix. 24. 2 Thes. ii. 14.
l vi. 13. xi 13 39, 40. Jam. i. 12. 1 John ii. 25.
m Ps. xxxvii. 18. Matt xix 29. xxv. 34. 46. Mark x 17. Luke xviii. 18. John x. 28. Rom. vi. 23. 2 Tim. ii. 10. Tit. i 2. iii. 7. 1 Pet. i. 3, 4. v. 10
* Or, *be brought in*
n Gen. xlviii. 21, 22. John xiv. 27. *Gr.* Gal. iii. 15.

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the blessings of salvation on all believers, and fulfil to them all the ancient promises of God. This he was appointed to do, by officiating as a High Priest, in a greater and better tabernacle than that prepared by Moses, or even the temple built by Solomon, or any made with hands; that is to say, in one, not builded after the manner of men, or even like the lower creation, being the contrivance of infinite wisdom, and the work of almighty power. This may be explained either of his holy human nature, in which he tabernacled on earth, and officiates as Priest in heaven, or of the heavens themselves, where he appears in the presence of God for us. Nor did he attempt to atone for sin by the blood of goats, bulls, or calves, and to enter into the most holy place with it; but, having shed his own most precious blood on earth, as in the court of the sanctuary, he entered in, once for all, into the true holy place in heaven, to plead the merit of it before the Father's throne, as the complete atonement for all the sins of his people; having thus purchased for them "eternal "redemption" from wrath, and sin, and all its consequences, and being assured that no further atonement would ever be required in their behalf. For if the blood of bulls and goats, and such irrational creatures, could avail to expiate the guilt of the nation, or of individuals, on the day of atonement, or on other occasions, (*Notes*, *Lev.* xvi.) and if the ashes of an heifer mixed with water, and sprinkling those who were unclean through the touch of a dead body, could produce a typical external sanctity, by which they might be admitted into the congregation of the Lord, (*Notes*, &c. *Num.* xix.) how much more efficacy might be supposed in the blood of Christ, actually to remove guilt and defilement! The exalted dignity of his divine nature, the entire purity of his human nature, the honour put on the law of God by his most perfect obedience, and the voluntary offering of himself, under the immediate influences of the eternal Spirit, as a spotless sacrifice to divine justice in the stead of sinners, concurred to render it glorious in God, for his sake, fully to pardon, and freely to accept, all who were interested in him by faith. If then there was the least efficacy in external expiations and purifications, through the appointment of God, and because they showed the guilt and pollution of sin, and typified the method of its removal, so that it became proper for God, through them, to confer temporal benefits on criminals, how much more efficacious must the blood of Christ be, to purge the believer's conscience from the guilt of those evil works, which were committed by such as were dead in sin, and deserved death, or that really polluted the soul, even as the touch of a dead corpse did the body! As, therefore, it was abundantly suited to render the exercise of mercy consistent with the most perfect justice and holiness, and honourable to God to accept the services of sinners who believed, so, when apprehended by faith, it would remove the burden of guilt from the conscience, and give the trembling sinner peace, confidence, and comfort in approaching, worshipping, and obeying the living God; and Christians therefore could have no occasion to cleave to the abrogated typical expiations of the Mosaic law. Some expositors, by "the "eternal Spirit," suppose the Deity of the Son to be meant; but this seems rather to be implied in the word CHRIST; and as the holiness and obedience of our Saviour, his miraculous powers, and the supports given to his human nature, are constantly ascribed to his immeasurable unction with the Holy Spirit, sealing his appointment to his mediatorial offices; and as he was carried through his last scene of sufferings by his most perfect zeal and love, which also gave value to his sacrifice; so the Holy Spirit seems to be intended, and his eternal Deity, (as well as the everlasting value and efficacy of Christ's atonement,) is attested by the epithet here employed. The Levitical services were all shadows of heavenly things; the expiations were, therefore, types of some real expiation. 'Now 'what expiation is there in the whole universe, if the 'Sacrifice of Christ is excluded?' (*Macknight.*)

V. 15—17. Because of the unceasing and inexhaustible efficacy of his sacrifice, Christ was appointed to be the Mediator of the new *covenant*. He had undertaken the cause of sinners, which must otherwise have been relinquished as desperate, as he alone was capable of offering a sacrifice of sufficient value to make a real atonement; and he had come into the world in human nature for that purpose, in order by means of his death to atone and pay a ransom to God for the transgressions, which had been committed by believers under the old *covenant*, or the legal dispensation; even they who lived before his coming, as well as all others who were called by the grace of God to faith in him, might receive the promise of an *eternal* inheritance, (*Notes*, *Rom.* iii. 21—26.) For the *temporal* inheritance alone was secured to the Israelites by their observance of the legal expiations, and they among them, who sought and obtained spiritual and eternal blessings, were made partakers of them through the anticipated efficacy of Christ's redemption. Yet that grace was finally confirmed to them by his death: so that, in this respect, the *covenant* he mediated might also be considered as *a Testament*, by which a man bequeaths certain legacies to persons specified therein, to be given to them in consequence of his death. Thus Christ might be considered as having acquired, in his mediatorial office, a conditional right to dispose of spiritual and eternal blessings, as by his will and Testament; these he bequeathed to all such as should apply for them in faith; and though, by a special favour, some were made partakers of them, in consequence of his unfailing engagements to assume human nature, and make redemption for their transgressions, yet

18 Whereupon neither [o] the first *testament* was * dedicated without blood:

19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took [p] the blood of calves, and of goats, with water, [q] and † scarlet wool, [r] and hyssop, and [s] sprinkled both the book and all the people,

20 Saying, [t] This *is* the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.

o viii 7–9. Ex. xii. 22, 23. xxiv. 3–8.
* Or, *purified.* 14. 22
p 12. x. 4. Ex. xxiv. 5 Lev. i. 2, 3 10 iii. 6 xvi. 14–18
q Lev. xiv. 4—6. 49 — 52. Num. xix. 6
† Or, *purple.* Matt. xxvii 26. Mark xv. 17. 20. John xix. 2 5.
r Ex. xii. 22. Num. xix. 18. Ps. li. 7
s xii. 24 Ex. xxiv. 8. Is. lii. 15. Ez. xxxvi. 25. 1 Pet. 1, 2.——t xiii. 20. Zech. ix. 11 Matt. xxvi. 28.

21 Moreover, [u] he sprinkled likewise with blood, both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

22 And [x] almost all things are by the law purged with blood: [y] and without shedding of blood is no remission.

23 *It was* therefore necessary that [z] the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these: but [a] the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

u Ex. xxix. 12. 20 36 Lev. viii. 15. 19 ix. 8, 9. 19. xvi 14—19. 2 Chr. xxix 19—22. Ez. xliii. 18–26.
x Lev. xiv. 6 14. 25. 51, 52.
y Lev. iv. 20, 26. 35. v. 10. 12. 18. vi 7. xvii. 11.
z 9, 10. 24 viii. 5 x. 1. Col. ii. 17.
a 11, 12. 14. 24. x. 4. 10—17. Luke xxiv. 26. 46 John xiv 3. 1 Pet. i. 19—21. Rev. v. 9.

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even their right to them was incomplete till after his death, and all others must be admitted to claim them on that ground only. For when a Testament is made, the death of the testator must of necessity take place, before the legacies can be claimed; it is of no validity till he be dead; for, as he may change it at pleasure while he liveth, so it hath no force till afterwards. Thus Christ died, not only to purchase the blessings of salvation for us, but to give efficacy to his testamentary disposal of them; though he is different from all other testators, in that he rose again, and ever liveth to be the executor of his own testament, for the benefit of all that are interested in it. Thus the passage has generally been interpreted; but this is the only passage in which the original word is *expressly* used in Scripture for *a testament*, or the will of a dying person. The change of the meaning also from *covenant* to *testament* seems unprecedented: the Mediator "of a "testament," "the blood of a testament," are expressions to which it is difficult to annex any precise ideas; and the Sinai-covenant can hardly in any sense be called a testament. Several modern expositors have therefore endeavoured to establish another interpretation. 'For this 'reason, of the new covenant he is the Mediator, or 'High Priest, by whom its blessings are dispensed, and 'also the Sacrifice, by which it is procured and ratified; 'that, his death being accomplished for obtaining the par'don of the transgressions of the first covenant, believers 'of all ages and nations, as the called seed of Abraham, 'may receive the promised eternal inheritance. For 'where a covenant is made by sacrifice, there is a neces'sity that the death of the appointed sacrifice be pro'duced. For, according to the practice of God and man, 'a covenant is made firm over dead sacrifices; seeing it 'never hath force whilst the goat, calf, or bullock, ap'pointed as the sacrifice of ratification, liveth. Because, 'from the beginning, God ratified his covenants by sacri'fice, to preserve among men the expectation of the 'sacrifice of his Son; hence, not even the covenant at 'Sinai was made without sacrifice, or blood.' (*Macknight.*) It appears to me, that the original will admit of this interpretation; but the nature of this work does not admit of my enlarging on the criticisms by which it is supported. On the one hand, the cavils which have been raised against the apostle's reasoning as inconclusive, if the first interpretation be adopted, and on the other hand, the venerable names which have sanctioned it, with other circumstances of a similar nature, render me afraid of too confidently preferring either interpretation. I cannot, however, on the whole, but think that the latter exposition is the most obvious, and consonant to the apostle's general way of reasoning.

V. 18—23. To prefigure the necessity of the blood-shedding of Christ, even the Sinai-covenant had not been dedicated, or ratified, without blood. For after the law of ten commandments had been delivered from the mount, and Moses had spoken every precept to the people, according to the outlines of that law, (on which their national covenant was to be established,) and they had consented to it, he wrote them in a book, and proceeded to the solemn ratification of the covenant, as a typical mediator between God and the nation. (*Notes, Ex.* xxiv.) The apostle specified some particulars, which are not found in the history, probably taking them from the traditionary usages of his people on similar occasions. To prevent the blood from coagulating, it was customary to mix it with water, that it might sprinkle the better, (which was an apt emblem of the two-fold benefit of Christ's atonement,) and then putting scarlet wool upon a stalk of hyssop, they sprinkled the blood with it. (*Notes, Lev.* xiv. 7. *Ps.* li. 7.) The Hebrews also knew, that Moses sprinkled the tabernacle and all its furniture with blood, to consecrate them for the worship of God. (*Marg. Ref.*) In short, it was a general rule, that almost every thing was by the law purified with blood, which showed, that nothing could be clean to a sinner, not even his religious duties, except as his guilt was expiated by the death of a sacrifice of sufficient value for that end, and unless he continually depended on it. And indeed it was absolutely an universal rule, that without the shedding of blood, no kind or degree of sin could be pardoned, or the punishment due to it be remitted. It was then necessary, by the appointment of the law, for the exemplars, or types, of heavenly things to be purified by the sacrifice of innocent animals, and by the application of their blood, or they could not be acceptably used in the worship of God; but it was necessary, for more durable and immutable reasons, that the heavenly things themselves should be purified by an atonement of superior excellence, even by the One sacrifice of the death of Christ, which was infinitely more valuable than all of them. In order to his efficaciously interceding for sinners in heaven, and opening for them the way to the mercy-seat, that they might commune with their reconciled Father in his ordinances, and at length be admitted into heaven; it was necessary that Christ should on earth, in our nature, shed his blood, and die a sacrifice on the cross; that he might have the infinite merit of that sacrifice to plead

24 For Christ is not entered into [b] the holy places made with hands, *which are* [c] the figures of the true; [d] but into heaven itself, now [e] to appear in the presence of God for us:

25 Nor yet that he should [f] offer himself often, [g] as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others:

26 For then must he often have suffered since [h] the foundation of the world: but now once, [i] in the end of the world, hath [k] he appeared to put away sin by [l] the sacrifice of himself.

27 And [m] as it is appointed unto men once to die, [n] but after this the judgment:

28 So Christ [o] was once offered [p] to bear the sins of many: and unto [q] them that look for him, shall [r] he appear the second time, [s] without sin [t] unto salvation.

b *See on*, 11 Mark xiv. 58 John ii 19—21.
c *See on*, 9. 23 viii. 2.
d i. 3. vi. 20, vii. 26. viii. 2 5 xii. 2. Ps. lxviii. 18. Mark xvi. 19. Luke xxiv. 51. John vi. 62. xvi. 28, 29. Acts i 9. 11. iii 21 Eph. i. 20—22. iv. 8—11. Col. iii 2.
e vii. 25. Ex. xxviii. 12. 29. 30. Zech. iii. 1. Rom. viii. 34. 1 John ii. 1, 2. Rev. viii. 3.
f *See on*, 7. 14 26. x. 10.
g 12. Ex. xxx. 10. Lev. xvi. 2—34.——h Matt. xxv. 34. John xvii 24 1 Pet. i. 20 Rev. xiii 8. xvii. 8.
i i. 2. Is. ii. 2. Dan. x. 14. Mic. iv. 1. 1 Cor. x. 11. Gal iv. 4 Eph. i. 10. 1 Pet. i. 20.
k 12. vii. 26 x. 4. 10. Lev. xvi. 21. 22. 2 Sam. xii. 13 xxiv. 10. Job vii 21. Dan. ix. 24. John i. 29. 1 Pet ii 24. iii. 18. 1 John iii. 5.
l 14. x. 12. 26. Eph v. 2. Tit. ii. 14.
m Gen. iii. 19. 2 Sam xiv. 14. Job xiv. 5. xxx. 23. Ps. lxxxix. 48. Ec. iii. 20. ix. 5 10. xii. 7. Rom. v. 12.
n vi. 2. Job xix. 23. Ec xi 9. xii. 14, Matt xxv. 31 &c. John v. 26—29. Acts xvii. 31. Rom. ii. 5. xiv. 9—12 1 Cor iv. 5. 2 Cor. v. 10. 2 Tim. iv. 1. Jude 15. Rev. xx. 11—15.——o *See on*, 25 ——p Lev. x. 17. Num. xviii. 1. 23 Is. liii. 4—6. 11. 12. 1 Pet ii. 24 ——q Phil. iii. 20. 1 Thes i. 10. 2 Tim. iv. 8. Tit. ii. 13. 2 Pet. iii 12——r Zech xiv. 5. John xiv. 3 Acts i. 11. 1 Thes. iv. 14—16 2 Thes i. 5—9. ii. 1. 1 John iii 2. Rev. i 7 ——s. Rom vi. 10. viii. 3 ——t Is. xxv. 9 Rom. viii. 23. 1 Cor. xv. 54. Phil iii. 21. 1 Thes. iv. 17. 2 Thes. i. 10.

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before the throne, in behalf of all who should come unto God by him: otherwise mercy shown to sinners would dishonour the justice and holiness of God, and their admission into heaven, would, as it were, defile that holy place.

V. 24—26. Christ had not entered into a "a wordly "sanctuary," made by the hands of men, to be the figures of the true, for which the blood of animals might be a suitable consecration: but he had entered into heaven itself, to appear in the immediate presence of God, as the Advocate for rebels and enemies, and in order to procure them full pardon, abundant grace, and eternal life; and a sacrifice of proportionably superior value was necessary, that he might perform this ministration to the glory of God, and the salvation of his people. This had been provided, in the sacrifice of himself: and there was no need, that he should frequently repeat his atoning sufferings and death, after the manner of the high priest; who every year went into the holy place with the blood of others, even of the animals slain for sin-offerings: for in that case Christ must often have suffered, since the first entrance of sin soon after the foundation of the world, when the efficacy of his gracious interposition in behalf of sinners began. This he must have done, if the sacrifice had been of small, or even of finite, value; as it would have been, if he were only a mere man, or a mere creature. But, on the contrary, the intrinsic and infinite value of his sacrifice appeared, in that, after he had been predicted and promised for four thousand years, and sinners had all along been saved by faith in him; he at length appeared in human nature, once, in the last period of the world, when the concluding dispensation was to be introduced: that by the One sacrifice of himself he might make an all-sufficient atonement for sin; and both provide for the full pardon of all the sins of the numberless multitudes of believers, through every age and nation; and also for the destruction of sin out of their hearts and nature, by their gradual sanctification: that so they might at last be made as righteous, holy, and happy, as if they never had been sinners. So vast was the value and efficacy of his one oblation!

V. 27, 28. As by the sentence denounced on the human race in Adam, the surety of the covenant of works, it had been "appointed for men once to die;" (from which Enoch and Elijah alone had been excepted, nor was that favour to be hoped for by any others, till the end of the world;) and as it was also appointed to all men, without one exception, that after death they must appear in judgment before God, and receive an eternal recompense of their conduct during their lives on earth; which judgment must be unto condemnation to all sinners, who have not previously obtained a pardon; and as without shedding of blood there can be no remission of sins, nor could the legal sacrifices really atone for them; so Christ, the second Adam, the Surety of his people, had once offered himself "to bear the sins of many," even of all the multitudes that ever did or ever shall believe in him, that thus he might fully expiate them, and make way for their entire pardon and complete salvation. So that, though they are not exempted from the stroke of death, they are delivered from the penalty, the sting, and the consequences of death; they will at length be made conquerors over that terrible enemy, and thus be justified in Christ at the day of judgment, and inherit eternal life through him. He therefore needed not to appear on earth again in the likeness of sinful flesh, to be "numbered "with transgressors," and be "made sin for us;" but he will at last appear in another form, in all his mediatorial and personal glory, as the omnipotent, omniscient, and righteous Judge of the world; in order to complete the salvation of all those who believe in him, wait for his coming, and prepare to meet him, by faith, hope, love, and patient obedience. It is generally supposed, that some of the expressions used in the latter part of this chapter allude to the ceremonies used on the great day of atonement; particularly the scape-goat *bore*, or carried away, the sins of the people into the wilderness; and the high-priest, when he had entered into the holy of holies, in linen garments, came forth to the people in his splendid sacerdotal robes, to pronounce the blessing upon them. 'Did he not appear the first time without sin? Yes, certainly, as to any inherent guilt; for the Scripture says, "He had no sin." 'What then is the meaning of this 'opposition, that at his first coming "he bare our sins," 'but at his second coming "he shall appear without sin "unto salvation?" 'These words can have no other imaginable sense but this, that at his first coming he sustained 'the person of a sinner, and suffered instead of us; but 'his second coming shall be on another account, and 'he shall appear, not as a Sacrifice, but as a Judge.' (*Tillotson.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

The ordinances of divine service, and the worldly sanc-

CHAP. X.

The inefficacy of the legal sacrifices is shown, from the frequent repetition of them, 1—4. *The abolition of them, and the substitution of the Sacrifice of Christ, was foretold by the Psalmist,* 5—9; *by which believers obtain eternal remission,* 10—18. *Exhortations to faith, prayer, and constancy in the gospel; and to love and good works,* 19—25. *The danger of wilfully renouncing Christ, after having received the knowledge of the truth; with warnings, expostulations; and encouragements,* 26—39.

FOR the law, [a] having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never, [b] with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect.

2 For then * would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers [c] once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

[a] *See on,* viii. 5 ix. 9. 23. Col. ii. 17.

[b] 3. 4. 11—18. vii. 18, 19. ix. 8. 25.

* Or, *they would have ceased to be offered, because,* &c.

[c] 17. ix. 13, 14. Ps. ciii. 12. Is. xliii. 25. xliv. 22. Mic. vii. 19.

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tuary of the Mosaic covenant, point out to us Christ as our Light, and the Bread of life to our souls, and remind us of his divine Person, his fruitful Priesthood that flourishes for ever, his perfect righteousness, and his all-prevailing intercession; "which things the angels desire to "look into," with admiring praise and adoration. At what a distance hath sin placed us from our holy Creator, when all the preparatory sacrifices of the law still left the worshippers secluded, and in a sense banished, even from the presence of God on his mercy-seat! All these sacrifices and services could no more purge the guilty conscience, than distinctions in meats, and "divers baptisms," could cleanse the polluted heart, or new-create the fallen nature of man. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that the way into the holiest is now manifested, by the coming, sacrifice, and ascension of our great High Priest! Now we sinners of the Gentiles may come with more boldness to the throne of grace, than Israel's pontiff himself could; and now the gate of heaven is thrown open to all believers. Eternal redemption, and the promise of eternal inheritance, are purchased for us by the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God. This effectually purges the most guilty conscience from dead works to serve the living God, whilst the grace, that seals the pardon, new-creates the polluted soul. May we then be made partakers of this heavenly calling, and seek remission of our sins, only through the shedding and sprinkling of the blood of the New Testament, which God hath enjoined unto us!

V. 15—28.

We must never presume to approach God, except upon a mercy-seat, and in the name of our great High Priest, who is entered into heaven, to appear in his presence for us. All our hopes and blessings must be sought as the purchase of the agonizing, yet voluntary, death of our gracious Saviour, the legacy of his dying love, and the gift of his royal munificence to rebellious creatures. We must ascribe even our sanctification, and all our real good works, to the same all-procuring cause, and attend on divine ordinances, and offer our spiritual sacrifices as sprinkled with his blood, and so purified from their defilement. Nay, we must expect admission into heaven, as the place which he has prepared for us, through the presenting of his blood, for the ransom of our souls, and the purchase of our inheritance, which would otherwise have been contaminated by our entrance into it. Thus we should in all things learn the inestimable value of the one sacrifice, which Christ once appeared on earth to offer for us, that we may know our interest in his covenant, and be constrained by his love to the most devoted and unreserved obedience. In this manner we shall be reconciled to the appointed stroke of death, and look forward to judgment with cheerful hope; and so wait prepared for his coming the second time without sin, to perfect our salvation. But as no wisdom, learning, virtue, wealth, reputation, or authority, can exempt one of our race from the sentence of death, so nothing can deliver a sinner from condemnation at the day of judgment, except an interest in the atoning sacrifice of Christ; nor will one be saved from eternal punishment, who hath despised, refused, or neglected this great salvation: for though the criminal suffers many painful effects of his offences previous to his trial, yet the sentence of the law is not executed, nor the threatened vengeance inflicted, till he hath been arraigned, convicted, and condemned, at the appointed tribunal.

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1, 2. As the Hebrews would be backward in acceding to the apostle's inferences, concerning the inefficacy of the legal expiations, he proceeded still further to argue with them on that important subject. He observed, that the ceremonial law had only a *shadow* of the good things to come to the church by the Messiah, and not so much as the very *image* of them: its ordinances rather resembled, faintly and obscurely, the way of salvation through Christ, and the several blessings conferred on believers through him, as a shadow, or the rude sketch of a picture, does a man, than gave a lively or adequate idea of them, as the reflection in a mirror, a good portrait, or statue, does of the person thus represented. So that the sacrifices, which were constantly offered every year on the great day of atonement, could not make the very persons, who came into the courts of the temple on that solemn occasion, free from the guilt of their offences, or perfectly accepted with God. He was pleased, indeed, to exempt Israel from punishment, and to continue to the nation their external benefits, while they adhered to the prescribed worship; but they, who were actually pardoned and saved, received those blessings by faith in the promised Messiah. This must be allowed to have been the case;

3 But in those *sacrifices there is* [d] a remembrance again *made* of sins every year.

[d] ix. 7. Ex xxx. 10 Lev. xvi. 6—11. 21, 22. 29, 30 xxiii 27, 28 Num xxix 7—11. 1 Kings xvii 18. Matt. xxvi. 28.

4 For *it is* [e] not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats, should [f] take away sins.

[e] 8 ix. 9 13 Ps. l 8--12. li. 16. Is i. 11—15. lxvi. 3. Jer vi. 20. vii. 21, 22. Hos. vi 6 Am. v. 21. 22. Mic. vi. 6, 7. Mark xii. 33.——[f] 11. Hos. xiv. 2. John i. 29 Rom xi 27. 1 John iii. 5.

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for if these sacrifices could have completely atoned for the sins of the people, would they not have been discontinued, as no further necessary? Seeing the worshippers, having been once purged from their guilt, would have no more been burdened with such a conscience of sins, as required more and further sacrifices to take it away. This is the privilege of Christians; for the sacrifice of Christ, being of intrinsic and infinite value and efficacy, there is no occasion that it should be repeated: but believers, having once had their consciences purged from dead works by faith in his blood, are perfectly justified and accepted unto eternal life: thenceforth they seek no other sacrifice; they are no more brought under condemnation; they continually apply, in the exercise of penitent faith, the unfailing efficacy of that atonement to their consciences; and thus they preserve inward peace, connected with humiliation and tenderness of conscience, notwithstanding the remains of sin in their hearts, and the guilt which they thence contract in their daily conduct. "*Would they not*, &c." (2.) Some render this "they would not have ceased to "be offered." That is, they would have continued to be offered, being efficacious and adequate; whereas it was plain, from the apostle's previous reasoning on several things contained in the Old Testament, that this was never intended. But the reading with an interrogation is founded on the best authority, and is most satisfactory. If any sacrifice had been offered of sufficient efficacy to atone for sin, there would have been no need for a continual repetition of it; and that repetition showed the inefficacy of the most solemn legal sacrifices. On the contrary, when the one sacrifice of Christ had been offered, the legal sacrifices were virtually abolished; no other sacrifice was required; no repetition was necessary; the end was fully answered; nothing, except faith in him, was needful; and the appointed ordinances were no longer prefigurations, but memorials, of his one all-sufficient atonement.

V. 3, 4. The apostle's argument implied, that no sacrifice could really atone for sin, or bring sinners into a state of acceptance with God unto eternal life, which did not make full satisfaction to his offended justice, and render it honourable to him to remit the punishment of it. But the legal sacrifices were so far from being thus efficacious, that they did not suffice for the individuals, or the generation of Israel, who presented them, even in respect of a permanent exemption from temporal judgments: for the most solemn of them, at the day of atonement, was rather an annual remembrance of their sins, than a removal of the guilt of them: so that they had only a respect to the year that was past; and the same remembrance was made of sins, when the day returned the next year. For indeed it was not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin, by making an actual atonement to divine justice for it. As divine appointments, such sacrifices might be a suitable acknowledgment of guilt, and profession of repentance, and reliance on God's mercy, on account of which he might bear with the Israelites, and give them temporal benefits; and they aptly typified the sacrifice of Christ. But they could not *possibly* render pardoning mercy, in its most plenteous exercise, consistent with the infinite justice and holiness of God, without which nothing could possibly take away sin, according to the apostle's reasoning in this place. The same argument equally proves, that the blood of a mere man, or of a mere creature, cannot take away sin. A guilty creature deserves wrath for his own crimes: if a perfectly holy man had the full disposal of his own life and soul, and could be willing to devote them to destruction, in the stead of a single guilty person, his life might be an adequate ransom for the other's life, his soul for the other's soul; but this must be all: and, even in this case, we cannot conceive that God would appoint, allow, or accept, such an atonement. If the most exalted of mere creatures should willingly assume our nature, and suffer temporal death, in its most horrible forms, for our salvation, we must perceive that the atonement would be of very small value, when compared with the guilt to be pardoned, and the punishment to be remitted, for the sake of it; nor could this render it consistent with the perfect justice of God, to pardon the atrocious and innumerable rebellions of so many millions, and to give them eternal life, on so inadequate a consideration. If, "without shedding of "blood, there could be no remission," it must have been, because God saw that sin fully deserved his wrath and the curse denounced against it; and that it could not consist with perfect distributive justice to remit the punishment, except through a vicarious sacrifice: and if the blood of bulls and goats could not possibly take away sin, it must have been, because they were not a sufficient satisfaction to divine justice; or, in other words, a sufficient declaration of God's holy hatred of sin, his judgment of its desert, and his determination to maintain the honour of his broken law, in order to render it consistent with his glory finally to pardon sinners on account of it. Now it must be evident, that the crucifixion of Peter, or of Paul, even if they had been free from sin, would have exhibited nothing decisive in this matter; there would have been no equality between the sufferer, or his sufferings, and the criminals to be pardoned, and the punishment to be remitted for the sake of it: and the case must still be the same, how high soever we ascend in the scale of created being. But when "God manifested in the flesh," became the Sacrifice, and his death upon the accursed tree the ransom, when "God "purchased the church with his own blood," the Sufferer being of infinite dignity, his voluntary sufferings were of infinite value. The perfect justice and holiness of God, and the honour of his law, are as legible in the cross of Christ, as his love to sinners: infinite purity and infinite mercy are in perfect and eternal harmony, while unnumbered millions of rebels who deserve the final wrath of God are pardoned, and made heirs of eternal felicity, through this satisfaction of inestimable value. We see, that this was an expedient adequate to its object; and that such a sacrifice would suffice for the sins of the whole world, if all men were willing to come to God through

5 Wherefore, [g] when he cometh into the world, he saith, [h] Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, [i] but a body * hast thou prepared me:

6 In [k] burnt-offerings and *sacrifices* for sin [l] thou hast had no pleasure.

7 Then said I, [m] Lo, I come, ([n] in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.

8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering, and burnt-offerings, and *offering* for sin, thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*; (which are offered by the law;)

9 Then said he, [o] Lo, I come, to do thy will, O God. [p] He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

10 By the which will [q] we are sanctified, through [r] the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all.*

g 7. i. 6 Matt. xi. 3. Luke vii. 19. *Gr.*
h Ps xl 6—8.
i. 10. ii 14 viii. 3. Gen. iii. 15. Is vii 14. Jer. xxxi 22. Matt. i 20—23. Luke i. 35. John i. 14. Gal. iv. 4. 1 Tim. iii. 16. 1 John iv. 2, 3 2 John 7.
* Or, *thou hast fitted me.*
k *See on,* 4. Lev i. iv. v. vi. 1—7.
l Ps cxlvii 11. Mal i. 10. Matt. iii. 17. Eph. v. 2. Phil. iv. 18.—m 9, 10. Prov. viii 31. John iv. 34. v. 30. vi. 38 —n *Gr.* Gen. iii. 15
o ix. 11—14.
p vii 18, 19 viii. 7—13 xii. 27, 28.
q ii 11. xiii 12. Zech xiii. 1. John xvii. 19. xix 34. 1 Cor. i 30 vi. 11. 1 John v. 6.
r 5. 12. 14. 20. ix. 26. 28.

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it. It is necessary for us to insist upon this, not only as comprising an unanswerable argument for the real Deity, and the proper atonement, of Christ; but, because many, who profess to believe both these truths, under colour of blaming metaphysical exactness in stating doctrines, and affecting to treat the orthodox reformers, doctrinal puritans, and modern preachers of the Gospel, as men of narrow minds, advance many things contrary to the apostle's reasoning in this passage: as if Christ's sacrifice derived *all* its efficacy from the appointment of God, and not from his personal Deity and excellency; (which was "the altar that sanctified the gift;") and as if, had the Lord so pleased, an inferior sacrifice might have equally answered the purpose. But surely they forget, that God appointed the sacrifices of bulls and goats, as well as that of his Son: yet it was not possible for the former to take away sin, but the latter at once effected it, because of its intrinsic value. 'Divine appointment and acceptation—'must not be assigned as the only cause, that the oblation 'of our Saviour's body was thus available for the expiation 'of the guilt of sin; for then no reason can be given why 'he might not have accepted of the blood of bulls and 'goats, and much more of any ordinary man. But the 'great reason, why "the blood of bulls and goats could "never take away sin," is this, that they could never 'answer the great ends of punishment, by rendering it 'consistent with the honour of the governor, and with the 'ends of government, to admit the substitution of them 'in our stead. By the obedience of our Lord Jesus 'Christ unto the death, in our stead, the ends of punish'ment are very signally obtained, and that with more 'advantage to God's glory, than if the punishment of our 'offences had been inflicted upon us; and so God by it 'may be truly said to have been satisfied, seeing that 'justice is truly satisfied, when all those ends for which 'the punishment of an offender could be desired are 'obtained. 1. God, by this dispensation, hath given us 'the best and most effectual *example*, to deter us from 'sin. If he, who was the well beloved Son of God, 'found it so dreadful to lie under the burden of the pu'nishment of sin for some hours; how must the sinner 'sink under that burden, when it is laid upon his shoulders "for ever?" 'Also, if on this account "God spared "not his own Son," 'we may be sure he will not spare 'his stubborn enemies. 2. God, by this method, hath 'taken a most excellent way for the *reformation* of the 'sinner. 3. God, by this dispensation, hath sufficiently 'consulted the preservation of his honour, and secured 'the reverence and observation of his laws, seeing he 'hath, by this example, let all men know, that though 'he be a God of great long-suffering and mercy, he will 'by no means clear the sinner, or suffer sin to go un'punished. But that none of these ends could be at all 'obtained by the substitution of a bull, or goat, or ram, 'to suffer in our stead, must be extremely manifest; for 'this would rather tempt men to conceive that God's 'displeasure against sin could not be great, and that he 'was not much concerned for any satisfaction for the 'violations of his laws, when such slight matters were by 'him thought sufficient expiations for them.' (*Whitby.*)

V. 5—10. To prove his doctrine in the most unanswerable manner, the apostle referred the Hebrews to a remarkable prophecy of the Messiah, which showed that his coming was the necessary consequence of the inefficacy of the legal sacrifices, and of God's purpose of saving sinners. (*Note, Ps.* xl. 6—8.) The Messiah, speaking concerning his coming into the world, remarked, that JEHOVAH had no delight in the sacrifices of the law; (*Notes, Ps.* l. 7—15. *Is.* i. 10—15:) but that he had "prepared a body for him." The words in the Psalm are, "mine ears hast thou opened," or "bored." (*Ex.* xxi. 5, 6;) and it hath perplexed many to determine why the apostle, writing to the Hebrews, should quote from the Septuagint, where that translation seems to deviate from the original. But he probably supposed that the words conveyed the true meaning, though not the literal rendering of the passage; and that the production of the holy human nature of Christ was the preparation for his mediatorial obedience, which the Holy Spirit intended by the expression, "mine ears hast thou opened." When JEHOVAH had no satisfaction in the legal sacrifices, not merely because the people rested in them in a formal and self-righteous manner, but especially because they did not sufficiently display the honour of his justice in pardoning sinners, the eternal Son declared his readiness to come into the world in human nature for that purpose; according as it had been written of him in the volume of the book, or in the *opening of the roll* of prophecy, in which he had been promised as the Seed of the woman. Now the apostle argued from this, that the opposition between the sacrifices, in which JEHOVAH had no pleasure, and the obedience of Christ to his whole will, in which he would be fully satisfied, was an evident intimation, that he intended to remove the former, in order to establish the latter in its full glory, and as the only ground of sinners being pardoned and saved. By this will of God, perfectly performed by Christ, in his obedience unto the death upon the cross, Christians were sanctified and consecrated to

11 And every priest standeth [s] daily ministering, and offering often times the same sacrifices, [t] which can never take away sins:

12 But [u] this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God;

13 [x] From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

14 For by one offering [y] he hath perfected for ever [z] them that are sanctified;

15 *Whereof* [a] the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before,

16 This *is* [b] the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;

17 * And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

18 Now, [c] where remission of these *is, there is* no more offering for sin.

19 [d] Having therefore, brethren, † boldness [e] to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

20 By [f] a new and living way, which he hath ‡ consecrated for us, [g] through the veil, that is to say, [h] his flesh;

21 And *having* [i] an High Priest over [k] the house of God;

22 Let us [l] draw near with [m] a true heart, [n] in full assurance of faith, having our hearts [o] sprinkled from [p] an evil conscience, and [q] our bodies washed with pure water.

s vii. 27. Ex. xxix. 38. 39. Num. xxviii. 24 xxix. 6 Ezra iii. 4 Dan. viii 11 ix 21. 27. xi 31 xii 11. Luke i 9, 10 —— t See on 4. —— u See on i. 3. viii. 1. ix 12 Acts ii. 33, 34 Rom. viii. 34 Col iii. 1 —— x i. 13 Ps cx 1 Dan. ii 44. Matt. xxii 44. Mark xii. 36 Luke xx. 43. Acts ii. 35. 1 Cor. xv. 25. —— y 1. vii. 19. 25 ix 10. 14. —— z ii. 11. ix 13, 14 xiii. 12. Acts xx. 32. xxvi 18. Rom. xv. 16. 1 Cor i. 2. Eph v. 26. Jude 1. —— a ii. 3. iii. 7. ix 8 2 Sam xxiii. 2. Neh. ix. 30. John xv. 26. Acts xxviii. 25. 1 Pet. i. 11. 12 2 Pet i. 21. Rev. ii. 7. 11 17. 29. iii. 6. 13 22. xix. 10 —— b See on, viii. 8—12. Jer xxxi. 33, 34. Rom xi. 27.——* Some copies have, *Then he said, And their,* &c.

c *See on*, 2. 14 —— d iv. 16. xii. 28. Rom viii. 15. Gal iv. 6, 7. Eph iii. 12. 2 Tim. i. 7. 1 John iii. 19—21 iv. 17. —— † Or, *liberty* —— e vii. 25. ix. 3. 7, 8 12 23-25. Rom v. 2 Eph. ii 18. 1 John ii. 1, 2 —— John x. 7. 10. xiv. 6. —— ‡ Or, *new made.* —— g vi 19 ix. 3. Ex xxvi. 31, &c xxxvi 35, &c. Lev. xvi. 2. 15 xxi 23. Matt xxvii. 51. Mark xv. 38. Luke xxiii 45 —— h John vi 51—56. Eph. ii 15. 1 Tim iii. 16. 1 Pet iii 18. 1 John iv. 2. 2 John 7 ——i *See on*, ii 17 iii iv. 14, 15. vi 20 vii. 26. viii. 1.——k iii 3—6 Matt xvi. 18. 1 Cor. iii 9—17. 2 Cor. vi. 16, 17 Eph. ii. 19—22. 1 Tim iii. 15.——l iv 16. vii. 19 Ps lxxiii 28. Is. xxix 13 Jer. xxx 21. Jam. iv. 8 ——m 1 Kings xv. 3. 1 Chr. xii. 33. xxviii. 9. xxix. 17. Ps. ix. 1 xxxii. 11. li 10. lxxxiv. 11 xciv. 15. cxi. 1. cxix. 2. 7. 10. 34 58 66. 80. 145. Prov. xxiii. 26. Jer. iii. 10. xxiv. 7. Acts viii. 21. Eph. vi. 5. n *See on*, 19. Matt. xxi. 21, 22 Mark xi 23, 24. Jam. i. 6. 1 John iii. 19 21, 22. o ix. 13, 14. 19. xi 28. xii 24. Lev. xiv. 7. Num. viii 7. xix. 18. 19. Is. lii. 15 Ez. xxxvi. 25. 1 Pet. i. 2.————p John viii 9. 1 Tim. iv 2 1 John iii. 20.————q *See on*, ix. 10 Ez. xxix 4. Lev. viii. 6. Ez. xvi. 9. xxxvi. 25. Zech. xiii. 1 Matt iii 11. John iii. 5. xiii. 8—10. 1 Cor. vi. 11 2 Cor. vii. 1. Eph v 26 Tit. iii 5. 1 Pet. iii. 21. Rev. i. 5.

God, as accepted and spiritual worshippers, through the offering of his body once for sin, with which his mediatorial obedience had been completed. ‘From this memorable passage of the fortieth Psalm, we learn that the only expiation for sin, which God ever appointed, is the sacrifice of his Son in the human nature; that all the sacrifices, which he appointed to the Israelites, were nothing but emblems of the sacrifice of Christ; and that the sacrifice of Christ being offered, the emblems of it are now fitly laid aside, that under the Gospel dispensation there might remain to mankind no sacrifice, having pretension to take away sin but the sacrifice of Christ, expressly established by God himself, as the meritorious cause of our pardon.’ (*Macknight.*)

V. 11—18. Every priest of Aaron's order stood as a servant at his work, offering repeatedly the same ineffectual sacrifices: some of the priests did this every day, and the high priest did it every year on the day of atonement. But *this person*, or *this priest*, even Christ, after the offering of one sacrifice, (because that was of infinite value and eternal efficacy,) sat down as a royal Priest upon his throne at the right hand of God; from that time waiting the fulfilment of the prophecy, or promise, which engaged that all his enemies should be put under his feet. For by his one oblation he had provided effectually for the perfect justification unto eternal life of all those, who received his atonement by that faith that springs from regeneration, and is evidenced by the sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and who were thus set apart and consecrated to the service of God. To this the Holy Spirit had borne testimony in the scripture, which has been before quoted: (*Note*, viii. 7—13:) according to the covenant there spoken of, when the laws of God are written in the heart, every kind and degree of sin will be for ever pardoned; for Christ by his one offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified; and where such perfect remission is vouchsafed, there needs no more sacrifice for sins. For though justified persons continually contract new guilt, and their best services want forgiveness, yet they never fall from a justified state: the sacrifice of Christ continually applied to, in the exercise of penitent faith, preserves their peace; and if the exercise of these graces be intermitted through temptation and sin, corrections, rebukes, and terrors, bring them back again to the same remedy: and thus their justification is, as it were, a permanent act of God, continued in their daily pardon and acceptance for Christ's sake, through life even unto death, and so in judgment and to eternity.

V. 19—22. The apostle, having closed the argumentative part of his epistle, proceeded to apply his doctrine to practical purposes. As believers had liberty and access with boldness, into the immediate presence of God, in the most holy place, and to the mercy-seat, even beyond what was permitted to the high priest himself under the law, it behooved them to make use of this privilege; for they were in no danger of being punished as presumptuous, notwithstanding their sinfulness and the holiness of God, how often soever they came before him; provided they humbly depended on the blood of Jesus, by which this privilege had been procured for sinners. They might now have access into the holiest "by a *new* way." The original way of acceptance and communion with God, through the righteousness of works, had been finally shut up by the entrance of sin: (*Note, Gen.* iii. 24;) and the typical sacrifices could not open another way, as the restrictions and exclusions before stated evidently showed: whilst even the partial admission of the high priest, being preceded with recent sacrifices and blood *newly shed*, showed that the way unto the Holiest was not yet manifested. But the blood of Jesus is always, as it were, *newly shed;* it never loses its efficacy, and may at any time, and by any sinner, be presented in faith before the mercy-seat; and it never fails to procure to all, who thus plead it, a free and acceptable access to God. This way is also

23 Let us [r] hold fast the profession of *our* faith without [s] wavering; [t] for he *is* faithful that promised:

24 And let us [u] consider one another, [x] to provoke unto [y] love, and to good works:

25 Not [z] forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; [a] but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, [b] as ye see the day approaching.

26 For [c] if we sin wilfully, [d] after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, [e] there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

27 But [f] a certain fearful looking for of judgment and [g] fiery indignation, [h] which shall devour the adversaries.

r *See on*, iii. 6 14. iv. 14. Rev. iii. 11.
s Jam. i 6.
t *See on*, vi 18 1 Cor. i 9 x. 13 1 Thes. v. 24. Tit. i 2
u xiii. 3. Ps. xli 1. Prov. xxix 7. Acts xi. 29 Rom. xii. 15. xv 1, 2 1 Cor. viii. 12, 13 ix 22 x. 33. Gal. vi. 1. Col. iii. 16 1 Thes v. 11. 2 Thes iii 9
x Rom. xi 14 2 Cor. viii. 8 ix. 2.——y vi 10, 11 xiii 1. Gal. v. 6. 13. 22. Phil i 9—11 1 Thes. i. 3. iii 12, 13 1 Tim. vi. 18. Tit. ii 14. iii. 8 1 John iii. 18.——z Matt xviii. 20. John xx. 19–29. Acts i 13, 14. ii. 1. 42 xvi. 16. xx, 7. 1 Cor. v 4. xi. 17, 18. 20. xiv 33. Jude 19.——a *See on*, u. 24. iii. 13. Rom xii. 8. 1 Cor. xiv. 3 1 Thes. iv. 18. v. 11. *Marg.*

b Matt xxiv. 33, 34 Mark xiii. 29, 30 Rom. xiii 11—13. Jam. v. 8. 1 Pet. iv 7.
c *See on*, vi. 4–6. Lev. iv 2 13 Num xv. 28—31. Deut xvii. 13 Ps. xix 12, 13. Dan v. 22, 23 Matt xii. 31, 32. 43–45 John ix 41. 1 Tim. i. 13. 2 Pet. ii. 20—22. 1 John v. 16
d Luke xii 47. John xiii. 17 xv. 22–24 2 Thes. ii. 10. Jam iv. 17 ——e *See on* 3—10 ——f ii 3. xii 25. 1 Sam. xxviii 19, 20. Is. xxxiii 14 Dan v 6. Hos x 8. Matt viii. 29. Luke xxi 26. xxiii 30. Rev vi 15—17 ——g xii. 26, Num xvi. 35. Ps xxi. 9, Jer. iv. 3 Ez xxxvi 5. xxxviii. 19. Joel ii. 30. Nah. i 5, 6 Zeph i. 18. iii 8. Mal. iv. 1. Matt. iii 10 12 xiii. 42 50. xxv. 41 Mark ix 43—49. Luke xvi 24. 2 Thes i. 8. Jam v, 3. Rev. xx. 15. h Deut xxxii 43 Ps. lxviii 1, 2 Nah. i 2. 8—10 Luke xix. 27. 1 Thes ii. 15, 16.

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living; as Jesus, the High Priest, ever liveth to intercede before the throne of God for us, as the way itself gives life, as it were, to those that come in it, and as it leads to eternal life. (*Note*, *John* xiv. 6.) This new and living way Christ hath consecrated, authorized, and set apart for this purpose, that we may come to God in the holiest, upon a mercy-seat, "through the veil, that is, his flesh." JEHOVAH displayed his glory above the mercy-seat, in the holy of holies, before the coming of Christ; but this glory was covered and concealed by the veil; that is, the harmony of infinite holiness, with pardoning mercy in the divine conduct and character, was not clearly discovered or understood. But when the human nature of Christ, the Son of God, was wounded and bruised for our sins, the veil was rent from top to bottom, the obscurity was removed, and "a just God and a Saviour" was openly revealed to mankind, displaying his glory from the mercy-seat, and exercising most abundant grace to the vilest of sinners, in a manner most honourable to his infinite purity. Having such a Way to God, and such a High Priest over the true sanctuary, it was not proper that the Hebrews should stand at a distance, as if afraid to approach, or averse to the most cordial reconciliation and friendship. The apostle therefore joined himself to them, and called on them to accompany him in drawing near to the Lord, with fervent desires, large expectations, and continual prayers and thanksgivings, with sincerity and integrity of heart, as real penitents, and upright worshippers, fearing nothing but hypocrisy; and, "in full assurance of faith," most firmly believing that God would accept the persons and services of all those who came to him in this appointed manner. For, though they might properly examine themselves, whether they were true believers or not, and so admit a doubt of their own sincerity or personal acceptance; and therefore "the full assurance of hope" could not always be a *duty*, any more than always attainable; yet they must never allow themselves to doubt of the truth of the testimony of God, or his faithfulness to his promises; so that "the full assurance of faith" was always their duty, though in that, as in other things, they would be liable to come short of it. In order to come in this manner, they must "have their hearts sprinkled from an evil "conscience," by a special reliance on the atoning blood of Christ, to take away their sense of guilt and fears of wrath, and to give them solid peace, connected with the purifying of their consciences from error, ignorance, partiality, and stupidity, or whatever might render them quiet in the allowance of any kind or degree of sin, and the cleansing of their hearts from all corrupt and carnal affections. Their "bodies also must be washed with pure "water," as the priests were washed with water before they were admitted to enter upon their office, and continually washed themselves in some measure before they officiated; and as divers washings were appointed to the worshippers by the law, so the use of water in baptism was to be a constant memorial to Christians, that their outward conduct should be pure and holy before men, as well as their hearts and consciences cleansed in the sight of God. Thus they would approve themselves to be spiritual worshippers; and, whilst they derived comfort and grace from their reconciled Father, they would adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things.

V. 23—25. The apostle further called upon the Hebrews, to unite with him in holding fast the profession of their faith and hope in Christ, without wavering in it, faltering about it, or shrinking from the persecutions to which it would expose them; being assured that God would vouchsafe them the present supports, and the future felicity which he had promised, and depending on his faithfulness for them. And moreover, they ought to consider one another's interests, dangers, and situations, and by what means they could be of service to each other; especially they should endeavour, by their example and exhortations, to stimulate one another to the more vigorous and abundant exercise of love, and the zealous practice of good works. Nor ought they, from fear of the reproaches and persecutions of their enemies, to forsake the assembling of themselves together, on the Lord's day, or at other times, to worship God in his ordinances, and to hear his word, as the manner of some Christians was, who were induced, through timidity or lukewarmness, to decline such attendance on public worship. On the contrary, they ought to exhort one another continually to be bold, constant, and diligent, in their holy religion, in honouring God before his enemies, and in seeking their own and each other's edification, and establishment in the faith. This they should the more resolutely perform, as they might clearly see the signs of Jerusalem's approaching desolation, which the Lord Jesus had mentioned in his predictions of that catastrophe, and which was evidently approaching. (*Notes*, *Matt.* xxiv.) This epistle was written only a few years before that event, and as it would be a critical deliverance of Christians from the persecutions of the Jews, so it would be peculiarly terrible to apostates.

V. 26, 27. (*Notes*, &c. vi. 4—9.) The Hebrews

28 He that [i] despised Moses' law died [k] without mercy, [l] under two or three witnesses:

[i] See on, ii 2. Num. xv. 30, 31. 36. Deut. xiii. 6—10 xvii. 12, 13. 2 Sam xii. 9. 13.

[k] Deut. xix. 13 Is xxvii 11 Jer. xiii. 14. Rom. ix. 15. Jam ii. 13.——[l] Deut xvii. 6, 7 xix. 15 Matt xviii. 16. John viii. 17. 2 Cor. xiii. 1.

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would be tempted to apostacy, not only by the virulence of their persecuting countrymen, but by their own undue attachment to the legal sacrifices. So long as they supposed that the blood of bulls, lambs, or goats, could take away sin, they might hope for safety in renouncing Christianity, and so escaping persecution; and thus they might be induced to "sin wilfully, after they had received the "knowledge of the truth." The whole argument shows, that the apostle principally intended a wilful, deliberate, and pertinacious apostacy, not the effect of ignorance or sudden surprise, but against the convictions of their own consciences, and in a presumptuous and obstinate manner, though he expressed himself in such language, as might also warn the readers against every kind of wilful and presumptuous sin. The persons spoken of were such, as had "received the knowledge of the truth," and were so enlightened in respect of the evidences and doctrines of Christianity, as to make a credible and intelligent profession of it, even in the time of the apostles. When this had *preceded*, a wilful renunciation of Christianity to return to Judaism, either from a determined purpose of escaping persecution, or from proud and carnal enmity to the humiliating and spiritual truth of the Gospel, would generally be fatal. In respect of such apostates, "there "remained no more sacrifice for sin;" the legal sacrifices had lost all their validity and efficacy to avert even national judgments since the death of Christ, which was the Substance of all these shadows; so that the Jewish nation was devoted to speedy destruction, for crucifying their Messiah and rejecting his Gospel; nor could their most exact and zealous attention to the legal expiations procure the least respite from their approaching miseries, or any alleviation of them; and the apostates wilfully chose their portion with that accursed generation, "after having received the "knowledge of the truth." Nor could it be expected, that they would ever be "renewed to repentance" of this atrocious and presumptuous wickedness; for they must have witnessed so many miracles, and even have exercised such gifts of the Holy Spirit themselves, that it might be supposed they had committed the blasphemy against that divine Agent, by ascribing his operation to some satanical influence, and that they would be given up to final impenitence and unbelief, and be wholly excluded from the benefit of Christ's efficacious sacrifice. So that nothing would remain for them, either as individuals or as a part of the Jewish nation, in respect of their temporal or their eternal state, but a certain, inevitable, and most terrible expectation of the judgment and vengeance of God, and of his indignation, like flaming fire, to consume them as his implacable enemies, and sacrifices to his offended justice, in the same manner that the fire on the altar consumed the typical sacrifices. There seems in this passage to be a peculiar reference to the unexampled miseries, which came soon after on the Jewish nation, and to their desperate rage and fury in the midst of them: and this horror of conscience, connected with desperation and all its tremendous effects, (as in the case of Judas,) might be expected to be most common among apostates from Christianity, who had done violence to their own convictions, and sinned against their better knowledge with presumptuous enmity, when they saw matters evidently coming to those extremities which Christ had predicted. But this horror and despair were only a shadow of the unspeakable anguish to which they would at length be reduced, when the insulted Saviour should proceed to execute vengeance upon them, from which they would see that it was impossible to escape. Sometimes apostates have perceived their desperate condition before death, and, in all the horrors and blasphemous rage of damned spirits, have served as beacons to warn others not to imitate their conduct. Probably there were few or no instances of such *enlightened* and *deliberate* apostates being restored; perhaps several of them had been known to be given up to the most tremendous horrors of conscience, and it was peculiarly proper to state this matter in such strong language, for the benefit of others. Yet this did not imply, that any *penitent* would fail of obtaining mercy, or that any one would be excluded from the benefit of the Saviour's sacrifice, who humbly, earnestly, and *perseveringly* sought it, into whatever sins he had been betrayed. The persons spoken of are considered as *adversaries*, which cannot properly be applied to the case of any trembling, weeping, praying penitent. It was not probable, that such apostates as were described would, in the peculiar circumstances of those times, return to seek forgiveness by faith in the blood of Christ; and their danger consisted in being given up to final obduracy or desperation. These things indeed were written to warn those who wavered in their profession; not to affright the fallen, or to discourage the penitent. The passage therefore can have nothing to do with the case of persons called Christians in these days, who had not previously received the knowledge, either of the evidences or doctrines of Christianity; but who, through the ignorance and the artifices of wicked men, were led to doubt, or deny, the truth of the Scriptures, without any of the peculiar aggravations of these primitive apostates. Some of these persons, being afterwards "renewed to repentance," have assuredly believed the Gospel, experienced the power of its truth in their hearts, and produced the fruits of it in their lives; yet Satan has taken advantage of the sound of this and similar passages, and of some unguarded things that expositors have said upon the subject, to harass them with perpetual apprehensions, that there remained no benefit for them in the sacrifice of Christ, because they once doubted the truth of Christianity, though they now value that salvation more than all the world. Some cases of this kind have fallen under the writer's cognizance; and in this day of skepticism and infidelity, in which multitudes aspire to the reputation of free-thinkers by never thinking seriously at all, there may be many others of the same kind; for when Satan can no longer buoy up men in unbelieving presumption, he endeavours to drive them into unbelieving desperation; and he never fails to harass those to the utmost, whose destruction he cannot compass. To obviate such conclusions, these passages have been enlarged on, and shown to be totally inapplicable to the case under consideration. Even when the Gospel has been renounced, after far clearer knowledge, and with much greater malig-

29 Of [m] how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath [n] trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted [o] the blood of the covenant, [p] wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, [q] and hath done despite unto [r] the Spirit of grace?

30 For we know him that hath said, [s] Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, [t] The Lord shall judge his people.

31 *It is* [u] a fearful thing [x] to fall into the hands of the living God.

m *See on*, ii 3 xii. 25. n 2 Kings ix 33. Ps. xci. 13. Is xiv. 19. xxviii 3. Lam. i. 15. Ez. xvi. 6. *Marg.* Mic. vii. 10. Matt. vii 6. Rom. xvi 20 1 Cor. xv 25. 27 o *See on*, ix. 20. xiii. 20. p ii 11 ix. 13. Jer. i 5 John x 36. xvii. 19. 1 Cor. xi. 27 29. q Is lxiii. 10. Matt. xii. 31, 32 Luke xii. 10. Acts vii. 51. Eph. iv. 30. r Ps cxliii. 10. Zech. xii. 10 s Deut. xxxii. 35. Ps xciv. 1. Is. lix. 17. lxi 2. lxiii 4. Nah i. 2. Rom. xii. 19. xiii. 4 ——t Deut. xxxii 36 Ps l 4 xcvi. 12. xcviii. 9. cxxxv 14 Ez xviii 30. xxxiv 17. 2 Cor v 10 ——u 27. Is xxxiii 14. Luke xxi 11 ——x xii. 29 Ps. l. 22. lxxvi 7 xc 11. Matt x. 28. Luke xii. 5.

32 But [y] call to remembrance the former days, in which, [z] after ye were illuminated, [a] ye endured a great fight of afflictions;

33 Partly, whilst ye were [b] made a gazing-stock, both [c] by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, [d] whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.

34 For ye had compassion of me [e] in my bonds, [f] and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing [*] in yourselves [g] that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.

y Gal. iii. 3, 4. Phil. iii 16. 2 John 8. Rev ii. 5. iii 3 z *See on*, vi. 4. Acts xxvi. 18. 2 Cor. iv 6. a xii 4. Acts viii. 1—3 ix 1, 2. Phil i. 29, 30. 2 Tim. ii 3, &c. iv 7, 8. b xi 36. Ps lxxi. 7. Nah. iii. 6. Zech. iii. 8. 1 Cor iv 9. c xi 26. xiii 18. Ps lxix 9. lxxiv. 22. lxxix. 12. lxxxix 51. Is. li. 7. 2 Cor xii 10. d Phil i. 7 iv. 14. 2 Tim i 8 16—18. e Acts xxi. 33. xxviii 20 Eph. iii 1. iv. 1. vi. 20 2 Tim ii. 9.——f Matt. v. 11. 12. Acts v. 41 Jam i. 2.——* Or, *that ye have in yourselves, or, for yourselves.*——g Matt vi. 19, 20 xix. 21. Luke x. 42. xii 33 2 Cor v. 1. Col. i. 5. iii 2—4. 1 Tim. vi. 19. 2 Tim iv 8 1 Pet. i. 4 1 John iii 2.

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nity, than in the case before stated, the apostacy cannot be *fatal*, unless it be *final.* It is the peculiar honour of God's mercy, and of the redemption of Christ, that none are excluded, who are willing to accept of them in the prescribed manner: "Him that cometh unto Christ, he "will *in no wise* cast out," whatever he hath before been guilty of: but when professed Christians are tempted to apostacy, they may well fear, lest God should be provoked to give them up to final obduracy and a reprobate mind. 'The apostle lays it down as certain, that God will not 'pardon sinners, without some sacrifice or satisfaction. 'For otherwise it would not follow, from there remaining to apostates no other sacrifice for sin, that there must 'remain to them a dreadful expectation of judgment.' (*Macknight.*) (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 28—31. The sacrifices of the law were principally appointed for sins of ignorance, infirmity, or inadvertency; but presumptuous transgressors were excluded from that benefit. (*Marg. Ref.*) He, therefore, who despised the law of Moses, and deliberately violated its plain commands, in contempt and defiance of the authority and vengeance of God, was punishable with death, and excluded from mercy, when the fact had been legally proved; even though the crime were such as might otherwise have been pardoned through a trespass-offering. But of how much severer vengeance would they be adjudged to be deserving, who had renounced the Gospel, in that wilful, contemptuous, and presumptuous manner, which had been described! They had indeed, as it were, trampled upon the Son of God, with insolent defiance and disdain, by doing all in their power to dishonour him, and to provoke him with the most desperate ingratitude and impiety: they had esteemed that precious blood, which purchased all the blessings of the new covenant for sinners, and ratified it to all that believed, and by the shedding of which Christ had been sanctified, or consecrated to be the High Priest and Advocate of sinners in the heavenly sanctuary, as if it had been an unclean thing, less holy than the blood of goats, or as vile as that of a malefactor! Some indeed apply the word *sanctified* to the apostate; who had been admitted into the church, as set apart for God, and consecrated to his service by professing faith in the blood of Christ, which he afterwards vilified. This may refer to those blasphemies against Jesus of Nazareth, which were often required of such as renounced the Gospel, in order to avoid death or other sufferings; and which apostates would commonly use, in order to gain confidence with the party which they had joined. They had moreover done despite to the Holy Spirit, the divine and gracious Author of spiritual life, and all its consolations in the souls of sinners. They had acted in direct opposition to the convictions of the Holy Spirit, and to his strivings with them. In renouncing Christianity, they traduced, with most virulent reproaches, that religion, which was adorned by the holy fruits of the Spirit in the lives of its professors: and above all, by ascribing his miraculous power to satanical agency, even contrary to their own knowledge; they acted as if they were determined to provoke him in the most despiteful manner possible. So that the authority and mercy of the Father; the Person, love, and atoning blood of the Son; and the Person and operations of the Holy Spirit, were alike insulted and blasphemed by them, after having professed the Gospel, and having been baptized "into the "name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost," yea, most of them at least, after having received the Holy Spirit by the laying on of the hands of the apostles! and what punishment could be too severe for such accumulated guilt? Nor should any man, when tempted to so atrocious a crime, flatter himself with hopes of impunity, from the immensity of the divine mercy; seeing God had declared that vengeance belonged to him as his peculiar prerogative; and that he would judge his people, being determined to punish with most decided severity, the crimes of such as renounced his worship, or committed wickedness to the disgrace of their profession. (*Notes, Deut.* xxxii. 35—44.) And it would be found, and might be known, to be a terrible thing, beyond all expression or imagination, to fall into the hands of the living, the eternal, and almighty God, as sacrifices to his justice, and objects of his vengeance and abhorrence, without any oblation or Mediator, to appease his indignation. This was about to be the case of the Jewish nation; and it would peculiarly be the doom of wilful and malignant apostates from Christianity. 'The epithet of *living*, is given to God, in 'this passage where his vengeance is spoken of, to show, 'that as he lives for ever, he can punish for ever; a con'sideration which adds to the terribleness of his ven'geance.' (*Macknight.*)

35 [h] Cast not away therefore your confidence which hath [i] great recompense of reward.

36 For [k] ye have need of patience; that, [l] after ye have done the will of God, [m] ye might receive the promise.

37 For [n] yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

38 Now [o] the just shall live by faith; [p] but if *any man* draw back, [q] my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

39 But [r] we are not of them who draw back [s] unto perdition: [t] but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

h *See on,* iii. 6. 14. iv. 14.
i xi. 26. Ps. xix. 11. Matt. v 12. x. 42 Luke xiv 14 1 Cor xv. 58. Gal vi 8—10
k vi. 15. xii 1. Ps. xxxvii. 7 xl 1. Matt. x. 22 xxiv. 13. Luke viii 15. xxi. 19. Rom ii. 7. v. 3, 4. viii. 25. xv 4, 5. 1 Cor xiii. 7. Gal. vi. 9 Col. i. 11. 1 Thes. i 3. Jam. i. 3, 4 v. 7—11. Rev xiii 10 xiv. 12 ——l xiii. 21. Matt. vii. 21. xii. 50. xxi. 31. John vii 17. Acts xiii. 22 36. Rom. xii. 2 Eph. vi. 6 Col. iv 12. 1 John ii 17 ——m *See on,* vi. 12. 15 17 ix. 15. 1 Pet i. 9 ——n Is xxvi. 20. lx. 22. Hab ii. 3. Luke xviii. 8. Jam. v. 7—9. 2 Pet. iii. 8, 9. Rev. xxii. 20
o Hab. ii. 4 Rom. i 17. Gal. iii. 11.
p *See on,* 26, 27. vi. 4—6. Ps. lxxxv. 8. Ez. iii. 20. xviii. 24. Zeph. i. 6. Matt. xii. 43—45. xiii. 21. 2 Pet. ii. 18—22. 1 John ii. 19.
q Ps. v. 4. cxlvii. 11. cxlix. 4 Is. xlii. 1. Mal i. 10. Matt. xii 18. 1 Thes. ii. 15 ——r vi. 6—9. 1 Sam. xv. 11. Ps. xliv. 18. Prov. i 32 xiv. 14. Luke xi. 26. 1 John v. 16. Jude 12, 13 ——s John xvii. 12. 2 Thes. ii. 3. 1 Tim. vi. 9. 2 Pet. iii 7. Rev. xvii. 8. 11 ——t xi. 1. Mark xvi. 16. John iii. 15, 16. v. 24. vi. 40. xx. 31. Acts xvi. 30, 31. Rom x 9, 10. 1 Thes. v. 9 2 Thes. ii. 12, 13. 1 Pet. i. 5. 1 John v. 5.

V. 32—34. The apostle here proceeded to caution the Hebrews by other topics. To fortify their minds against temptations to apostacy, or other wilful sins, they ought frequently to recollect the former days of their profession; and to consider what they had ventured, suffered, and renounced for Christ, and how they had been supported and comforted under their trials. When they were first illuminated in the knowledge of the gospel, (*Notes, 2 Cor.* iv. 3—6;) and had been admitted into the Christian church; they were speedily called, as soldiers to the combat, to contend with persecutions and afflictions. Some of them were made a public spectacle to their neighbours, by the malicious accusations brought against them, and the disgrace, derision, and punishment laid upon them: and others were the companions and witnesses of the cruelties inflicted on those who were so used; and thus were called to unite sympathy with their afflicted brethren, to alarms on their own account. Among those whom the apostle especially addressed, were several that had shown compassion to him some years before, when he was bound at Jerusalem, and in his subsequent imprisonment: and when, on that or other accounts, their property was seized and confiscated, they bore it, not only patiently, but joyfully; having abundant consolation from the assurance that they had in heaven a better and more enduring inheritance, which could not be taken from them, but would be their *substantial* felicity for ever: for they possessed *in themselves*, independently of all external things, the pledges and earnests of that expected blessing.

V. 35—39. None of those who had acted hitherto in an honourable and consistent manner, should at length cast away their confidence in Christ, or renounce the profession of his name, which they had boldly made; and to which so gracious and abundant a recompense was promised. Some indeed who once seemed to be zealous believers had apostatized, and the rest would surely be tried greatly; and they had need to have their minds armed with patient resignation and persevering constancy: that, having done the will of God, by steadfastly cleaving to Christ, and obeying, they might afterwards receive the promised gift of eternal life. For in respect of their final deliverance from trouble, as well as to the coming of Christ to take vengeance on the Jewish nation, and thus to deliver the christian Church from the persecutions which they endured from that quarter, the words of God by the prophet might properly be applied. (*Notes, Hab.* ii. 1—4:) and the *just, by faith,* would live, as had been predicted, while proud unbelievers would be cut off and perish: but if any man, who had made the most plausible profession of faith in Christ, should draw back in the time of trial, and finally apostatize, the Lord declared, by his apostle, according to the tenour of his whole word, and speaking after the manner of men, that "his soul should have no "pleasure in him," that is, he would utterly reject and entirely abhor him. Many of the Hebrews had thus evidenced the insincerity of their profession by apostacy; and others began to forsake the assembling of themselves together, who needed to be reproved and warned; but the apostle trusted that he himself, and they whom he immediately addressed, were not of the same character with those who drew back to perdition, but such as had "believed to the saving of their souls; even such as were partakers of living faith, and would be kept through it by the power of God, unto salvation.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—4.

So precious are the blessings which come to us through the Gospel, that all sacrifices and ordinances, however varied and multiplied, could only be an indistinct shadow, and not so much as an exact image of them: and, in like manner, the most nervous language, the most lively expressions, and the most fervent affections, fall immensely beneath their real excellency. The righteousness brought in, and the sacrifice once offered, by Christ, are of eternal efficacy, and his salvation shall never be abolished: they suffice to make all "the comers thereunto perfect:" the worshippers, once purged by his atoning blood, need seek no other sacrifice; nor will they, by the conscience of guilt, be ever driven to adopt such expedients, as call sin to remembrance, yet cannot possibly take it away; but daily applying to the great propitiation, they derive from it both strength and motives for obedience, and inward comfort, notwithstanding their sinfulness. Most certain it is from these chapters, that God will not pardon any transgression without such a sacrifice as can really expiate the guilt of it. And if those sacrifices, which were of his own appointment, could not take away sin, because they could not satisfy the demands of his justice, let none suppose, that human inventions, self-imposed penances, prayers, tears, amendment, moral virtues, alms-deeds, or any other device or performance, can avail in the behalf of those, who put them in the place of the sacrifice of the Son of God: "for if righteousness," in any way or degree, "come by "the law, then Christ died in vain."

V. 5—18.

When the eternal Son saw the hopeless condition of

CHAP. XI.

The nature, excellency and efficacy of faith, illustrated by the examples of the most eminent saints, from Abel to the close of the old testament-dispensation, 1—38. *The superior advantages of Christianity,* 39, 40.

NOW [a] faith [b] is the * substance of things [c] hoped for, [d] the evidence of things not seen.

2 For [e] by it the elders obtained a good report.

a 13. x. 22. 39. Acts xx. 21. 1 Cor. xiii. 13. Gal. v. 6. Tit. i. 1. 1 Pet. i. 7. 2 Pet. i. 1.
b Ps. xxvii. 13. xlii. 11.
* Or, *ground,* or, *confidence.* i. 3. iii. 14. 2 Cor. ix. 4. xi. 17 *Gr.*——c *See on,* vi. 12. 18, 19.——d 7. 27. Rom. viii. 24, 25. 2 Cor. iv. 18. v. 7. 1 Pet. i. 8.——e 4—39.

fallen man, for whom no sacrifices or contrivances could in the least avail, he, according as it had been written of him in the volume of the book from the beginning, with infinite compassion to our deserved misery, came, in our nature, to accomplish the will of the Father, and to "bear "our sins in his own body on the tree." Thus, by one sacrifice for sins, he effected the glorious and gracious design, and now seated on the right hand of God, he henceforth expects till all his enemies shall be put under his feet. What then remains, but that we seek an interest in this sacrifice by faith, and the seal of it to our souls by "the sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience?" Thus, by the law being written in our hearts, we may know that we are perfectly justified, and that God will no more remember any of our sins and iniquities.

V. 19—25.

Having "access with boldness into the holiest by the "blood of Jesus;" by "the new and living way which he "hath consecrated for us," through the rending of the veil by his crucifixion for our sins; and having such a High Priest over the house of God, let us not stand at a distance, or turn away from him, who beseeches us to be reconciled: let us in the first place, beware of hypocrisy, that we may "draw near "with a true heart:" let us watch and pray against unbelief, that we may come "in the full assurance of faith," as knowing this to be the appointed and only way of acceptance and salvation: let us apply his blood to purge us from guilt, and seek for his promised grace to cleanse us from all our filthiness; that so, our hearts being sprinkled from an evil conscience, we may lay aside the body of the sins of the flesh, and henceforth walk in newness of life. Thus we shall be enabled to "hold fast the profession of our faith "without wavering," whatever temptations or seducing examples we may meet with, as knowing that he is faithful who hath promised; and with composed and cheerful minds, we shall be enabled to consider the cases of our brethren, that we may animate them to love and good works. But if they were not to be excused, who, in the time of severe persecution, forsook the assembling of themselves together, how shall we answer it to God, if, in these favoured days, we indolently absent ourselves from the assemblies of his saints, and neglect to honour him by attendance on his ordinances? Against such evils we should exhort others; and we ought ourselves gladly to suffer the word of exhortation, as knowing that soon the day of death and of judgment approacheth.

V. 26—39.

By negligence, pride, or carnal self-love, or by gradually yielding to the fear of man, professors of the Gospel are left to "sin wilfully, after they have received "the knowledge of the truth;" and, though the fallen, the weak, and the trembling should be encouraged, yet we cannot too awfully alarm the secure and presumptuous; as every deliberate sin against light and conscience is a step towards the tremendous precipice here described. Neither the mercy of God, the sacrifice of Christ, nor the love of the Spirit, will profit that man who "tramples under foot "the Son of God," treats his atoning blood with insolent contempt, and does despite to the Spirit of grace. For such daring rebels and apostates, "there remains no more "sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judg- "ment and fiery indignation, to consume" them as the enemies of the Lord. To him belongeth vengeance, and his righteous recompenses of the crimes committed by hypocrites and apostates will be more terrible than the doom of Sodom, or even than that executed upon the devoted Jews. However men may now despise these warnings, they will at length know that it is "a dreadful thing to fall "into the hands of the living God," and to hear him say, "It is a people that hath no understanding; therefore he "who made them will have no mercy on them." Let then every professed Christian "give diligence to make his "calling and election sure:" let us all remember our convictions, affections, and purposes, when we were first enlightened, and how we thought that we should be willing to endure or part with any thing, if we could but obtain peace with God and a good hope of salvation; and let us remember our consolations and supports under former trials. And if we have been called to "endure a great "fight of afflictions," and have suffered reproaches and losses with fortitude and cheerfulness, from a persuasion that we had "in heaven a better and a more enduring sub- "stance," let us not disgrace our former conduct, or "cast "away our confidence, which hath great recompense of "reward." For we still have need of patience, whilst we wait the accomplishment of God's promises, in obedience to his will. But the time is short: he that *cometh* will soon come, and will not tarry beyond his appointed season; and he will shortly end our sorrows and conflicts, by removing our souls to heaven; yea, he will speedily come to raise the dead, and perfect our salvation. Let us then show that we are justified through faith, by living and walking with God in dependence upon his promises, and in obedience to his commands, because we are satisfied with the security of his word. Thus we shall possess the assurance, that "we are not of them who draw back to "perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of "the soul."

NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1, 2. The apostle, having referred to the prophet's testimony, that "the just should live by "faith," proceeded more fully to show the nature and efficacy of that principle, and to prove that it had always

3 Through [f] faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God; so that things which are seen, were not made of things which do appear.

4 By [g] faith Abel offered unto God [h] a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which [i] he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; [k] and by it he being dead * yet speaketh.

[f] i. 2. Gen. i 1, &c. ii. [illegible]. Ps xxxiii 6. Is. xl. 26. Jer. x. 11. 16 John i. 3 Acts xiv 15. xvii 24 Rom. i. 19—21. iv. 17 2 Pet. iii 5. Rev. iv. 11

[g] Gen. iv 3—5 15. 25 1 John iii. 11, 12

[h] ix. 22. Prov xv. 8. xxi. 27. Tit. i. 16 Jude 11.

[i] Lev. ix 24. 1 Kings xviii 38. Matt. xxiii. 35. Luke xi. 51.

[k] xii. 1. 24.

* Or, *is yet spoken of*.

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been the grand peculiarity of JEHOVAH's worshippers, from the beginning of the world. This induction of examples he prefaced by a definition of faith; in which he did not confine his views to one single exercise of that fundamental grace, but took in all the variety of its actings, in the whole of a believer's experience and conduct. Where the principle, from which faith springs, is implanted by the regenerating Spirit of God, it leads a man to receive the truth concerning justification by the merits of Jesus Christ, according to the measure of light afforded him; but it will also embrace the whole word of God, and expect its accomplishment as to all the extent, in which he hath spoken and promised. This divine faith is "the sub-"stance of things hoped for:" crediting the testimony of God, resting on his promises, and expecting the accomplishment of them, it gives the object hoped for at some *future* period, a *present subsistence* in the soul, as if it were already possessed; for the believer is satisfied with the security afforded, and acts under the persuasion that God will not fail of his engagements. Thus he gives up present advantages, and endures present hardships, in obedience to God, and in waiting for his promise; even as men give ready money for an estate in reversion, or endure present labour in hope of future ease and indulgence.—But faith has not only respect to the good things hoped for: it is also, "the evidence of things not seen." The things revealed to faith, but invisible to sense and undiscoverable by reason, may relate to the past, the present, or the future: to God, and to his works of creation, providence, and redemption; to his omniscient presence and his future judgment; to the world of spirits, and the eternal state of happiness or misery: to the law and its sanctions, or the gospel and its privileges; and, in short, to a vast variety of particulars which cannot be enumerated. But faith is the *evidence*, the internal conviction, or demonstration, of them all. To unbelievers they appear false, dubious or visionary; as they have no medium by which to obtain satisfaction about them: but believers take the plain testimony of God as a truth already demonstrated, and which requires no further proof: their argument is this: "God "hath said it, and it must be true." And, in proportion to the strength of their faith, their judgment and conduct are influenced by this realizing conviction, with reference to things revealed; even as if they were the objects of sight, or capable of strict demonstration. The believer uses his powers of reasoning, to obtain satisfaction concerning the evidence, that such or such matters are divinely revealed; and to determine the meaning of the words, in which the revelation is conveyed. But when these previous questions are answered, he most rationally says, "God hath determined this point: and though I once thought otherwise, as multitudes still do; yet infinite knowledge and truth have decided against our prejudices and erroneous opinions, and I submit to the divine teaching.' He is not so absurd, as to attempt to invalidate the testimony of God by his objections, or to give force to it by his arguments. He does not suppose that divine revelation must be level to man's comprehension, or coincide with his speculations: he expects, believes, and adores mysteries, but knows that contradiction is not mystery; nor can any evidence prove a *real* contradiction to our senses, or *certain* knowledge, to be a divine revelation; so that mysteries *above* reason he humbly receives, but absurdities *contrary* to it, he ascribes to misconstruction or imposture. This definition of faith will be illustrated by all the examples in this chapter. The apostle further observed, that by faith all their pious progenitors, and other eminent persons in former times, had obtained a good report, or an honourable character in the word of God: by faith they were all justified, and the same was the principle of all their holy obedience and eminent services, and patient constant sufferings in the cause of truth and holiness.

V. 3. The heavens and the earth, and all things in them, as well as the regular order with which they are governed and directed, might, indeed, be proved by argument to be the contrivance and work of God; yet men's reason had never come to any satisfactory and practical conclusions in this matter; so that, "by faith" crediting the word of God, we believe, and understand to good purpose, that the worlds were contrived, framed, created, and arranged in their present order by the omnipotent command of God; so that the things which we now behold in such resplendent beauty, were made of those "which do "not appear." They were produced from the chaotic mass, which was without form and void, by that powerful word, which first called the chaos out of non-existence. This was effected in the six days' work of creation; and the satisfactory assurance which believers derive from the scriptural account of the original of the world, being contrasted with the discordant hypotheses and endless disputations of ancient philosophers and modern theorists, exhibits a very striking illustration of the proposition, that "faith is the evidence," or demonstration, "of things "not seen." (*Notes, Gen.* i. ii.) 'This world, which 'we see, was not made of any appearing or existing 'matter, but from nothing, contrary to the axiom of all 'the philosophers, 'From nothing nothing is made.' This 'indeed never could enter into the mind of any philo'sophers, not even of those who wrote that God created 'the world. Therefore the whole of this is *of faith*.' (*Beza.*) Nothing can possibly be more unphilosophical, or indeed absurd, than the notion of the eternal preexistence of that chaos, from which God created the world: yet I apprehend Beza had firm ground for asserting that none of the philosophers had perceived this, or without revelation would have perceived it. Most commentators consider this verse as a decided proof that God created the world from nothing; which, no doubt, is the doctrine both of reason and revelation. (*Note, Gen.* i. 1.)

5 By faith [l] Enoch was [m] translated that he should not see death; [n] and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had [o] this testimony, [p] that he pleased God.

6 But [q] without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for [r] he that cometh to God [s] must believe that he is, and *that* he is [t] a rewarder of them that [u] diligently seek him.

7 By faith [x] Noah, being [y] warned of God of [z] things not seen as yet, * moved with fear, [a] prepared an ark to the saving of his house, by the which [b] he condemned the world, and became heir of the [c] righteousness which is by faith.

l Gen v. 22—24. Luke iii. 37 Jude 14. m 2 Kings ii. 11. Ps lxxxix. 48 John viii 51, 52. n 2Kings ii 16, 17. Jer. xxxvi, 26. Rev. xi. 9—12. o 3, 4. p 6 Gen. v. 22 Rom. viii 8, 9. 1 Thes i 4. 1 John iii. 22. q iii. 12. 18. 19 iv. 2. 6. Num. xiv. 11. xx. 12 Ps. lxxviii. 22. 32. cvi. 24 Is. vii. 9. Mark xvi. 16 John iii 18, 19 viii 24. Gal v. 6. Rev. xxi. 8.——r *See on*, vii 25 x. 35 Job xxi 14 Ps. lxxiii 28 Is lv. 3. Jer. ii. 31. John xiv 6.——s Rom x. 14.——t 26 Gen. xv 1. Ruth ii. 12 Ps. lviii. 11. Prov. xi. 18, Matt. v. 12. vi 1, 2. 5. 16. x. 41, 42. Luke vi. 35.

u 1 Chr xxviii. 9 Ps. cv. 3, 4. cxix 10. Prov. viii. 17 Cant. iii 1—4. Jer. xxix. 13, 14. Matt vi. 33. Luke xii. 58. 2 Pet. i. 5. 10. iii. 14. x Gen vi. 13—22. vii. 1. 5. Matt. xxiv. 38, 39. Luke xvii 26. 27. *Noe* 2 Pet ii 5. y Gen vi 13. xix. 14 Ex ix. 18—21. Prov xxii. 3 xxvii. 12. Ez. iii. 17—19. Matt iii 7 xxiv 15—25. 2Pet. iii. 6—8 ——z *See on*, 1.——* Or, *being wary See on*, v. 7 *Gr.*——a Gen vi. 18 vii. 1, 28. viii 16. Ez. xiv. 14 20. 1 Pet. iii. 20.——b Matt. xii 41, 42. Luke xi 31, 32.——c Rom. i. 17. iii. 22. iv. 11. ix. 30. x. 6 Gal. v. 5. Phil iii. 9 2 Pet i. 1.

V. 4. The original word, rendered "more excellent, signifies also a *greater*, or more complete, sacrifice. Cain brought the meat-offering alone: Abel brought that, and the firstlings of his flock also. By faith embracing the promise of a Redeemer, who was to come, Abel, as a sinner, penitently, humbly, uprightly, and obediently, presented unto God the typical sacrifice, which had been appointed, and he was accepted; but Cain, in self-will, self-wisdom, self-righteousness, impenitence, unbelief, and rebellion, brought a formal acknowledgment to God of his obligations to him for temporal benefits, but not the atonement for his sins. He seemed to say, with modern infidels and skeptics, 'In what is my sacrifice inferior to 'Abel's? Why should he be so bigoted, as to think God 'will accept none, who do not come in his peculiar way! 'I, *being sincere*, shall be as favourably received with my 'sacrifice, as he with his: and indeed it seems more '*rational* to present the first fruits of the earth, than to 'slay an innocent lamb, to be burned upon the altar.' Yet God rejected his offering: and his rage and enmity against Abel, the accepted worshipper of God, produced the same horrid effects, which similar principles have in every age been producing, in cruel persecutions, and multiplied murders of believers, by proud formalists and hypocrites. But God himself attested, that Abel was righteous before him, and that his oblations were accepted: so that, being murdered by Cain, he still speaketh to us; declaring that sinners can come to God only by penitent faith in the great Propitiation; that faith is uniformly connected with righteousness and upright obedience: that believers have their portion in a better world, and not on earth; that they must expect no favour from proud unbelievers and Pharisees; and that their blood shed by persecutors calls from the ground to heaven for vengeance. (*Notes, Gen.* iv. 1—14.) Abel 'offered a sin-offering, as well as a 'meat-offering. Whereas Cain, having no sense of sin, 'thought himself obliged to offer nothing but a meat-'offering. In this character of Abel, Paul had our Lord's 'expression in his eye, "the blood of righteous Abel." (*Matt.* xxiii. 35.) 'As in after times God testified his 'acceptance of particular sacrifices, by sending down fire 'upon them, we may suppose that it was in that man-'ner that he testified Abel's righteousness upon his offer-'ing. Flesh not being permitted to men till after the 'flood, Abel must have thought it unlawful to kill any an-'imal, unless God had ordered it to be killed as a sacrifice.' (*Macknight.*)

V. 5, 6. (*Note, Gen.* v. 22—24.) By faith, Enoch was so peculiarly favoured of God, that he was translated to heaven, without *seeing* death, or experiencing its painful stroke; his body having been changed and rendered incorruptible, that he might immediately enter on his full felicity. So that he was not found on earth by those who sought him, as the sons of the prophet sought Elijah; for the Lord had taken him to himself. (*Marg. Ref.*) But, before this took place, he had received some evident testimony, that God was pleased with him, and probably this was made known to his contemporaries. St. Paul here quotes the Septuagint, where the words translated in our version, "he walked with God," are twice rendered, "he pleased God." The general meaning is, no doubt, the same, though the language is less emphatical, and the apostle seems to have been unwilling to interrupt his argument, by noticing the variation. Enoch had walked with God for a long season, but this was the effect of that faith by which he pleased him; for it is, and always was, impossible, for fallen man to please God, except by faith, seeing every one who cometh to God, to worship and serve him, "must believe that he is;" he must realize his invisible being, presence, and perfections, which can only be done by faith, exercised on the Revelation which he hath given of himself; otherwise some imaginary deity, some idol, will be substituted in his place. Moreover, he must believe "that God is the Rewarder of them that diligently "seek him;" but as all men deserve condemnation for their sins, and even their best services need forgiveness, so no one can know, or on good grounds conclude, that God will reward his services, or accept him in them, unless by receiving the testimony of revelation, either immediate, traditional, or written. This Enoch doubtless did, and so he believed in God, and came to him by faith in his word and promise, according to his appointment, and thus was accepted and graciously rewarded. But this differs widely from a mere assent to a conjecture, or a conclusion of reason, concerning the existence of a God, without any just notions of his character, will, or worship, and an attempt to please him in ways of man's devising. This many suppose to be all the faith which the apostle here means; though it accords to the religion of no one person mentioned in this chapter, except that of Cain, who doubtless had this kind of faith, and came in this manner, but "with "him God was not well pleased."

V. 7. (*Notes, Gen.* vi—ix.) The Lord, by immediate revelation made known to Noah his purpose of destroying the inhabitants of the whole earth by a flood of water, and warned him to prepare for such an event. These "things "were not seen as yet;" nothing of that kind had ever happened; no token of such a deluge appeared; unbelief

8 By faith [d] Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place [e] which he should after receive for an inheritance, [f] obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

9 By faith [g] he sojourned in the land of promise, as *in* a strange country, [h] dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, [i] the heirs with him of the same promise:

10 For [k] he looked for a city which hath foundations, [l] whose Builder and Maker *is* God.

d Gen xi. 31. xii. 1–4. Josh xxiv. 2. Neh. ix. 7, 8. Is. xli. 2. li. 2. Acts vii. 2–4
e Gen. xii. 7 xiii. 15–17. xv. 7, 8. xvii 8 xxvi. 3 Deut ix 5. Ps. cv. 9–11. Ez. xxxiii 24. 38, v 9. Gen.
f xxii. 18. xxvi. 5. Matt. vii. 24, 25. Rom i. 5 vi. 17. x. 16. 2 Cor x 5. Jam. ii. 14–26. 1 Pet. i. 22. iii. 1. iv. 17.——g Gen. xvii. 8. xxiii. 4. xxvi 3. xxxv. 27. Acts vii. 5, 6
h Gen. xii 8. xiii. 3 18 xvii 1, 2. 6. 9. xxv. 27.
i vi. 17 Gen. xxvi. 3, 4 xxviii. 4. 13, 14 xlviii. 3, 4
k xii. 22. 28. xiii. 14 John xiv. 2. Phil. iii. 20. *Gr.* Rev. xxi. 2. 10 –27.
l iii. 4 Is. xiv. 32. 2 Cor. v. 1.

might conclude it impossible, or exclaim against it as inconsistent with the justice or goodness of God. But Noah had faith, and that was in him "a demonstration of "things not seen:" he verily believed that such a deluge would come; he expected that omnipotence would execute the sentence denounced by infinite justice, and fulfil the word of unfailing veracity; he therefore reverenced with holy awe the majesty of God, and was moved with fear of falling under his displeasure: he was aware that unbelief and disobedience would expose him to future vengeance, as well as involve him in the common calamity; and therefore he was prepared to employ any means of deliverance, that the Lord should see good to appoint. Accordingly, when directed and commanded to prepare an ark, he did not hesitate to obey in the most entire and unreserved manner, though the labour and expense of building so vast a vessel must have been enormous, and though the undertaking must have exposed him to all kinds of ridicule and obloquy imaginable; and he might be sure that the unbelieving world would deride him as a visionary, and a fanatic for so singular a conduct. But he obeyed in faith, he ventured all consequences, and exercised the needful self denial; he waited the Lord's time, and preached, though unsuccessfully, to the men of his generation; he expected safety in the ark, though Omnipotence alone could secure him in such a vessel, through so tremendous a deluge. Thus he was preserved, and preserved his family also, from the common destruction of mankind, to repeople the earth; his example and admonitions concurred in condemning the world, and in showing the justice of God in thus punishing their universal and incorrigible wickedness; and, by the same faith, he relied on the promise of God concerning the Messiah, and became "heir "of the righteousness of faith," and of eternal salvation through him. This may be shown to be an exact representation of the manner, in which believers, being warned by God to flee from the wrath to come, are moved with fear, take refuge in Christ, part with all for his sake, are often made the instruments of salvation to their families also, condemn the world, and become heirs of the righteousness of faith. (*Notes, Phil.* iii. 7—9.) A Jewish writer introduces Noah, from the ark, expostulating with those who were perishing, because excluded. They plead, that they had used various means of securing themselves, in case the deluge should come, though they had declined his invitation to come into the ark: but he silences all their pleas at once, by saying, that they had refused to avail themselves of God's appointed way of preservation, and every other method must be unavailing. "How shall ye "escape, if ye neglect so great salvation?"

V. 8—10. (*Notes*, &c. *Gen.* xii—xvii.) Next in order of time to the two principal characters of the old world, and the progenitors of the new world, and even superior to them in eminence, was Abraham, the father of Israel, of many nations, of the Messiah, and spiritually of all believers. When he was first selected to be the repository of the promises, he was called, and commanded, to leave his native country and all its attachments, and to go out into a place which he was afterwards to receive for an inheritance, that is, in his posterity: this command was connected with several promises to him and to his seed; by faith he substantiated the blessings hoped for, and was satisfied concerning the things not seen; he therefore implicitly obeyed the call of God, and went forth, not knowing whither he was to travel. But he was satisfied that he was following the special guidance of God, under his immediate protection; and he therefore disregarded the objections, persuasions, or contempt of those, to whom such a design must have appeared, to the last degree, visionary and irrational. By faith in the promise of Jehovah, he continued likewise to sojourn as a stranger in that land which was promised to his posterity, without having any inheritance in it, or even building a house there; but passing his days as a traveller, dwelling in tents, that were easily removed, shifting frequently from one place to another, yet within the land of Canaan, except as he was forced out of it by famine. Thus he spent his life, even after the birth of Isaac, and afterwards of Jacob, who were the heirs with him of the same promises, and who imitated his example in this manner of life, and in believing obedience to the commandment of God. For he was not desirous of building, or inhabiting, a city in Canaan, or elsewhere; because he expected one of a more excellent nature, which alone has foundations that can never be removed; even the permanent, secure, and blessed city of God, where he displays his glory, and communicates unalloyed felicity, of which He is the Architect. His wisdom and love formed the stupendous plan, and his omnipotence executed it, for the glory of his own name, and the eternal residence of those whom he delighteth to honour and bless; and what can those magnificent cities be, which proud worms have erected, compared with that, the Builder and Maker of which is the almighty and everlasting God? Abraham expected Canaan for his posterity, and a mansion in heaven for himself. If this was the faith of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and this their expectation, can we suppose that such of their posterity, as "obtained a good report by "faith," did not believe the same truths, and expect the same inheritance? Nay, can we reasonably doubt whether this were the popular creed and hope of Israel, through successive generations, to the time of Christ? We cannot: unless we can suppose that the Sinai-covenant, in which national advantages were secured to the people, on condition of national obedience, could operate, as the fabled waters of Lethe, to make them entirely forget all

11 Through faith also [m] Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, [n] because she judged him faithful who had promised,

12 Therefore sprang there even of one, [o] and him as good as dead, *so many* [p] as the stars of the sky in multitude, and [q] as the sand which is by the sea-shore innumerable.

13 These all [r] died * in faith, [s] not having received the promises, [t] but having seen them afar off, [u] and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and [x] confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

14 For they that say such things, declare plainly that [y] they seek a country.

[m] Gen xvii 17—19. xviii. 11—14. xxi. 1,2 Luke i. 36. 1Pet iii 5,6

[n] x 23. Rom. iv. 20, 21.

[o] Rom. iv. 19.

[p] Gen. xv 5. xxvi. 24. Ex. xxxii. 13. Deut i. 10. xxviii. 62 1 Chr xxvii 23. Neh. ix. 23.

[q] Gen xxii. 17. xxxii. 12 Josh. xi. 4. Judg vii. 12. 1 Sam. xiii. 5 2Sam xvii 11. 1 Kings iv. 20. Is. x. 22. xlviii. 19. Jer. xxxiii. 22 Hos. i. 10. Hab. i. 9. Rom iv 18. ix. 27. Rev. xx. 8.

[r] Gen. xxv. 8 xxvii. 2—4 xlviii 21. xlix. 18. 28. 33. l. 24.

* Gr *according to faith.*

[s] 39.

[t] 27 Gen. xlix. 10. Num. xxiv. 17. Job xix. 25. John viii. 56. xii. 41. 1 Pet i. 10—12.

[u] Rom iv. 21 viii. 24. 1 John iii. 19 *Gr.*

[x] Gen. xxiii. 4. xlvii. 9. 1 Chr. xxix. 15. Ps. xxxix. 12 cxix. 19. 1 Pet. i. 17. ii. 11.

[y] 16. Rom. viii. 23—25. 2 Cor. iv 18. v. 1—7. Phil i. 23.

15 And truly if they had been [z] mindful of that *country* from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

16 But now [a] they desire a better *country*, that is, an heavenly: wherefore [b] God is not ashamed [c] to be called their God: [d] for he hath prepared for them a city.

17 By [e] faith Abraham, [f] when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had [g] received the promises, [h] offered up his [i] only begotten *son*,

18 † Of whom it was said, [k] That in Isaac shall thy seed be called;

19 Accounting that [l] God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead; [m] from whence also he received him in a figure.

[z] Gen. xi 31. xii. 10. xxiv. 6—8. xxxi. 18 xxxii. 9—11.

[a] *See on,* 14. xii. 22.

[b] ii 11.

[c] Gen. xvii. 7, 8. Ex. iii. 6. 15. Is. xli. 8—10. Jer. xxxi. 1. Matt. xxii. 31, 32. Mark xii. 26, 27. Luke xx 37, 38. Acts vii. 32.

[d] *See on.* 10. Matt xxv. 34. Luke xii. 32.

[e] Gen xxii. 1—12. Jam. ii. 21—24.

[f] Deut. viii. 2. 2 Chr. xxxii. 31. Job i. 11, 12. ii. 3—6 Prov. xvii. 3. Dan. xi. 35. Zech. xiii. 9. Mal. iii. 2, 3. Jam. i. 2—4. 12. v. 11. 1 Pet. i. 6, 7. iv. 12. Rev. iii 10.

[g] vii. 6.

[h] 2 Cor. viii 12.

[i] Gen. xxii 2. 16. John iii 16.

† Or, *To.*

[k] Gen xvii. 19 xxi. 12 Rom ix 7.

[l] Gen. xxii. 5 *Heb* Matt. ix. 28. Rom. iv. 17—21, Eph. iii. 20.

[m] 11, 12. ix. 24. Gen. xxii. 4. 13. Rom v. 14.

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preceding revelations made to their forefathers, and transmitted to them, and all the obedient confidence, which their forefathers had placed in those revelations? In fact, there is not one age in the history of Israel, from the origin of the nation to the termination of the New Testament, of which we have any remaining records, but in those records, the belief of a future state of just retributions, a future judgment, and a state of supreme blessedness to the righteous, may not be clearly discerned, and pointed out.

V. 11, 12. Sarah was at first unbelieving, when a son was promised to her in her old age; but she afterwards was enabled to rely on the faithfulness and power of God to perform his word, though contrary to the ordinary course of nature: and, in consequence of this faith, she was supernaturally strengthened to conceive and bear a son. Thus, in answer to the expectation of the faith, both of Abraham and Sarah, there sprang from one father, (who apparently was in this respect even as a dead person, from whom no offspring could have been expected,) such an immense multitude, that they were as the stars of heaven, or even absolutely innumerable as the sands on the seashore. This principally refers to the descendants of Abraham by Isaac and Jacob; but those descended from him by Ishmael and the sons of Keturah render the fulfilment of the promises to him, in this respect, still more surprising. (*Notes, Gen,* xvii. 15—21. xviii. 9—15. xxi. 1—7. xxv. 1—4.)

V. 13—16. Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Jacob, persevered in faith, and the obedience of faith, even unto death, and departed, expecting the performance of God's promises to them and their posterity. For they had not received the promises, or the things promised; either the inheritance of Canaan, or the coming of the promised Seed, during their lives. They had endured many hardships and trials, without any such peculiar advantages as might answer the singular favour, which the Lord declared that he bore to them. But they had "seen them afar off, "and were persuaded" that they would be performed in due season; they embraced them by faith, as their portion and the inheritance of their posterity; and they gave up present advantages for the sake of them "confessing that "they were strangers and pilgrims upon earth." (*Notes, Gen.* xxiii. 4. xlvii. 9.) Now they, who considered themselves, during their whole abode in this world, to be strangers in a foreign land, and travellers through it, plainly declared that they were going home to their native country, the residence of their Father and their most beloved friends, and the place of their permanent abode and enjoyment. Indeed, if, weary of this wandering life, they had purposed to return into Mesopotamia, they might have found an opportunity of doing it, and might there have settled among their relations; but this would have been an act of unbelief and disobedience, and a renunciation of the promises. Whereas, by sojourning in a strange land unto death, they declared their supreme desire and hope of a better country than could be found on earth; even of that heavenly inheritance, which Canaan typified. As, therefore, they were willing to renounce all other prospects to follow God in obedient faith, for the sake of an eternal and invisible inheritance; and as he had prepared such an inheritance, or permanent glorious city, for them; so he was not ashamed, or did not disdain, to be called their God, their Friend, and their everlasting Portion. Whereas the advantages which they had on earth from their believing dependence on him were too transient and little, to answer to such a relation; seeing they were neither sufficient for their final felicity, nor for the glory of his divine munificence.

V. 17—19. (*Notes, Gen.* xxii. 1—19.) It was peculiarly to be noted that in the grand instance, in which Abraham had been tried how far he would carry his unreserved obedience to the Lord, he had been influenced by the same powerful principle of faith; even when, in his determined *purpose,* he had offered up his beloved Isaac as a burnt-offering, in whom God himself had, as it were, laid up the promises: so that he might have thought he was about to render the performance of them impossible, by obeying this hard and mysterious command. But he

20 By [n] faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

21 By [o] faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; [p] and worshipped, *leaning* upon the top of his staff.

22 By [q] faith Joseph, when he died, * made mention of the departing of the children of Israel: and gave commandment concerning his bones.

23 By [r] faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw *he was* a proper child; [s] and they were not afraid of [t] the king's commandment.

en. xxvii. 27 —40. xxviii. 2, 3.

o Gen. xlviii. 13—22.

p Gen. xlvii. 31.

q Gen. l. 24, 25 Ex. xiii 19. Josh. xxiv. 32. Acts vii 16

* Or, *remembered.*

r Ex ii. 2, &c. Acts vii. 20.

s xiii 6 Ps lvi. 4 cxviii 6 Is viii 12, 13 xli. 10, 14. li. 7 12. Dan. iii. 16—18 vi 10 Matt. x 28. Luke xii. 4, 5

t Ex i. 16 22.

23 By faith Moses, [u] when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

25 [x] Choosing rather to suffer affliction with [y] the people of God, than to enjoy [z] the pleasures of sin for a season;

26 Esteeming [a] the reproach † of Christ [b] greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: [c] for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

u Ex. ii. 10, 11. Acts vii 21—24.

x x. 32. Job xxxvi. 21 Ps. lxxxiv 10. Matt. v. 10—12. xiii. 21. Acts vii. 25, 26. xx 23, 24. Rom. v 3. viii. 17, 18. 35—39. 2 Cor. iv. 17. Col. i. 24 2 Thes. i. 3—6. 2 Tim. i. 8. ii. 3—10. iii 11, 12 Jam i. 2. 1 Pet. i. 6, 7. iv. 12—16

y iv. 9 Ps xlvii. 9. 1 Pet. ii 10.

z Job xx. 5. xxi. 11—13 Ps. lxxiii. 18—20. Is. xxi. 4. xlvii. 8, 9. Luke xii. 19, 20. xvi 25. Jam. v. 5. Rev. xviii. 7.——a x. 33 xiii 13. Ps lxix 7 20. lxxxix 50, 51 Is. li. 7. Acts v 41 2 Cor xii 10 1 Pet i 11. iv. 14.——† Or, *for Christ*——b Ps. xxxvii. 16 Jer ix 23, 24 2 Cor vi 10. Eph. i. 18. iii. 8. Rev. ii. 9 iii 18——c *See on*, 6 ii. 2. x. 35. Ruth ii. 12. Prov. xi 18. xxiii. 18. Matt. v. 12. vi. 1. x 41. Luke xiv. 14.

left this to God, assured that he was able to restore his son to life, from the ashes to which he was about to reduce his body; though no instance of a resurrection from the dead had ever occurred. And in fact he did receive him back, as from the dead; seeing he had for three days lain under the sentence of death. This, in a most expressive figure, represented the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, the only begotten of the Father, thus delivered for us lost sinners, to bleed and die, and bear the wrath of God for us, by love which passeth knowledge. Some indeed explain the last clause, of the supernatural conception and birth of Isaac, which, by a figurative manner of speaking, might be called receiving him from the dead: but the other interpretation is far preferable.

V. 20. Isaac, (as well as Rebekah and Jacob,) was reprehensible in the circumstances of the transaction which is here referred to; (*Notes, Gen.* xxvii.) yet he blessed his two sons, in a firm belief that God would fulfil his promises to his posterity. He also spake by the Spirit of prophecy; and he most entirely believed, and acquiesced in, the discoveries made of the future condition of the posterity of both Jacob and Esau, though his own purposes were thus disannulled. In a firm belief and assured persuasion, that the promises made to Abraham and to himself would be accomplished, (though under an error, the effect of a criminal partiality for Esau, he mistook the heir of these promises,) he blessed Jacob, supposing that it was Esau: but subsequent events convincing him of his mistake, he confirmed the blessing pronounced on Jacob, which he afterwards more deliberately ratified; and he also foretold many important particulars concerning Esau and his descendants.

V. 21. (*Notes, Gen.* xlvii. 28—31. xlviii.) Jacob, when his death approached, pronounced a prophetical blessing on each of his twelve sons, but that which respected Ephraim and Manasseh is here especially noted. God revealed to him his future purpose concerning their posterity, and in a firm belief of his word Jacob blessed them: and, though weak and infirm, he expressed his confidence in God, and his gratitude to him, by worshipping him, leaning on the top of his staff. Thus the Septuagint render the words, which, in our version, are translated *the bed's head*, and the variation is immaterial. Learned men have shown that the same word, by changing merely the vowel-points, will bear either signification.—‘We have here a lively example of that *substance*, (*Note* 1,) which was before com‘memorated. As Jacob, dying a stranger in Egypt, dis‘tributes the kingdoms of the Canaanites to his twelve sons ‘in no other manner than he would have done, had he ‘reigned in peace at Jerusalem. But how true and solid ‘this “faith, the substance of things hoped for,” was, ‘appeared by this, that after many years, the whole con‘cern being committed to the lot, than which nothing ‘seems more fortuitous, the event confirmed Jacob's testa‘ment.’ (*Beza*)—This learned writer here includes the blessing which Jacob pronounced on all his sons, as well as that on Joseph, with Manasseh and Ephraim. (*Notes, Gen.* xlviii, xlix.)

V. 22. *Joseph*, &c. (*Notes, Gen.* l.) Joseph, though lord of all the land of Egypt, yet, believing the word and promise of God concerning the posterity of Abraham, expressed his confident expectation, that they would be performed in the removal of the Israelites to Canaan: and he ordered his bones to be carried along with them, both as an expression of his faith, and to show that he desired to have his lot after death with the people of God, and not with the Egyptians.

V. 23. The parents of Moses also acted from the same powerful principle, of faith in the word and promises of God. When that eminent deliverer and lawgiver of Israel was born, they concealed him three months, from those who were appointed by Pharaoh to destroy the male children; for they perceived something uncommon in his appearance, which was supposed to indicate his future eminence. (*Note, Acts* vii. 20.) By faith they relied on the promised care and protection of God; and so they were not afraid of the king's commandment, but preserved the life of their son, at the peril of their own: and they acted from the same kind of faith, when they trusted Moses to the care of Providence in an ark of bulrushes; which believing expectation was answered in his preservation by Pharaoh's daughter, and his education in the court of Egypt to be the deliverer of Israel.

V. 24—26. In like manner, when Moses was grown up, even to the age of forty years, and was become very eminent among the Egyptians, he refused any longer to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, (though tradition reports that he was considered as heir of that prosperous

27 By faith [d] he forsook Egypt, [e] not fearing the wrath of the king: for he [f] endured, [g] as seeing him who is invisible.

28 Through faith [h] he kept the passover, and [i] the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them.

29 By faith [k] they passed through the Red Sea as by dry *land;* which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.

30 By faith [l] the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.

[d] Ex. x. 28, 29. xi. 8. xii. 31, &c xiii. 17—21.

[e] Ex. ii 14, 15. iv 19. xiv. 10—13

[f] vi 15. x. 32. xii. 3. Matt. x. 22. xxiv 13 Mark iv 17. xiii. 13. 1 Cor. xiii. 7 Jam v. 11.

[g] 1. 13 xii. 2. Ps xvi 8 Acts ii. 25.. 2 Cor iv 18. 1 Tim. vi. 16. 1 Pet. i. 8

[h] Ex. xii. 3—14. 21—30.

[i] ix. 19. xii. 24. Ex. xii 7. 13. 23. 1 Pet. i 2.

[k] Ex. xiv 13—31. xv 1—21 Josh. ii. 10 Neh. ix. 11. Ps lxvi. 6. lxxviii. 13. cvi. 9—11. cxiv. 1—5. cxxxvi. 13—15. Is. xi. 15, 16. li 9 10. lxiii. 11—13. Hab. iii. 8—10.

[l] Josh. vi. 3—20. 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

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kingdom:) but, believing the testimony and promises of God concerning Israel, and especially that respecting the Messiah, he would not take his lot among the Egyptians, for the sake of temporal advantages, however great. On the contrary, seeing God's peculiar people under the most cruel bondage and in the most abject condition, he openly avowed himself to be one of them: choosing rather to suffer the most distressing affliction with them, and to share the blessings promised to them; than to enjoy all the temporary pleasures, which his high station could have procured him, in the ways of sin and ungodliness. He likewise esteemed the reproach cast on Israel, for their expectations of a glorious Redeemer to arise from among them, under whose special care they professed themselves to be, as well as the disgrace of their condition, to be more valuable than all the immense treasures and revenues of Egypt; so that he renounced the latter, that he might partake of the former: for "he had respect unto the recompense of reward;" even the gracious and abundant compensation, which Christ confers on all those who are reproached for his sake. In consequence of this believing choice and purpose, he renounced all his prospects and indulgences in Egypt, and became a refugee, or a stranger and a humble laborious shepherd in Midian for forty years. (*Notes, Ex.* ii. iii.) 'Esteeming the scoffs cast on the Israelites, for expecting the Christ to arise from among them, in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed, "greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." (*Macknight.*) "The recompense of reward," here mentioned, could not be *temporal;* for Moses came not into the land of Canaan; nor could he expect any greater blessing in that kind, than he might have had in Egypt. He therefore must have had respect to some spiritual and heavenly recompense.' (*Whitby.*)

V. 27. Moses evidently feared, when he forsook Egypt the first time: but this relates to his leaving that kingdom the second time, when he led forth the tribes of Israel. He was then strengthened in faith to disregard the wrath and power of king Pharaoh: he denounced the death of the first-born, left the tyrant's presence, as one who bade defiance to his menaces, and marched out of Egypt with great intrepidity; though he was fully aware, that Pharaoh, with his army, would pursue him: and when that actually took place, he boldly said to the affrighted Israelites, "Fear not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD. The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace." For he endured most constantly in delivering his messages, and in this emergency, though he had no visible protection against the vengeance of Pharaoh; because, (by faith, as the evidence of things not seen,) he saw the invisible God, as his almighty Defender, and rested assured that he was with him, to take care of and deliver him. (*Notes, Ex.* viii. xi. xii. 29—42. xiv. 5—14.)

V. 28. By the same efficacious principle Moses foresaw the destruction of the first-born in Egypt, and expected the exemption of Israel from that calamity, in the way that the Lord prescribed unto him. He therefore influenced his people to keep the Passover, with the sprinkling of the blood upon the door-posts, and the other significant ceremonies; lest the destroying angel should enter their houses also: by which they were preserved, and this made way for their deliverance out of bondage. The whole hath been shown to be a typical representation of a sinner's salvation by the death of Christ, and by faith in his blood. (*Notes, Ex.* xii. 3—28.)

V. 29. Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Caleb, and others, truly believed; and the rest of the nation, by the exhortations of Moses, were excited to a confidence in JEHOVAH's power and favour for present deliverance from Pharaoh. But it was chiefly by the faith of Moses, their leader, that the Israelites passed safely through the Red Sea; even as Noah's family were preserved in the ark by means of his faith, though they seem not all to have been true believers. Israel was the visible church of God, and the type of the whole multitude, who by faith pass through trials and death unhurt: but the Egyptians represented the enemies of God and of his people; and, copying Pharaoh's pride and presumption, they ventured into the sea, and perished; as all the enemies of the Lord will do at death, which delivers all believers from them. This does not therefore authorize us to suppose, that any of the persons, *here mentioned by name,* were destitute of justifying faith: as some have inferred from the subsequent unbelief of many, who passed safely through the Red Sea. (*Notes, Ex.* xiv. xv.)

V. 30. (*Notes,* &c. *Josh.* vi.) Joshua, and many of the Israelites, believing the promise of God, that he would deliver Jericho into their hands, obeyed his command, and induced their brethren to do the same, in respect of the extraordinary means used for that purpose. They expected God to perform his word, and they observed his directions, in marching round the city, and blowing the trumpets for seven days: and in this manner the walls fell down at the appointed time, and afforded them a safe and easy victory. The same principle would lead them to embrace the promises concerning the Messiah, and salvation by him: but in collective bodies there has always subsisted the difference between real believers, and mere professors, who concurred with them in the same external services.— 'As the land of Canaan belonged to the Israelites, by a grant from God, the Possessor of heaven and earth, it was proper that the first city, which resisted them, should be taken in such a manner, as to demonstrate the

31 By faith [m] the harlot Rahab, perished not with them that [*] believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

32 And [n] what shall I more say? for [o] the time would fail me to tell of [p] Gedeon, and *of* [q] Barak, and *of* [r] Samson, and *of* [s] Jephthae, *of* [t] David also, and [u] Samuel, and *of* [x] the prophets.

33 Who [y] through faith subdued kingdoms, [z] wrought righteousness, [a] obtained promises, [b] stopped the mouths of lions,

34 [c] Quenched the violence of fire, [d] escaped the edge of the sword, [e] out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, [f] turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

m Josh. ii. 1—22. vi 22—25. Matt i. 1. 5 Jam ii. 25.

* Or, *that were disobedient. See on.* iii 17—19. 1 Pet. ii. 8. iii. 20.

n Rom iii. 5. iv 1 vi 1. vii. 7.

o John xxi. 25.

p Judg. vi—viii. *Gideon* 1 Sam. xii. 11. *Jerubbaal.*

q Judg. iv. v.

r Judg xiii—xvi.

s Judg. xi. xii. 1—7. *Jephthah.*

t 1 Sam xvi. 1. 13. xvii. &c. Acts ii. 29—31. xiii. 22 36.

u 1 Sam. i. 20 ii. 11. 18. iii—xii xxviii. 3, &c. Ps. xcix. 6. Jer. xv. 1. Acts iii. 24. xiii 20.

x Matt v. 12 Luke xiii. 28. xvi. 31. Acts x. 43. Jam. v. 10. 1 Pet i 10—12 2Pet i 21. iii 2.

y Josh vi—xiii. 2 Sam v. 4—25 viii. 1—14. Ps. xviii. 32—34 xliv. 2-6 cxliv. 1, 2 10 ——— z *See on*, 4—8. 17. ——— a *See on*, vi. 12—15. x. 36. ——— b Judg. xiv. 5, 6 1 Sam. xvii. 33—36. Ps. xci. 13. Dan. vi. 20—23 2 Tim. iv. 17. 1 Pet. v. 8. ——— c Ps. lxvi. 12 Is. xliii. 2. Dan. iii 19—28. 1 Pet. iv. 12 ——— d 2 Sam xxi. 16. 17 2 Kings vi. 16—18. 32. Job v. 20. Ps cxliv 10 Jer xxvi. 24. ——— e Judg. vii 19—25. viii. 4—10. xv. 14—20. 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10.

f 1 Sam. xiv. 13. &c xvii. 51, 52. 2 Sam viii. 1, &c. 2 Chr. xiv. 11—14. xvi. 1—9. xx 6—25. xxxii. 20—22.

35 [g] Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were [h] tortured, not accepting deliverance; [i] that they might obtain a better resurrection.

36 And others had trial of *cruel* [k] mockings [l] and scourgings, yea, moreover of [m] bonds and imprisonment:

37 They were [n] stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, [o] were slain with the sword: they wandered about [p] in sheep-skins and goat-skins; [q] being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

38 (Of [r] whom the world was not worthy:) they [s] wandered in deserts, and *in* mountains, and *in* dens, and caves of the earth.

g 1 Kings xvii 22—24 2 Kings iv. 27—37. Luke vii 12—15. John xi. 40—45. Acts ix. 41.

h Acts xxii. 24. 29.

i Matt xxii. 30. Mark xii. 25. Luke xiv. 14. xx. 36 John v. 29. Acts xxiii. 6. xxiv 15. 1 Cor xv. 54. Phil. iii. 11.

k Judg. xvi 25. 2 Kings ii. 23. 2 Chr xxx. 10. xxxvi. 16. Jer. xx. 7. Matt. xx. 19 Mark x. 34. Luke xviii. 32. xxiii. 11 36.

l 1 Kings xxii. 24. Jer. xx 2. xxxvii 15. Matt xxi. 35 xxiii. 34. xxvii. 26. Acts v. 40. xvi. 22, 23. 2 Cor. xi. 24, 25.

m x. 34. Gen. xxxix 20. 1 Kings xxii. 27. 2 Chr. xvi. 10. Ps cv. 17, 18. Jer xxix. 26. xxxii 2, 3. 8. xxxvi. 5 xxxvii. 15—21. xxxviii. 6—13. 28. xxxix. 15. Lam iii 52—55. Acts iv. 3 v 18. viii. 3 xii. 4, &c. xvi. 24, &c xxi. 33. xxiv 27 2 Cor. xi. 23. Eph. iii. 1. iv. 1. 2 Tim. i. 16. ii. 9. Rev. ii 10 ——— n 1 Kings xxi 10. 13—15 2 Chr. xxiv. 21. Matt. xxi. 35. xxiii. 37. Luke xiii. 34. John x. 31—33. Acts vii. 58, 59. xiv 19. 2 Cor xi. 25. ——— o 1 Sam. xxii. 17—19 1 Kings xviii. 4. 13. xix. 1. 10. 14 Jer ii. 30 xxvi. 23. Lam. iv. 13, 14. Matt. xxiii. 35—37. Luke xi 51—51. Acts vii. 52. xii. 2 3 ——— p 2 Kings i. 8. Matt. iii. 4. Rev. xi. 3. ——— q xii. 1—3. Zech xiii 9. Matt viii 20. 1 Cor. iv. 9—13. 2 Cor. xi. 23—27. xii. 10. Jam. v. 10, 11. ——— r 1 Kings xiv. 12, 13. 2 Kings xxiii. 25—29 Is lvii. 1. ——— s 1 Sam. xxii. 1. xxiii. 15. 19. 23 xxiv. 1—3. xxvi. 1. 1 Kings xvii. 3. xviii 4. 13. xix. 9. Ps cxlii. *title.*

'truth of their title. Thus were—all the Canaanites 'made to know the supremacy and power of the God of 'Israel, and how vain it was to make any resistance.' (*Macknight.*)

V. 31. In like manner Rahab, the harlot, hearing that God had denounced the destruction of the Canaanites, and that he had promised manifold blessings to Israel, was by faith induced to renounce her connexion with the enemies of God, and to seek admission among his people. At the hazard of her life she entertained, peaceably and as friends, the spies of Israel; and, assured that Jericho would be taken by the Israelites, she stipulated for her own life and that of her relations, as if that event had already taken place. Thus she escaped the destruction of her unbelieving citizens, who persisted in their enmity to God and to Israel. Doubtless she embraced the promises concerning the Messiah and spiritual salvation in the same obedient manner, when she was made acquainted with them; and thus she was incorporated among the Israelites, and became an ancestor of Christ. But the fruits and infirmities of her faith have already been fully considered. (*Notes,* &c. *Josh.* ii.)

V. 32—34. (*Notes,* &c. *Judg.* iv—xvi.) The history of the eminent persons, here mentioned in general terms, has already been considered. It would have exceeded proper bounds for the apostle to have spoken particularly concerning each of them, and of all that might have been adduced. They are not placed in the order of time in which they lived, but as they occurred to the apostle's mind: and the whole company of the prophets are mentioned in a word. By faith, crediting the testimony of God, and substantiating his promises, some of them, as Joshua and David, subdued the nations of Canaan and the neighbouring kingdoms, as the servants of God in the cause of Israel. (*Notes, Josh.* vi—xi. 2 *Sam.* v. 6—25. viii. x.) Others performed most eminent obedience to his commandments, or executed justice, and reformed the nation; and they waited for, and obtained, most remarkable accomplishments of the divine promises to them and their people. Some had even, in the exercise of faith in God, been enabled to stop the mouths of lions: Samson and David slew each of them a lion; and Daniel the prophet spent the night in a den of hungry lions. (*Notes, Dan.* vi.) Others quenched the violence of the fire. (*Notes, Dan.* iii.) Elijah was repeatedly delivered from the persecuting rage of Ahab, Jezebel, and Ahaziah; Micaiah from that of Ahab; and Elisha from the sword of the kings of Israel and Syria; and Jeremiah from that of Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah's princes. (*Notes,* &c. 1 *Kings* xvii. xviii. xix. xxii. 2 *Kings* i—vi. *Jer.* xxvi. xxxviii. 8—13.) Hezekiah and others were miraculously recovered from sickness; and Hezekiah's kingdom was restored from the utmost debility to a very flourishing condition, in answer to his confidence in God. Many instances occur in the history of Israel, of those who waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens: yet it has generally been supposed, that there is a peculiar reference to the successes of Judas Maccabeus and his brethren, against the forces of Antiochus Epiphanes; when, from feeble beginnings, they arrived at great power, and defeated all that persecutor's devices, by faith in the promises and protection of the Lord. While we make a decided difference between the word of God and all other writings, there seems no impropriety in supposing, that the apostle had these events in his view on this occasion; as the historical facts respecting the persecutions of Antiochus and the victories of the Maccabees were well known among the Hebrews, and really formed an illustrious example of the efficacy and nature of faith.

V. 35—38. Through the same principle of faith, as exercised by the prophets and the persons concerned, women had received their dead children raised to life

39 And these all, [t] having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

[t] *See on*, 2. 13. Luke x. 23, 24. 1 Pet. i. 12.

40 God having * provided some [u] better thing for us, that [x] they without us should not be made perfect.

* Or, *foreseen*.
[u] vii. 19 22. viii. 6. ix. 23. xii. 24.
[x] ix. 8—15. x. 11—14. Rom. iii. 25, 26.

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again, (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xvii. 17—24. 2 *Kings* iv. 18—37.) Others were tortured with all the horrid ingenuity, which their cruel persecutors could exercise; and yet refused to accept of deliverance from their agonies, when offered them on condition that they would commit idolatry. They rather chose to expire in their torture, than to purchase life on such terms; because by faith they expected a *better* resurrection, even a resurrection to eternal life; which was far better than being restored again from the jaws of death, and living a while longer in this world, and better than the resurrections to temporal life before-mentioned. This is supposed to refer to the tortures and death of a woman and her seven sons, as recorded in the history of the Maccabees: (2 *Mac.* vii.) This is a most decisive testimony of the sacred writer, that his countrymen expected a resurrection to eternal life, and that the word of God warranted that expectation. Others, in different ages, had been tried by cruel mockings, and every kind of indignity and derision, with ignominious and painful scourgings, and with lingering sufferings in bonds and imprisonment; yet by faith they cleaved to God and their duty, amidst all that could be inflicted on them. Thus Micaiah, Jeremiah, and many others, had been abused; moreover, several had been stoned to death; and some had even been cruelly sawn asunder, as tradition reported that Isaiah had been. (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* xxi. 16. *Is.* i. 1.)—Others had been tempted, with the most complicated sufferings, and with conditional offers of deliverance, to sin against God: some were slain at once with the sword: whilst others were driven from their habitations, to wander as vagabonds, covered with undressed skins instead of suitable raiment; and to inhabit mountains, deserts, dens, and caves, instead of commodious houses; being destitute of friends, afflicted by complicated distresses, and most cruelly tortured, when they fell into the hands of their persecutors: yet they still trusted in God, and obeyed him with unremitting patience and constancy, in a realizing belief of his promises of support, comfort, and eternal salvation, and an unwavering confidence in them. Of these excellent persons the world, that used them with such contempt and cruelty, was not worthy; and therefore they were soon removed, in mercy to them, and in judgment to their enemies. The cases of David, Elijah, and many others recorded in scripture, may be alluded to: but doubtless many others occurred, during the persecuting reigns of the kings of Judah and Israel, of which particular accounts have not reached us; though some records or traditions concerning them might be extant among the Hebrews, when the apostle wrote. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 39, 40. All these persons had obtained a good report in the church, and many of them had been mentioned with honour in the word of God, though the world abhorred and execrated them: but faith was that principle, by which they were distinguished from other men, both in respect of God's acceptance, and their patient zealous obedience, or remarkable exploits and deliverances. Yet they received not that *promise*, which their faith especially embraced; they did not live to see the accomplishment of the promise concerning the Messiah, "in whom all nations "should be blessed," which was the grand promise made to Abraham, though they were saved by the anticipated efficacy of his sacrifice. For God, in his wise and righteous sovereignty, had reserved some better thing for his church under the Christian dispensation; (*Notes*, *Luke* x. 23, 24;) that these ancient believers might not be complete in their salvation and felicity, except in and by Jesus Christ, and by sharing those benefits, which were at length more openly revealed to his people: that so the whole church, by union with Christ, might be perfected in one body, and not in separate divisions; though the members of it had been scattered, as it were, through all the ages and nations of the earth. (*Eph.* i. 10.) Various interpretations have been given of this passage. Some suppose that *the promise* was that of "the better country," which the patriarchs desired, (13—16;) but unto which they were not admitted, nor will be admitted, till the whole multitude of heirs shall be collected together at the end of the world. Others, perceiving the contrariety of this interpretation to the general current of scripture, which uniformly declares that the "righteous entereth into rest;" that "it is "better to depart, and to be with Christ;" and that "when "absent from the body believers are present with the "Lord;" "blessed *are* the dead, who die in the Lord, "&c.;" confine the meaning almost wholly to deliverance from persecution! But was not the promise of a Redeemer, from the first fall of Adam, the grand promise to fallen man? This promise the patriarchs *received*, (17;) but they did not live to obtain the thing promised, (as the word in this verse implies.) They were indeed saved by faith in a Redeemer who was to come; but without those events, which the apostles testified as already past, their pardon and acceptance could not be ratified, or their salvation perfected. Thus the Old Testament believers could not be perfected, except by communion with the New Testament church, in the promised Saviour, and his righteousness, atonement, and intercession. (*Note*, *Rom.* iii. 24—26. *Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

The wisdom and goodness of God are peculiarly manifested, in the appointment of divine faith to be both the means of our interest in Christ for justification, and the efficacious principle of our obedience: and in neither case will any thing avail, but that faith which gives the soul, as it were, an appropriating hold of things hoped for, and an internal demonstration of things not seen. As men easily remove, and raise to a great height, vast bodies, by means of proper engines, which could not otherwise be done at all; so faith, exercised on the promise, truth, and power of God, would enable a feeble sinner to remove a mountain, if that were necessary for his safety and advantage. Without this, no man, since Adam's fall, has ob-

CHAP. XII.

Exhortations to constancy, patience, and diligence; from the testimony of former believers, and with peculiar attention to the example of Christ; and from the loving intent, and salutary effect of the Lord's corrections, 1—13. *To peace, and holiness, and jealous watchfulness over ourselves, and each other; enforced by the case of Esau,* 14—17: *to an obedient reception of the gospel, and reverential worship of God; from the superior excellency of the christian dispensation, and the proportionably greater guilt and danger of neglecting it,* 18—29.

tained a good report, or done any real and acceptable good works, according to the standard of God's word; but the worthies of the church are very different from the admired characters of the world. We know nothing to good purpose, concerning the perfections or works of God, or the eternal state, except by this evidence of things not seen: men's reasonings produce amusing speculations; but the sure testimony of God, received by faith, brings satisfaction to the soul. While we credit his account of the creation, we learn to adore and obey the Creator, with humble, thankful, and admiring hearts; which philosophers, ancient and modern, have scarcely appeared to do. But though faith receives the testimony of God concerning his creating and providential wisdom, power, and goodness; yet his truths and promises respecting redemption constitute its peculiar province. Believing his testimony concerning the future judgment and the eternal world; and even more than believing that we are sinners, exposed to condemnation and deserving of it, according to the tenour of his righteous law; we gladly receive the truth, concerning salvation by grace through the atoning blood of the divine Saviour, and wait on him for pardon, and every blessing, as his gift through Jesus Christ. Thus we are enabled by faith to plead a far more excellent Sacrifice, and to present more acceptable worship, than any Pharisee or infidel can offer unto God, according to the vain devices of his proud impenitent heart: we obtain the testimony of God in his word, and by his Spirit, that our persons and services are accepted with him: and, however we may be persecuted or driven out of the world, our felicity will be sure; and we shall wish to declare to all around us, and to leave it upon record for those that come after, that this is the only way to heaven, and that we are exceedingly thankful for having been taught to walk in it. We may not expect to escape the pangs of death; but we may hope to be with God, when no longer found on earth; as having pleased him, by coming in faith to his mercy seat, desiring his favour as our portion, and not only believing that *He is*, but that he is the gracious rewarder, even of sinners who diligently seek him; for without this faith it is impossible to please God. If we possess this evidence of things not seen, we shall hear with great interest the warnings of the oracles of God, concerning the future and eternal misery of the ungodly; we shall reverence the denunciation which unbelievers deride, object to, or blaspheme; we shall be moved with fear to flee from the wrath to come; we shall be encouraged in hope to make Christ our Refuge, and to leave all things, as comparatively worthless, to seek admission into this ark: thus we shall be safe, during the troubles of life, the terrors of death, and the solemnities of judgment, and when "the wicked shall be turned into hell, even all the people that forget God:" and we may in the mean time hope to be the instruments of saving our beloved children and relatives also. But then we must be contented to bear the reproach of singularity, enthusiasm, or hypocrisy: we must be unfashionable; and the world will condemn us, if our profession and behaviour condemn the world, as they certainly will, if we "become heirs of the righteousness which is by faith." We may by faith foresee the time, when our revilers will wish in vain that they were with us in the despised ark.

V. 8—19.

That is not justifying faith, which does not obey the command, as well as rely on the promise, of God: we too are called to leave many of our worldly connexions, interests, and comforts, to go in quest of a future inheritance; and if heirs of Abraham's faith, we shall "obey," and go forth, not knowing what things may befall us, or whither the Lord may lead us; we shall wait in the way of duty for the performance of his promises; we shall not take up our rest in the world, or be satisfied with its most splendid accommodations; but we shall seek for a city that hath foundations, whose Architect and Founder is the Lord of hosts. Our faith indeed, will not be always alike vigorous and efficacious; and its waverings will show, that we are not saved *for* it, though *by* it: yet, upon recollection, "judging him faithful, that hath promised," we shall be strengthened to expect the blessing, in defiance of apparent difficulties and supposed impossibilities, and thus shall be enabled for whatever is connected with the obtaining of the promises. If indeed we professed to seek a portion in the world, the advantages of religion might appear dubious; but we avow ourselves to be strangers in a foreign land, and upon our pilgrimage to our desired home, where our treasure and our hearts already are: we have not yet received the promises, but we see them afar off, embrace them, and wait in hope for their accomplishment; and we profess to be satisfied with the life of a sojourner and a pilgrim, and to wait till after death for our felicity. If, (like apostates,) we were minded to return to the country whence we came out, we might find an opportunity of doing it, perhaps with some secular advantage; but faith shows us, that it is devoted to destruction, with all those who choose their inheritance in it. We therefore desire a better country, that is "an heavenly;" and as God hath prepared everlasting mansions for us in the city of his special abode, in which he will make us most blessed for evermore; so his glory in our salvation, and our wisdom in choosing him for our Portion, will be most manifest in the event, whatever pre-a xi. 2—38.

b Is. lx. 8. Ez. xxxviii. 9. 16.

WHEREFORE, [a] seeing we also are compassed about with so great [b] a cloud of [c] witnesses, [d] let us lay aside

c Luke xvi 28. John iii. 32. iv. 39. 44. 1 Pet. v. 12. Rev. xxii. 16.——d Matt. x. 37, 38. Luke viii. 14. ix. 59—62. xii. 15. xiv. 26—33. xviii. 22—25. xxi. 34. Rom. xiii. 11—14. 2 Cor vii. 1. Eph. iv. 22—24. Col. iii. 5—8. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. 2 Tim. ii 4. 1 Pet. ii. 1. iv. 2 1 John ii. 15, 16.

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sent appearances may be. This faith endures to the end; we must live by it, and die in it; and then have its expectations answered, and far exceeded. Whilst we live, our faith must be repeatedly and sharply tried, that we may be distinguished from mere professors of Christianity; but we may expect that we shall be strengthened in proportion to the trial: nor can we reasonably doubt of the power of faith to produce the most unreserved obedience, when we remember, that by this principle Abraham, when tried, offered his beloved Isaac as a burnt-offering at God's command, and trusted in him to perform all those promises, which his obedience seemed about for ever to disannul. Let us then inquire how far our faith has produced a similar obedience, when we have been called to acts of inferior self-denial, or to make inferior sacrifices to our duty. And whether we have given up what was called for, in an unreserved confidence that the Lord would make up all our losses, and even bless us by means of the most afflictive dispensations. For, as "He spared not his "own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he "not with him freely give us all things?" And what shall we deem too valuable to give up, at the call of such a merciful and bounteous Benefactor?

V. 20—31.

While we desire in faith to bless our children and worship God, during life and at the approach of death, and afterwards to have our lot with his people in the heavenly Canaan; and while we attend to every relative duty, trusting in the Lord and not fearing the wrath of man; let us particularly note the effects of the faith of Moses; and ask ourselves, whether we have been influenced to a similar judgment, choice, and experience. Have we by faith learned to prefer the sanctified affliction of the people of God, to the enjoyment of the pleasures of sin for a season? Do we deem it an honour and a privilege to be reproached for the sake of Christ; and prefer loss in his cause to the riches of this evil world, having respect to the great reward promised to those who are thus distinguished? All believers are not called to make the same sacrifices, or to endure the same trials, for righteousness-sake; nor have all the same measure of faith: yet without some experience, consciousness, and instances of this kind, we are not warranted to conclude that we are of *his* religion: for a common walking stick more resembles Aaron's fruitful rod, than the faith of many modern professors does the self-denying faith of Moses. But the subject is absolutely inexhaustible; we must by faith overcome the fear of man, as well as the love of the world; we must endure all sufferings, and venture all consequences, in the way of duty, as "seeing Him who is invisible." In all things our faith must respect the true paschal Lamb, and the sprinkling of his blood for deliverance from the destruction of the wicked; and we must conscientiously observe his ordinances, as means of grace to our souls. Then, by faith we may pass, at God's command, through seas of tribulation, and scenes of temptation or danger, during life and at death, in which all unbelievers must sink and perish for ever. By faith we must implicitly use every means, however unlikely, which God prescribes, in order to our obtaining the promises; trusting in him alone to render them effectual: nor will any perish with the enemies of God, who believe his word, and show it by love to his people, whatever former crimes they have committed, or in whatever situation they may be found.

V. 32—40.

Faith will enable a man to serve God and his generation, in whatever way he may be employed, whether in governing or reforming nations, or defending them, by crushing the power of iniquitous assailants; or in preaching the Gospel, and boldly testifying against the crimes of the most mighty and implacable of its opposers; or by working righteousness and obtaining promises in a more obscure station. It will influence a man to such prompt obedience, disinterested diligence, and warranted expectation, as will ensure all needful success in his undertakings. It will also prepare him for facing any dangers: and though we do not now expect to stop the mouths of lions, or to quench the violence of fire; yet we are authorized to look for proportionable supports and consolations, if called to end our pilgrimage by the hand of violence. But we are chiefly concerned in the spiritual warfare: and in this, "by faith, we shall out of weakness be made strong, "wax valiant in fight, and put to flight the armies of the "aliens." Though we do not hope to have our dead restored again to life in this world, yet faith will mingle joy with our tears, and teach us to refuse deliverance from suffering, by sin, whilst we hope for the better resurrection which God hath promised to his people. Trials of cruel mockings we may expect, even in these favoured days, though hitherto exempted from scourgings, bonds, and imprisonments. We seem not to have immediate cause to apprehend being stoned, or sawn asunder, or slain by the sword; yet we shall surely be tempted, and we cannot overcome temptation, except by that faith which supported the martyrs, and made them more than conquerors over the fear of torment and death. If then we are ready to shrink or droop under our lighter trials, let us think of those excellent men, of whom the world was not worthy, and reflect how destitute, afflicted, and tormented they were; and how they were driven out, and wandered as outcasts in mountains and caves of the earth. For as our advantages, with those better things that God hath provided for us, are so much superior to theirs; so should our obedience of faith, and patience of hope, and labour of love, be more distinguished. Let us then pray continually for the increase of our faith, that we may follow these illustrious examples, and be with them at length made perfect in holiness and felicity, and "shine "like the Sun in the kingdom of our Father for ever-"more."

every weight, [e] and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, [f] and let us run [g] with patience the race that is set before us;

2 [h] Looking unto Jesus, [i] the * Author and [k] Finisher of *our* faith; who [l] for the joy that was set before him, [m] endured the cross, [n] despising the shame, [o] and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

3 For [p] consider him that endured such [q] contradiction of sinners against himself, [r] lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

[e] x. 35–39. Ps. xviii. 23. [f] 1 Cor ix. 24–27. Gal. v 7 Phil. ii. 16. iii. 10–14. 2 Tim. iv. 7. [g] vi. 15. x. 36. Matt. x. 22. xxiv. 13. Luke viii. 15. Rom. ii. 7. v. 3–5. viii 24, 25. xii. 12. Jam. i. 3. v 7–11. 2 Pet. i. 6. Rev. i. 9. iii. 10 xiii. 10.——[h] 3. ix. 28. Is. viii. 17. xxxi. 1 xlv. 22. Mic. vii. 7. Zech. xii. 10 John i. 29 vi. 40. viii. 56 Phil. iii 20. 2 Tim. iv. 8. Tit ii. 13. 1 John i. 1—3 Jude 21.——[i] Mark ix. 14. Luke xvii. 5. Rev. i. 8. 11. 17 ii. 8.——* Or, *Beginner.* ii. 10. Acts v. 31 *Gr.*——[k] vii 19. x. 14. *Gr.* Ps. cxxxviii. 8. 1 Cor. i 7, 8. Phil i. 6 ——[l] ii 7–9. v. 9. Ps. xvi. 9—11. Is. xlix. 6. liii. 10—12. Luke xxiv. 26 John xii. 24. 32. xiii. 3 31, 32. xvii 1–4. Acts ii. 25, 26. 36. Phil. ii. 8–11 1 Pet i. 11.——[m] x 5–12. Matt. xvi. 21. xx 18, 19. 28. xxvii. 31—50. Mark xiv. 36. John xii. 27, 28. Eph. ii. 16. v. 2. Tit ii. 14. 1 Pet. ii. 24. iii. 18.

[n] x 33. xi. 36. Ps. xxii. 6–8. lxix. 19, 20 Is. xlix. 7. l 6, 7. liii. 3. Matt. xxvi. 67, 68 xxvii 27—31. 38—44 Mark ix. 12. Luke xxiii. 11. 35–39 Acts v. 41. 1 Pet ii. 23. iv. 14–16. [o] *See on*, i. 3. 13. Ps cx. 1. [p] 2. iii. 1. 1 Sam. xii. 24. 2 Tim. ii. 7, 8.——[q] Matt. x. 24, 25. xi. 19. xii. 24. xv. 2. xxi. 15, 16. 23. 46 xxii. 15. Luke ii. 34. *Gr.* iv 28, 29. v. 21. xi. 15, 16. 53, 54. xiii 13. 14. xiv. 1. xv. 2. xvi. 14. xix 39, 40. John v. 16. vii. 12. viii. 13. 48, 49. 52. 59. ix. 40 x. 20. 31–39. xii. 9, 10. xv. 18—24. xviii 22.——[r] 5. Deut. xx. 3. Prov. xxiv. 10. Is. xl. 30, 31. l. 4. 1 Cor. xv. 58. 2 Cor. iv. 1. 16. Gal. vi. 9. 2 Thes. iii. 13.

NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1. The apostle called on the Hebrews to consider themselves as surrounded with witnesses to the faithfulness of God, and the power and efficacy of faith, as innumerable as the drops of water in a cloud. The persons before-mentioned, and multitudes besides, seemed to look down from heaven, or even to come from thence, to compass them about, and to bear their testimony in the cause; as well as to be spectators of their conduct, in that arduous, perilous, and honourable race, in which they themselves had got so blessed a victory. Professed Christians ought therefore, with one consent, to lay aside every weight, (as men laid aside their superfluous garments, or most costly ornaments, when about to run in the Isthmian games, or to contend in the race on any occasion:) and not to burden themselves with worldly cares, interests, or indulgences, idolatrous attachments, or needless hurry of business, which might hinder their spiritual progress, and cause them to loiter, to move heavily, or to look back, and so endanger the loss of the race. They should also watch against, and seek a decided victory over, natural depravity, which would still continually beset them, and take advantage, so to speak, of every favourable circumstance, and especially of those sinful propensities, which on any account had a peculiar power against them. In particular they ought to use every means of conquering their unbelief; through which they were tempted to apostatize, from love of the world and fear of suffering. This was the sin which most easily beset them in those times of persecution: many had been cast down by it, many more were in danger, and they all would doubtless be vigorously assaulted on that side. It behooved them, therefore, to get rid of every encumbrance, and to seek the increase of their faith, and the crucifixion of their worldly lusts, that they might press forward with progressive earnestness and unwearied patience, in the persevering obedience of faith in Christ. This was "the race set before them," in which they must either win the crown of glory, or have everlasting misery and ignominy for their portion.

V. 2, 3. The apostle had indeed called the Hebrews to contemplate the conduct of those who had patiently run the race, and to consider the perils, difficulties, and sufferings, through which they had urged their course by faith. to seize the incorruptible prize: and they ought to realize their presence as witnesses for Christ, and spectators of their conflict. But they must *look off*, not only from the vain-glory of the world, the number and power of their enemies, and their own weakness and sinfulness, but even from these inferior luminaries; that they might behold that glorious Sun, from which even they received all the light that rendered them so resplendent. In order to their more full instruction and encouragement, they must look steadily to Jesus; not merely as one who had run his glorious race, and completed his work, by faith in the promises and covenant-engagements of the Father, but as "the Author and Finisher of faith" itself. He alone had opened the way for men to return to God, and to enter heaven by faith, when sin had closed for ever that of personal righteousness: from him, as the great Prophet of the church, the doctrine of faith had been delivered, which none could ever be authorized to change, add to, or deduct from: he alone, by his Spirit, produces faith in the hearts of his people, which he maintains, increases, and perfects, in its nature and fruits, till its work be finished. So that they must look to him *for* faith, as well as *by* faith: and though he needed not that faith, by which a sinner is justified, yet, in finishing his work on earth, he led his people the way to complete victory over every enemy, by a patient obedient reliance on the word of his heavenly Father. As he had in all things the pre-eminence, so he did not enter into his mediatorial glory, without having the precedency, in the measure of his sufferings, above all others that ever went to heaven. "For the joy set before him," of his own personal exaltation to the mediatorial throne; of the salvation of many millions of lost sinners from destruction; of bringing them to endless happiness, and of eternally glorifying the whole Name and all the perfections of God; he, with the utmost fortitude and constancy, endured all his other humiliating sufferings, from his birth in the stable to his agony in the garden; and at length most willingly submitted to be suspended on the cross, and there to expire in lingering tortures. And though this method of execution was peculiarly ignominious, and by the law pronounced accursed; and though his crucifixion was attended with unheard of circumstances of indignity, outrage, revilings, and derision; yet he disregarded the shame, as well as the anguish of it, as not worthy to be compared with the glorious event which he had in view. Thus, having endured, until his undertaking was finished, he was speedily raised from the dead, and exalted to "the right hand of the throne of God." The disciples ought therefore to look unto him, both as an example of constancy and patience; as the Author of their strength, encouragement, victory, and salvation; and as a glorious instance of the blessed effect of perseverance amidst reproaches and sufferings, in cleaving unto God, and being faithful unto death. For this case was so extraordinary, that they would do well to consider it, even with *arithmetical* exactness; and to estimate the dignity and

4 Ye have [s] not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

5 And [t] ye have forgotten [u] the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, [x] despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, [y] nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

6 For [z] whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, [a] and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

7 If ye [b] endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; [c] for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

8 But if ye be [d] without chastisement whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

s 2. x 32—34 Matt xxiv. 9. 1 Cor. x. 13. 2 Tim iv. 6, 7. Rev. ii. 13. vi 9—11. xii 11. xvii. 6. xviii 24.
t Deut iv. 9, 10 Ps cxix. 16. 83 109. Prov. iii. 1. iv. 5. Matt xvi. 9, 10. Luke xxiv. 6. 8.
u 7 Prov. iii. 11, 12.
x Job v. 17, 18. xxxiv. 31. Ps. xciv. 12. cxviii 18. Jer. xxxi. 18. 1 Cor. xi. 32.
y 4. Josh vii 7—11. 2 Sam. vi. 7—10. 1 Chr. xiii. 9—13. xv. 12, 13. Ps. vi. 1, 2. 2 Cor. iv. 9, 10. xii. 9, 10.
z Deut. viii. 5. Ps. xxxii. 1—5. lxxiii. 14, 15. lxxxix. 30—34. cxix 71. 75. Prov. iii 12. xiii. 24. Is. xxvii 9 Jer. x. 24. Jam. i. 12. v. 11. Rev. iii. 19 ——a 7, 8. 2 Sam. vii. 14.——b Job xxxiv. 31, 32. Prov. xix. 18. xxii. 15. xxiii. 13, 14 xxix. 15. 17. Acts xiv. 22.——c 1 Sam ii. 29. 34. iii. 13. 1 Kings i 6. ii. 24, 25. Prov. xxix. 15 ——d 6. Ps. lxxiii. 14, 15. 1 Pet. v 9, 10.

9 Furthermore, we have had [e] fathers of our flesh which [f] corrected *us*, and [g] we gave *them* reverence: [h] shall we not much rather be in subjection unto [i] the Father of Spirits, and live?

10 For they verily for a few days chastened *us*, [*] after their own pleasure; [k] but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be [l] partakers of his holiness.

11 Now, [m] no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: [n] nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the [o] peaceable fruit of righteousness, unto them which are [p] exercised thereby.

e John iii. 6. Acts ii. 30. Rom. i 3. ix. 3. 5.
f *See on*, 7.
g Ex. xx. 12 Lev. xix. 3 Deut xxi. 18—21. xxvii. 16. Prov. xxx. 17. Ez xxii. 7. Eph vi. 1—4.
h Mal. i. 6. Jam iv. 7. 10. 1 Pet. v. 6.
i Num. xvi. 22. xxvii. 16. Ec xii. 7. Is xlii. 5. lvii. 16. Zech xii. 1.
* Or, as seemed *good*, or, *meet*, to them.
k *See on*, 5, 6.
l Lev. xi. 44, 45. xix 2. Ps xvii. 15. Ez. xxxvi. 25—27. Eph iv. 24. v. 26, 27. Col i. 22. Tit. ii. 14 1 Pet i. 15, 16. ii. 5. 9. 2 Pet. i. 4.
m Ps. lxxxiv. 32. cxviii. 18. Prov. xv. 10. xix. 18.——n *See on*, 5, 6. 10.——o Ps. cxix. 165. Is. xxxii. 17. Rom v. 3—5. xiv. 17. 2 Cor. iv. 17. Gal. v. 22, 23. Jam iii. 17, 18. p v. 14. 1 Tim. iv. 7, 8. 2 Pet. ii. 14 *Gr.*

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excellency of the sufferer; the contradiction of sinners against him, who ensnared, reviled, opposed, and accused him, with most perverse enmity against his holy doctrine and example, and with malignant ingratitude for all his love; the intenseness and variety of his sufferings; the meek and composed fortitude with which he endured them; the love which moved him thus to suffer; and the most blessed consequences of his humiliation. When they were weary and faint in their minds, with trials and injuries from their malicious persecutors, such considerations would serve to quiet and encourage them, whilst they recollected that the holy Jesus suffered, to save them from deserved and eternal misery, and that sinners of the same nature with themselves inflicted these tortures; that he had much bitterness in his cup, which was not in theirs; that he was hated for his own sake, and they only because of their relation to him; and that his cross secured a happy event to all their conflicts and trials in his cause. In short, by looking to him, every kind of humiliating and animating topic would occur to their minds, to invigorate the exercise of their holy affections, and to repress the working of every carnal propensity.

V. 4—8. The Hebrews had indeed suffered the loss of their property, and even bonds and scourgings, for cleaving to Christ, and maintaining the conflict against sin and temptation: but they, whom the sacred writer addressed, had not yet resisted unto blood. Many of their brethren had chosen to die in this conflict, rather than yield the victory to their enemies by renouncing the Gospel: even men of like infirmities with themselves had endured more, by faith in the cause of God, than they had been called to do; and their sufferings for Christ were unspeakably less than his for them had been: so that they ought to be ashamed of their cowardice, if they grew weary, or fainted in the contest, because of their inferior trials. It would in that case appear, that they had forgotten the exhortation of the Lord, by Solomon, who addressed believers as his children, when he called on them not to despise his chastening, nor yet to faint under it. Whatever instrument was employed, they were thus taught to recognize the fatherly correction of God in their trials, and neither to disregard them with stoutness of spirit, and unfeeling contempt, as if they called for no humiliation, were capable of no improvement, had no meaning, and were easily supported; nor yet to faint, despond, turn aside, or seek relief by sin, when suffering under them; seeing the Lord correcteth all the objects of his special love, and sharply scourgeth every one, whom he receives as his adopted child into his family, and distinguishes by his peculiar regard. (*Note, Job* v. 17. *Prov.* iii. 11, 12.) If then the Hebrews endured their afflictions as fatherly chastisements, in a submissive spirit, and with due constancy, it would evidently appear that the Lord was dealing with them as with children: for, indeed, among men it might be inquired, "What son is he, whom his "father, on no occasion, chasteneth?" All need correction; all who are properly educated receive it; no wise and kind father wholly withholds it; and no children are entirely exempted from the pain of salutary discipline, except such as are indulged to their ruin. So that, if the professed people of God were not at all corrected, it might be inferred, that he did not own them as his children, but considered them as spurious members of the visible church, but not born of the Spirit, or educated for the inheritance of his saints. The allusion may either be made to such children as a man deems to be spurious, though born of his wife, because he suspects her of being unfaithful, and therefore will bestow no pains about them, or such as the real father neglects, because they are illegitimate, and he is ashamed to own them; but the former case seems more exactly to accord to the apostle's intent.

V. 9—11. The persons addressed had had fathers according to the flesh, who corrected them in their younger years: and though the chastisement seemed grievous to them, yet they did not leave them on that account, but rather learned to stand in awe of their authority, and to fear giving them further offence: and, when they were grown up, they became sensible that such discipline had been productive of good to them. Was it not therefore much more proper for them to submit to the Father of their spirits, the Creator of their souls, and the Giver of spiritual life; (*Marg. Ref.*) when that subjection was essentially connected with their salvation, and nothing but

12 Wherefore, [q] lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

13 And [r] make * straight paths for your feet, lest that which is [s] lame be turned out of the way; [t] but let it rather be healed.

14 [u] Follow peace with all *men*, [x] and holiness, without which [y] no man shall see the Lord:

15 [z] Looking diligently, lest [a] any man † fail of the grace of God; lest [b] any root of bitterness springing up [c] trouble *you*, [d] and thereby many be defiled;

16 Lest there *be* [e] any fornicator, or profane person, [f] as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.

17 For ye know how that afterward, [g] when he would have inherited the blessing, [h] he was rejected: [i] for he found no ‡ place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

q 3 5 Job iv 3, 4 Is xxxv 3. Ez. vii 17 xxi. 7. Dan. v 6. Neh ii. 18. 1 Thes v. 14.
r Prov. iv. 26, 27. Is. xxxv. 3 8—10 xl 3, 4 xlii. 16. lviii 12 Jer xviii. 15 Luke iii. 5.
* Or, *even*
s Is. xxxv 6 Jer. xxxi 8. 9.
t Gal vi. 1. Jude 22. 23.
u Gen xlii. 7—9. Ps xxxiv. 14. xxxviii 20. cxx. 6. cxxxiii. 1. Prov. xv. 1. xvi 7. xvii. 14. Is. xi. 6—9. Matt. v. 9. Mark ix. 50. Rom xii. 18. xiv 19. 1 Cor. i. 10. Gal. v. 22, 23. Eph. iv. 1—8. 1 Thes. v. 15 1 Tim. vi. 11. 2 Tim. ii. 22 Jam. iii 17. 18. 1 Pet. iii. 11.——x *See on.* 10. Ps. xciv. 15 Is. li. 1. Luke i 75. Rom. vi. 22 2 Cor vi. 17 vii. 1 Phil. iii. 12. 1 Thes iii. 13 iv. 7. 1 Pet i. 15, 16. iii. 13. 2 Pet iii. 11. 18 3 John 11.
y Gen xxxii. 30. Job xix. 26 xxxiii. 26. Matt. v. 8 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Gal. v. 21. 1 John iii 2. 3 Rev xxi. 24—27. xxii 3 4 11—15.——z ii 1, 2 iii 12. iv. 1 11. vi. 11. x 23—35. Deut. iv. 9. Prov. iv. 23. 1 Cor. ix. 24—27. x. 12 2 Cor. vi. 1. xiii. 5. 2 Pet. iii. 11. 14. 2 John 8 Jude 20, 21.——a Luke xxii 32. 1 Cor. xiii 8.

† Or, *fall from.* Gal. v. 4.
b Deut. xxix. 18. xxxii 38. Is. v. 4. 7. Jer. ii. 21. Matt. vii. 16—18.
c Josh vi. 18. vii. 25, 26. xxii. 17—20.
d Ex. xxxii. 21. 1 Kings xiv. 16. Acts xx. 30, 31. 1 Cor. v. 6. xv. 33. Gal. ii. 13. 2 Tim ii. 16, 17. 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2. 18.
e xiii. 4. Mark vii. 21. Acts xv. 20 29. 1 Cor. v. 1—6. 9—11. vi. 15—20. x. 8. 2 Cor. xii. 21. Gal. v. 19—21. Eph. v. 3. 5. Col. iii. 5. 1 Thes. iv. 3—7. Rev. ii. 20—23. xxi 8. xxii 15 ——f Gen xxv 31—34. xxvii. 36.——g Gen. xxvii. 31—41 ——h vi. 8. Prov. i 24—31. Jer vi 30 Matt. vii 23 xxv. 11, 12. Luke xiii. 24—27.——i vi 4—6. x. 26—29.——‡ Or, *way to change his mind.*

death could be the consequence of their rebelling against him? For indeed the corrections of their earthly parents, during the few days of their childhood, had been inflicted "after their own pleasure," and were often, in a great degree, the effect of their own passions, rather than of a prudent design for the good of their children: but their heavenly Father corrected them, though with apparent severity, during the short time of their continuance on earth, yet entirely with a wise and faithful regard to their profit; and in order to make them partakers of his holiness, by mortifying their pride and carnal lusts, and bringing them, through such discipline, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, to be conformed to himself in their judgment, dispositions and conduct. For by these means, he showed them the vanity of the world, the evil nature and effects of sin, the depravity of their own hearts, and the preciousness of his salvation: and so trained them up to humility, spirituality, simplicity, tenderness, submission, love, reverence, gratitude, compassion, and every holy affection. Now they were not to suppose, that these salutary corrections ever appeared pleasant, or matter of joy, to the persons who were enduring them: on the contrary, they always *seemed* for the present grievous, and caused much anguish; nor could they otherwise answer their intention. So that the sufferers often thought, that their trials did them harm, and would end in their ruin: yet afterwards, when the tumult of their passions had subsided, and they were able to digest the lessons which they received under them, they amply compensated for the anguish, by yielding the peaceable fruits of righteousness, and bringing them into a disposition quietly to submit to God, and meekly to bear the injuries of men; and by rendering them fruitful in all those good works, which evinced them to be justified, and at peace with God, and which tended to give them inward peace, joy, and confidence in him. Thus having been *exercised*, disciplined, or instructed, by sanctified afflictions, they would afterwards possess the benefit of them; even though for the present they seemed to irritate their corruptions, and tended immediately to make a discovery of the evils of their hearts, for their subsequent humiliation.

V. 12, 13. The considerations, above insisted on, should induce the Hebrews, both in respect of themselves and each other, to observe the counsel of the prophet, (*Note, Is.* xxxv. 3,) by endeavouring to counteract every disposition to faint, despond, or throw up their profession of the Gospel, amidst their persecutions. For they should consider them as fatherly corrections for their profit, submit to them as such, and seek to have them sanctified, and direct and encourage each other to take the same course. Thus they ought patiently and firmly to maintain their profession, and go on in the path of holy obedience; and, by proper instructions, admonitions, and counsels, oppose every false doctrine, and remove every stumbling-block: that so straight paths might be made for their feet, though the road itself was rough and thorny, lest any of those who were discouraged, or who, (like lame persons,) proceeded with difficulty and pain, should be turned out of the way, to seek an easier path, by concealing, or acting contrary to, their profession; (*Note, Is.* lvii. 14.) On the contrary, such persons should be healed, and confirmed by suitable encouragements and cautions, whilst there remained any hope concerning them.

V. 14. Whilst the persons addressed thus steadfastly adhered to the truth, and contended for it, they should also avoid all discord and resentment, and *pursue* peace with all men, even though it seemed to flee from them. They ought, as far as truth and duty would permit them, to live peaceably with Jews and Gentiles, and to bear or concede every thing for that purpose: and they should study to be at peace with each other, and with their Gentile brethren. This would greatly aid their following after holiness, and seeking nearer conformity to the spiritual law and perfect character of God, as exhibited in the example of Christ: nor must they even seek peace, so as to neglect the practice and pursuit of holiness, or by connivance at sin; for without holiness no man, of any religion, could see the Lord. None could behold his manifested glory, aud commune with him in comfort, whilst in this world, without "the sanctification of the Spirit unto obe-"dience;" nor could any one be capable of the beatific vision hereafter, or be admitted to it, without being made holy even as God is holy. It should be noted, that humiliation, brokenness of heart, and proper affections towards the Lord Jesus, are essential to the holiness of a redeemed sinner, and all else, however specious, must be counterfeit where these are wanting.

V. 15—17. It behooved Christians to look diligently, not only to themselves, but likewise to each other, both in respect of their principles and conduct: lest any one of them should fail of an interest in the special mercy and favour of God, or remain destitute of his sanctifying

18 For [k] ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,

19 And [l] the sound of a trumpet, [m] and the voice of words; which *voice* [n] they that heard entreated, that the word should not be spoken to them any more:

20 (For [o] they could not endure that which was commanded, and [p] if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart:

21 And so terrible was the sight, *that* [q] Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)

22 But [r] ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto [s] the city of [t] the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to [u] an innumerable company of angels.

23 To [x] the general assembly and church of [y] the first-born, [z] which are * written in heaven, and to [a] God the Judge of all, and to [b] the spirits of just men made perfect.

24 And to [c] Jesus the Mediator of the [d] new † covenant, and [e] to the blood of sprinkling, that [f] speaketh better things than *that of* Abel.

k Ex. xix. 12—19. xx. 18. xxiv. 17. Deut. iv. 11. v 22—26. Rom. vi. 14. viii. 15. 2 Tim i. 7
l Ex. xix 16 19. 1 Cor. xv. 52 1 Thess. iv. 16.
m Ex xx. 1—17. 22 Deut iv. 12. 33 v. 3—22.
n Ex xx. 19. Deut v. 24—27 xviii 16.
o Deut. xxxiii 2. Rom. iii. 19, 20. Gal. ii. 19. iii. 10
p Ex. xix 13.
q Ex xix 16 19. Ps cxix. 120 Is. vi 3 4 Dan. x. 8. 17. Rev. i. 17
r Ps ii 6 xlviii. 2 cxxxii 13, 14. Is xii 6. xiv. 32. xxviii. 16. lii 11 16 lix 20 lx 14. Joel ii 32 Rom. xi 26. Gal iv 26. Rev. xiv. 1.
s xiii 14 Ps. xlviii. 2 lxxxvii 3. Matt. v. 35 Phil. iii. 20. *Marg.* Rev. iii 12 xxi. 2. 10. xxii. 19.
t iii. 12. ix. 14. x. 31 Deut. v. 26. Josh. iii. 10 2 Kings xix 4. Ps. xlii. 2 lxxxiv 2. Jer. x 10. Dan. vi. 26. Hos. i. 10. Matt. xvi. 16. Rom. ix. 26. 1 Thes. i. 9. Rev. vii 2.
u Deut. xxxiii 2. Ps lxviii. 17 Dan. vii 10. Jude 14. Rev. v. 11, 12
x Ps. lxxxix. 7 cxi. 1 Acts xx 28. Eph. i 22 v. 24—27. Col. i. 24 1 Tim iii. 5.——y Ex. iv. 22. xiii. 2. Deut xxi. 17. Ps. lxxxix. 27. Jer. xxxi. 9. Jam. i 18 Rev xiv 4.——z Ex xxxii 32. Ps. lxix. 28. Luke x 20. Phil. iv. 3. Rev. xiii. 8. xx. 15.——* Or, *enrolled*——a vi. 10—12. ix 27 Gen xviii. 25 Ps. l. 5. 6 xciv 2 xcvi. 13. xcviii. 9. Matt xxv. 31—41 John v. 27 2 Thes i 5—7 1 Pet. ii. 23.——b xi 4. Ec. xii 7 1 Cor. xiii. 12 2 Cor. v. 8 Phil i. 21—23. iii. 12. &c. Col i 12. Rev. vii. 14—17.———c vii. 22 viii 6. 8 1 Tim. ii 5 d xiii. 20. Is. lv. 3 Jer. xxxi. 31—33.——† Or *testament* ix 15 Matt xxvi. 28. Mark xiv. 24. Luke xxii 20.——e ix 21. x. 22. xi 28. Ex. xxiv. 6. 1 Pet. i. 2.——f xi. 4 Gen iv 10. Matt. xxiii. 35. Luke xi. 51.

grace, and so be left to apostatize; and lest any root of bitterness, any unmortified lust in the heart, which seemed to be dead, should spring up and shoot forth its bitter and poisonous produce, in heretical doctrines or scandalous practices, to the trouble and disturbance of the whole body, and the defiling and corrupting of numbers, as frequently had been done. (*Note, Deut.* xxix. 18—21.) (*Marg. Ref.*) For instance, lest any one among them should commit fornication, under a mistaken notion of Christian liberty; or lest there should be some profane person, who so despised the peculiar blessings of the new covenant, as to barter them away for temporal advantages, like Esau, who for one meal of meat sold his birthright, (*Notes, Gen.* xxv. 29—34.) That example ought to be a warning to them, not to renounce Christianity for the sake of worldly ease, interest, or indulgence; for when Esau would afterwards have inherited the blessing, he was rejected both by the Lord, and by his father Isaac, (*Notes, Gen.* xxvii. 31—41.) so that he found no place or opportunity for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears. The whole history of Esau shows, that he, at that time, neither truly repented of all his sins, nor sought to do it; but he was grieved and vexed at being circumvented by Jacob; he was sorry that he had made so foolish a bargain; he coveted the temporal advantages which belonged to the birthright, especially the dominion over his brother; he had altered his mind *in that particular*, and he sought carefully, and with tears, to induce Isaac to alter his purpose, to retract Jacob's blessing and to bestow it on him; but he sought this in vain, for it was then too late. This latter, however, even the change of mind in Isaac, which might induce him to retract the blessing pronounced on Jacob, and to confer it on him, seems to be the *repentance* which Esau sought with tears. Thus the time would shortly come, when they, who refused spiritual blessings for the sake of temporal interests, would become fully sensible of their madness and folly, and would be glad to reverse the fatal bargain; but that must be let alone for ever. This was another awful warning against apostacy; but it in no degree relates to the case of such as do truly repent of all their sins, or who seek repentance *of God in prayer*, carefully, and with tears; for this Esau never did. Indeed it chiefly respects the condition of sinners in another world, though it also includes the total desperation and tremendous horror of some apostates in this present life. (*Note*, &c. vi. 6—8 x. 26—30.)

V. 18—21. The apostle here recurred to his argument, that the superior excellency of the Christian dispensation would render it proportionably more criminal and perilous to reject it; (*Notes*, ii. 1—4. x. 28—31) for his discourse seems equally suited for the warning of avowed unbelievers, and of those who were tempted to apostacy. He did not speak of the state of individuals, as converted or unconverted; but of the different method in which God now spake to the nation, from that in which he delivered the law to their fathers. This he showed by an allusion to the two mountains, Sinai and Zion; for though God at length spake to his people from mount Zion and the mercy-seat, through the atonements and ministrations of the high priest, yet this was only in a typical and obscure manner; the way into the Holiest was not made manifest under that dispensation, but the law was delivered from, and the national covenant was ratified at, mount Sinai. That dispensation was at length abolished, and another introduced; the Lord therefore had not called them to assemble, and hear him speak to them from the material mountain, which was capable of being touched, (though their fathers had been forbidden to touch it,) from whence such tremendous displays of the divine glory had been made, when the law was given, and the terrors attending on it made the people entreat, that JEHOVAH would no more speak to them in that way, as they could not endure the things which were spoken. (*Notes Ex.* xix. xx.) Indeed the severe restraints laid on them, and the terrible things seen and heard by them, filled them with dismay, and even made Moses exclaim, that "he exceedingly feared and quaked," notwithstanding his typical office of Mediator, his peculiar sanctity, and the long and intimate communion with God that he had maintained, (*Note, Ex.* xix. 16—20).—The whole of this scene showed the impossibility of a sinner's coming before God with acceptance, according to the works of the law; the highly criminal presumption of attempting it, and the need of a Mediator and a better covenant; and it was to the apostle's purpose to call off the attention of the Hebrews from that dispensation to the Gospel, by every argument.

25 [g] See that ye [h] refuse not him that speaketh: For [i] if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more *shall not* we *escape*, if we [k] turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven:

26 Whose [l] voice then skook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, [m] Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

27 And this *word*, Yet once more, [n] signifieth the removing of those things that * are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

28 Wherefore, we receiving [o] a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us † have grace whereby [p] we may serve God acceptably, [q] with reverence and godly fear;

29 For [r] our God *is* a consuming fire.

g viii. 5 Ex. xvi. 29 1 Kings xii. 16. Is. xlviii 6 lxiv. 9 Matt. viii. 4. 1 Thes v. 15 1 Pet i 22. Rev. xix 10. xxii 9.

h Prov. i 24 viii. 33. xiii 18. xv. 32. Jer. xi. 10. Ez. v. 6. Zech. vii 11. Matt. xvii. 5. Acts vii 35.

i *See on*, ii. 1—3. iii. 17. x. 28, 29.

k Num. xxxii. 15 Deut. xxx. 17. Josh. xxii 16. 2 Chr vii. 19. Prov. i. 32. 2 Tim. iv. 4 —— l Ex. xix. 18. Ps. cxiv. 6, 7. Hab. iii. 10. —— m 27. Is. ii. 19. xiii. 13. Joel iii. 16. Hag ii 6, 7. 22.

n Ps. cii 26, 27. Ez. xxi. 27. Matt. xxiv. 35. 2 Pet. iii. 10, 11. Rev. xi 15. xxi. 1.

* Or, *may be shaken.*

o Is ix. 7. Dan. ii. 44 vii. 14. 27. Matt. xxv. 34. Luke i 33. xvii. 20, 21. 1 Pet. i 4, 5. Rev. i. 6 v. 10.

† Or, *hold fast.* *See on*, iii. 6. x. 23.

p Ps. xix. 14. Is. lvi. 7. Rom xii. 1, 2. Eph. i. 6. v. 10. Phil. iv. 18 1 Pet. ii. 5 20. —— q iv. 16 v. 7. x. 19. 22. Lev. x 3 Ps. ii. 11. lxxxix. 7. Prov. xxviii. 14. Rom. xi 20. 1 Pet i. 17. Rev. xv 4. —— r x. 27. Ex. xxxiv 17. Num. xi. 1. xvi. 35. Deut. iv. 24. ix. 3. Ps. l. 3. xcvii. 3. Is lxvi. 15. Dan. vii. 9. 2 Thes i. 8.

V. 22—25. The Hebrew converts to Christianity ought to consider themselves as summoned by the preachers of the Gospel to come to mount Zion, or as actually convened there, to hear the voice of God from the mercy-seat; they were *professedly* become inhabitants of the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the place of the Lord's special residence with his covenant-people and accepted worshippers, of which Jerusalem had been but a feeble type; at least they were invited to enter, and become citizens of that favoured city. This meant the Church of Christ on earth, with all its special privileges, ordinances, and promises, as connected with the holy residence of God in heaven, and continually replenishing it with new inhabitants. (*Marg. Ref.*) They were also called to hear the voice of God, in the presence of an innumerable company of angels, who were all minis- "tering spirits to the heirs of salvation," whose happiness they were invited to participate, and whose worship they were called upon to join and emulate. Moreover, they were come to unite, (not with the congregation of Israel,) but with the assembly and Church of the first born, those who were specially devoted to God; his children, and heirs of the heavenly inheritance, whose names were not only enrolled in the genealogies or registers of the Lord's people on earth, but written in heaven as the elect of God, born of the Spirit, denizens of that heavenly city, and entitled to all its invaluable immunities. They were also called, and many of them were in profession come, to hear the voice of that God, as a Saviour and a Father, who was the impartial, omniscient, omnipotent, and righteous Judge of all men, and of all the world, and by whom all unbelievers would be condemned to everlasting punishment; yea, they were come to share the blessedness of "the "spirits of just men made perfect;" even of all the company of ancient believers, and of those who had died since the coming of Christ, and had thus been made perfect in holiness and felicity.---This is a most decisive proof, that the souls of believers enter into a state of perfect happiness when they die, as far as this can consist with being separated from their bodies.---They were also convened, as it were, to hear the voice of God speaking to them by Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, which was founded on better promises, and ratified by nobler blood, than that mediated by Moses; even by the shedding of that blood, through the application of which the conscience, the heart, and the duties of sinners were cleansed, and the heavenly things themselves were purified; of which all the sprinklings of blood under the law had been mere shadows. Not only was this blood more efficacious than that of bulls and goats, but Jesus, by it, being dead, yet spake far better things than righteous Abel had done, (*Note*, xi. 4.) for, while the blood of Abel called from the ground for vengeance on the murderer, the blood of Christ, applied in faith, not only took away the guilt of all other sins, however atrocious, but even that of being his crucifiers; as multitudes of those, who had been immediately concerned in that most heinous crime, could thankfully witness. Their national guilt, therefore, could not preclude them from pardon, through this great atonement; and the Lord then invited and commanded them to believe in the name of his Son, and so to share all the before-mentioned most precious privileges. Let them therefore see to it, as they valued his favour and feared his vengeance, that they did not refuse the gracious call and proffered salvation of him who thus spake to them from his throne of grace, and by his beloved Son. For if *they* who refused to obey the voice of God speaking to them on earth, from mount Sinai, by Moses, but rejected his authority and brake his covenant, did not escape condign punishment; much more certainly and severely would they be punished, who turned away with enmity and contempt from him, who now spake to them from heaven, by the ambassadors of his Son, their Mediator and High Priest in the sanctuary above; for their guilt and condemnation must be proportioned to the grace and condescension which they refused and despised.---This shows, that by coming to mount Zion, &c. the apostle did not mean *being true believers*, but having the Gospel proposed to them, or having made a profession of it. They might therefore be said to turn away from God, whether they rejected his invitation, or after a time became apostates from Christianity; but men cannot be said to refuse what was never proposed to them.

V. 26—29. The voice of JEHOVAH, from mount Sinai, had been attended with tremendous earthquakes and convulsions; but many ages after that transaction, in an express prediction of the Messiah, he had promised, that he would once more shake the earth and the heavens also; (*Note*, *Hag*. ii. 6---9.) meaning that he would unhinge the whole civil and ecclesiastical state of the Jews, and abolish the Mosaic dispensation, in order to make way for the kingdom of Christ. The expression, "once "more," as referring to the change in the state of the Church and the world, which took place by the introduction of the Mosaic dispensation, with the extraordinary events attending that change, and to all other

CHAP. XIII.

Exhortations to brotherly love, hospitality, and compassion; to chastity, contentment, and trust in God, 1—3; *to recollect the faith, examples, and happy end of deceased pastors,* 4—7; *remembering that Christ is unchangeable and eternal,* 8; *to watchfulness against false doctrines, regard to the sacrifice of Christ, willingness to bear reproach for him, thanksgivings to God, liberality to men, subjection to teachers, and prayer for the apostle,* 9—19. *A prayer for the*

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still more extraordinary changes, to be introduced at the coming of the Messiah, donoted the total removal of the things shaken, as of things made and constituted after the manner of this lower creation, to endure but for a time: this was to be only "once more," and then a constitution would be introduced of a heavenly nature, which could not be shaken or removed, but should continue to the end, and, in its effects, for ever. As, therefore, they who had embraced the Gospel were admitted into, and made partakers of, a kingdom which could not be removed; as others were invited to accept of these benefits, according to the dispensation which was now openly introduced; and as all grace was freely promised to every one who sought it in the appointed way; it was proper to exhort all of them "to have," that is, to seek for, and so obtain, "grace," that they might serve God, not merely as his professing people, but acceptably, as true believers and spiritual worshippers: and not only with joy, confidence, and gratitude, but with reverence of his majesty and authority, and a godly fear of deceiving themselves, of falling under his wrath or frown, or of dishonouring his name; as humbly conscious of their unworthiness, weakness, and depravity, and recollecting, that the God, whose people they professed to be, was a consuming fire, to destroy hypocrites, apostates, and enemies of every kind, however masked or disguised. (*Marg. **Ref.***) The apostle evidently meant some of his expressions for one description of readers, and others of them for those of a different character; though he left each to make the application to himself: but he peculiarly aimed to convince his countrymen, that unbelievers among them were doomed to the most tremendous vengeance of God, both national and personal, from which there could be no escape, except by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, and cleaving to him.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—4.

While prophets, apostles, martyrs, and ancient believers, sing the praises of our redeeming God, they unitedly testify to us his faithfulness to his promises, and the preciousness of his salvation; and they exhort us to lay aside every weight, and to run with patience the race set before us. We should therefore seriously inquire, what are the weights which retard our course; what the sin, or sins, by which we are most easily beset, and peculiarly endangered; that we may seek for grace to enable us to lay aside the one, and to be upon our guard against all occasions of the other. Many, who seemed to set out well, lose the race, through the weight of increasing trade or affluence, with the peculiar snares, temptations, connexions, and encumbrances of them. This seems the easily-besetting sin of these days of liberty and peace; though all persons, in whatever state, have their peculiar dangers and hinderances, against which they are required to watch and pray without ceasing: nor can we "run with "patience the race set before us," unless we be crucified to the world, and daily employed in mortifying the whole body of sin, with all its affections and lusts; those especially, to which education, habit, or situation, give most advantage. We should imagine ourselves surrounded with this cloud of witnesses, as spectators of our conduct, animating us to run the race without fainting, and prepared to congratulate our success with adoring acclamations. Yet the eye of our souls should be principally fixed upon "Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith," from whose fulness they all received, by whose light they shone, and through whose strength they contended for and obtained the victory: and we should turn our attention from all other objects to fixed contemplation on his ignominious cross, and his glorious throne. The thoughts of the variety of his sufferings, from love to sinners, and his animating example of meekness and patience, cannot fail to exhilarate our drooping spirits with an assurance of his compassion, and tender regard to our good. We shall then see, that a joy is set before us also, at the end of our sorrows, for the sake of which we may cheerfully endure them; we shall perceive that it is reasonable to disregard the reproach and contempt of men, as the divine Saviour bore and sanctified this trial also: and the view of his glorious exaltation will inspire us with confidence in his power to protect, support, and comfort us, under all that we can suffer for his sake. Let us then frequently "consider "him, who endured the contradiction of sinners against "himself, lest we be wearied and faint in our minds." What are our little trials to his agonies, or even to our deserts? What indeed are they to the sufferings of many of our brethren, in different ages and places? We have not yet resisted unto blood in our warfare against sin, as many others have done; and we should be ashamed of our murmurings and impatience, when we have so little cause of complaint.

V. 5—13.

While we look to Jesus, to reconcile us to suffering, to set us against sin, and to eclipse the vain splendour of this worthless world, we should also learn to receive every affliction, which the malice or envy of men brings upon us, as a correction sent by our wise and gracious Father, who speaketh to us by his word, interpreting his providential dispensations as to children, and calls on us neither to despise, nor to faint under, his chastisements. We should consider them as precious favours, needful blessings, pledges of love, and the only spiritual good which he hath promised to give us without our praying for it. He never fails to chasten his children; though he often permits

Hebrews, and concluding salutations, 20—25.

LET [a] brotherly love continue.

2 Be [b] not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby [c] some have entertained angels unawares.

3 Remember [d] them that are in bonds, as bound with them; *and* them [e] which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

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[a] vi. 10, 11. x. 24. John xiii. 34, 35. xv. 17. Acts ii 1. 44—46. iv 32. Rom xii. 9. 10. Gal v. 6. 13. 22 Eph. iv. 3 v. 2. Phil ii. 1—3. 1 Thes. iv. 9, 10 2 Thes. i. 3. 1 Pet. i. 22. ii. 17. iii. 8. iv. 8. 2 Pet. i. 7. 1 John ii. 9, 10. iii. 10—18. 23. iv. 7—11. 20 21. v 1. 2 John 5, 6. Rev. ii. 4

[b] Lev. xix. 34. Deut x 18, 19. 1 Kings xvii. 10—16. 2 Kings iv. 8. Job xxxi. 19. 32 Is. lviii. 7. Matt xxv. 35. 43. Acts xvi. 15. Rom. xii. 13. xvi. 23. 1 Tim. iii. 2. v. 10. Tit. i 8. 1 Pet. iv. 9.

[c] Gen. xviii. 2—10. xix. 1—3. Judg. xiii. 15. &c. Matt. xxv. 40.

[d] x. 34. Gen. xl. 14, 15 23. Jer. xxxviii. 7—13. Matt. xxv. 36. 43 Acts xvi. 29—34 xxiv. 32. xxvii 2. Eph. iv. 1. Phil. iv 14—19. Col. iv 18. 2 Tim. i. 16—18.

[e] Neh. i. 3, 4 Rom. xii. 15. 1 Cor. xii. 26. Gal. vi. 1, 2. 1 Pet. iii. 8.

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hypocrites to remain unmolested, because he means to destroy them. He will neglect the education of none whom he receives into his family; and he sets us an example how we should correct our children, not for our pleasure, but for their profit, not from passion, but in wise affection. Thus he "makes us partakers of his holiness," that we may be meet to share his felicity. Let us then endeavour to receive chastening from the Father of our spirits, as we expect our children to submit to our corrections: these momentary sorrows will be over in a few days: and though for the present they seem not to be joyous, but grievous, yet we shall afterwards experience the benefit and comfort of them in the peaceable fruits of righteousness, which have been produced and matured by our being exercised with them. Thus nauseous medicines yield the pleasant sensations of health, when the taste is forgotten; and delicious poisons cause extreme agony, when the relish of them is gone for ever. Let us then comfort ourselves and each other with these topics; that we may lift up the hands which hang down, and confirm the feeble knees: and let us carefully remove obstacles out of the way of pilgrims, and look well to the weak and tempted, lest they should be turned out of the way, instead of being encouraged to persevere in the course, amidst all its roughness and difficulty.

V. 14—17.

To avoid stumbling-blocks and offences, we should follow peace with all men, and leave no proper means untried to avoid contention, which numbers delight to kindle, and blow into a flame. As far as we can go, without sacrificing truth or duty, we shall find, that peace with men of all parties and descriptions will be favourable to our pursuit of holiness; without which no man of any sect can enter heaven, or enjoy the favour of God, or be capable of delighting in him, and his presence, worship, and service. Let us then look diligently to ourselves, that we are not deceived by notions or forms, and "fail of the grace of "God;" and let us watch over each other, that no root of bitterness may spring up, in our congregations or families, to disturb their peace and to defile the souls of many. Those loose notions especially must be zealously opposed, which give allowance to the flesh, from a perversion of evangelical principles; for a little of this leaven will suffice to leaven a whole lump. All professors of the Gospel should remember profane Esau; for they will all be tempted, more or less, to sell their birthright for worldly pleasure or advantage. But the time is at hand, when they, who thus renounce, or refuse, the salvation of God, for carnal indulgence, would be glad to inherit the blessing, and will be rejected; no place will be found for reversing the fatal bargain, though they should seek it carefully with tears; nor can any one, who wilfully rejects the Gospel for the love of this present world, know to what obduracy and desperation he may be given up, in the righteous judgment of God.

V. 18—29.

We have abundant cause for joy and gratitude, that we are not left under the terror and curse of the broken covenant of works, or under the darkness of the legal dispensation. The most holy man must tremble, yea, despair, if he were to be judged according to the law given from mount Sinai; and the vengeance of God would be far more tremendous than the fire and tempest there witnessed. But whilst we bless God, who speaks to us from the mercy-seat, and calls us to partake of the privileges of Zion's citizens, and the happiness of angels and glorified saints, through Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and the sprinkling of his precious blood, let us see to it, that we have good evidence of our names being written in heaven, with those of true disciples, and not merely on earth, with those of professed Christians: let us remember that our cause must be tried by God, the Judge of all, who will determine whether we do, or do not, belong to the church of the first-born: and let it be noted, that whilst the blood of Jesus speaketh nothing but mercy to the vilest, who truly believe, it will call for severer vengeance on those, who neglect, pervert, or despise it, than that of Abel did on his murderer Cain. Let all then see to it, that they do not refuse him, who speaketh to them from heaven, with infinite tenderness and love; lest they should fall from a greater height of privilege to a more tremendous depth of condemnation, than ancient rebels did: for how can they escape, who turn away from God in unbelief or apostacy, whilst he so graciously beseeches them to be reconciled to him, and to accept of his everlasting favour? No other dispensation is now to be introduced, till the consummation of all things; the kingdom which we are called to receive can never be moved; the inheritance of believers is secured against all enemies and disasters; all things pertaining to salvation are freely given in answer to prayer: let us then seek for "grace, that we "may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly "fear;" remembering that he is greatly to be feared in the assembly of his saints; and that he is a consuming Fire, especially to hypocrites, apostates, and despisers of his salvation.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1—3. The Hebrew converts, after the day of Pentecost, abounded in love to each other, and in all the fruits of this holy affection: but many things would naturally occur to interrupt that entire harmony, and to stop the current of that liberality, which they at first showed. It was therefore peculiarly proper for the

4 [f] Marriage *is* honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: [g] but whoremongers and adulterers [h] God will judge.

5 *Let your* [i] conversation *be* without covetousness; [k] *and be* content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, [l] I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

6 So that we may [m] boldly say, [n] The Lord *is* my Helper, and [o] I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

7 Remember them [p] which * have the

f Gen. i 27, 28. ii. 21. 24. Lev. xxi 13—15 2 Kings xxii. 24 Is viii. 3. 1 Cor. vii. 2, &c. ix. 5. 1 Tim. iii 2 4. 12 v. 14. Tit i. 6.
g See on, xii. 16. 1 Cor. vi. 9. Gal. v. 19 ——h Ps l. 16—22. Mal. iii. 5. 1 Cor. v. 13. 2 Cor v. 10.
i Ex. xx. 17 Josh vii. 21. Ps x 3 cxix. 36. Jer vi. 13. Ez. xxxiii. 31. Mark vii. 22. Luke viii 14. xii 15—21 xvi. 13, 14. Rom. i 29 1 Cor. v. 11 vi. 10 Eph v. 3. 5. Col. iii. 5 1 Tim. iii. 3, vi. 9, 10. 2 Pet. ii 3. 14 Jude 11.——k Ex. ii. 21. Matt. vi 25. 34 Luke iii. 14. Phil. iv. 11, 12. 1 Tim. vi. 6—8

l Gen. xxviii. 15. Deut xxxi 6. 8. Josh i 5. 1 Sam. xii 22. 1 Chr. xxviii. 20. Ps. xxxvii 25. 28. Is. xli. 10. 17
m iv. 16. x. 19. Eph. iii. 12.
n Gen. xv 1. Ex. xviii. 4. Deut. xxxiii 26 29. Ps. xviii 1, 2. xxvii. 1—3 9. xxxiii. 20. xl. 17. liv. 7. lxiii. 7. xciv. 17. cxv. 9—11 cxviii. 7—9 cxxiv 8 cxlvi 3. Is. xli. 10. 14. Rom. viii 31.——o Ps. lvi. 4. 11, 12. cxviii. 6. Dan. iii. 16—18 Matt. x 28 Luke xii. 4, 5 ——p 17. 24 Matt. xxiv. 45. Luke xii 42. Acts xiv 23. 1 Thes. v. 12, 13. 1 Tim. iii. 5 ——* Or, *are the guides.*

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apostle to exhort them to "let brotherly love continue;" and to avoid every thing that interfered with their persevering attention to peace, kindness, and reciprocal affection, as became children of one family, and heirs of the same inheritance; and he probably meant to excite them to brotherly love towards the Gentile converts, against whom they were generally prejudiced. In particular he exhorted them not to forget to entertain strangers, especially such as were driven, or travelled, from home, for the sake of the Gospel, and who in general were destitute of other accomodation, and dependent on the hospitality of their brethren, though not personally known by them. To encourage this kind of charity, he reminded them, that some had entertained angels unawares, as Abraham and Lot. (*Note, Gen.* xviii. xix.) It hath been observed, that one of the three who came to Abraham was called **Jehovah**, and was doubtless the eternal Word and Son of God: but it was not necessary for the apostle to advert to that circumstance, when he merely suggested a hint on the subject. It was not indeed to be expected that the Hebrews would literally be visited by angels, in the form of strangers: but by hospitality to their brethren, for Christ's sake, they in fact received him, and would be rewarded accordingly: (*Notes, Matt.* xxv. 31—40:) and even if they were mistaken in the character of those strangers to whom they showed this kindness, their intentions would in no wise fail of a gracious recompense. Many of their brethren also were bound in prison for the sake of the Gospel; and they ought to remember the hardships endured by such sufferers, as if they were confined with them, that they might be excited to adopt every method of alleviating their sorrows, or procuring their release. In short, whatever adversity any of their brethren were exposed to, in their persons, connexions, or circumstances, they ought to sympathize with them, and endeavour to relieve them; recollecting that they were still in the body, and liable to similar afflictions; and that they would in that case expect the soothing lenient care of their brethren. All captives and afflicted persons might be included in the exhortation, but the household of faith was specially intended.

V. 4. *Marriage*, &c. Many persons, particularly they of the Church of Rome, explain this as an exhortation; "Let marriage be honourable *in all things*, &c.;" and doubtless the apostle meant, that it ought to be entered into, and behaved in, according to the holy commandments of God, that it might be honourable to the persons themselves and to their profession of the Gospel, as well as that the state should be had in honour and considered as undefiled. The particle *but*, however, introducing the second clause, shows that his primary meaning was to assert, that marriage in itself was honourable in all things, and in all persons, and the bed undefiled as to its own nature, though not incapable of abuse: for he contrasts marriage with the conduct of fornicators and adulterers, whom God will certainly judge, and condemn for their violations of his law. Some persons in the primitive times contended for the lawfulness of fornication, and most abominable sentiments and practices, in respect of polygamy and divorces, prevailed, not only among the Gentiles, but even among the Jews: while, on the other hand, some of both, and of the Christians, condemned marriage, or at least deemed it a less holy state than celibacy. This mystery of iniquity very early began to work, and the apostle, in a few most expressive words, guarded against both the extremes, which experience has always proved to be, in different forms, but almost equally, in effect, destructive to morality, the welfare of society, and the purity of religion.

V. 5, 6. The Hebrews were generally poor; many had sold their estates to relieve their brethren, after the day of Pentecost, and the goods of others had been plundered by their persecutors. The apostle strenuously exerted himself to procure them a liberal relief from the Gentile churches; but he here exhorts them, to let their whole conduct, discourse, and manner of life, be evidently at a distance from covetousness: neither being anxious about getting money, to lay up, or to expend in superfluities; nor yet to be tenacious of what they had, or averse to lay it out for valuable purposes. On the contrary, it was proper for them to be content, well-satisfied, and pleased with such things as they had at present, though mean, scanty, or precarious; assured that infinite wisdom and love chose their portion for them; and remembering the promise of God, that "he would not in any wise "leave them, nor in any wise, on any account, in any "emergency, or at any time, would he forsake them."—The emphasis of the original words, in which five negatives are used to increase the strength of the negation, according to the Greek idiom, can scarcely be retained in any translation. The words are quoted from the Lord's address to Joshua, though nearly the same are used in several parts of the scripture, (*Marg. Ref.*) They however, show that every believer, in similar circumstances, may rely upon the promises made specially to any person, as recorded in the Scripture. The Hebrews, therefore, cleaving to the Lord and his service, in the depth of poverty, and in the midst of their persecutors, might say with confidence "the Lord is my Helper," according to the frequent language of the Psalmist: and they might be assured that he would protect, provide for, and comfort them, in all possible emergencies: and never forsake them in life or death, but bring them safe to his heavenly rest and glory; and in this confidence, they need not fear what men could do, in any way, to impoverish, distress, or injure, them.

rule over you, who have spoken unto you [q] the word of God: [r] whose faith follow, [s] considering [t] the end of *their* conversation:

8 Jesus Christ [u] the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.

9 Be not [x] carried about with divers and strange doctrines; for [y] *it is* a good thing that the heart be established with grace; [z] not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.

10 We have [a] an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which [b] serve the tabernacle.

11 For [c] the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp.

12 Wherefore Jesus also, [d] that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, [e] suffered without the gate.

13 Let us [f] go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.

14 For [g] here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

[q] Luke viii. 11. Acts iv. 31 xi. 46 Rom. x. 17. 1 Thes. ii. 13. Rev. i. 9 vi. 9 xx. 4.

[r] vi 12. Cant. i. 8. 1 Cor. iv 16 xi. 1. Phil i. 17. 1 Thes. i. 6. 2 Thes iii 7. 9

[s] Acts vii. 55–60

[t] 1 Cor x. 13. *Gr.*

[u] i. 12. Ps xc 2 4 cii 27, 28 ci i. 17. Is. xli. 4. xliv 6. Mal. iii. 6 John viii 56—58 Jam. i 17 Rev i. 4 8. 11 17, 18.

[x] Matt xxiv 4. 24 Acts xx. 30. Rom. xvi. 17, 18 2 Cor xi. 11—15. Gal i 6—9. Eph. iv 14 v 6. Col ii. 4 8. 2 Thes ii. 2. 1 Tim iv 1–3. vi. 3–5. 20 1 John iv. 1. Jude 3.

[y] Acts xx. 32. 2 Cor. i. 21. Gal vi. 1 2 Thes ii. 17 2 Tim. ii. 1, 2

[z] *See on,* ix 9, 10 Lev. xi Deut. xiv. 3–21. Acts x. 14—16. Rom. xiv 2–6 17 1 Cor. vi 13 viii. 8. Col. ii. 16—20. 1 Tim. iv. 3–5. Tit. i. 14, 15.

[a] 1 Cor. v. 7, 8 ix. 13. x. 17–20.

[b] Num. iii. 7, 8. vii. 5.

[c] Ex. xxix. 14. Lev. iv. 5–7. 12. 16–21. vi. 30. ix 9 11 xvi. 14—19. 27 Num. xix 3

[d] ii. 11. ix. 13, 14. 18, 19. x. 29. John xvii. 19. xix 34 1 Cor. vi. 11. Eph. v. 26. 1 John v 6—8

[e] Lev. xxiv. 23. Num. xv 36 Josh. vii. 24. Mark xv 20—24. John xix 17, 18 Acts vii. 58.

[f] xi. 26. xii. 3. Matt v 11 x. 24, 25 xvi. 24. xxvii 32 39—44. Luke vi 22 Acts v. 41 1 Cor. iv. 10–13 2 Cor. xii. 10. 1 Pet. iv. 4·14—16

[g] iv. 9 xi. 9 10. 13—16 xii. 22. 1 Cor. vii. 29. 2 Cor iv. 17, 18. v. 1–3. Phil. iii. 20. *Gr* Col. iii. 1—3. 1 Pet. iv. 7. 2 Pet. iii. 13, 14.

V. 7, 8. To encourage the patience and perseverance of the Hebrews even unto a violent death, if that were set before them, the apostle called on them to remember such *as had presided over* them, and spoken the word of God to them, but had been removed by martyrdom, or in some other way, as James whom Herod beheaded, and several others. They ought carefully to recollect their instructions and behaviour, to adhere to the doctrines which they had delivered, and to copy their vigorous faith and constant obedience; considering especially the conclusion of their course, and the manner in which they departed out of the world, and thinking of the composure and holy joy, with which they met the stroke of death, with whatever circumstances of torture or ignominy it was attended. For if they would end their conversation, or their Christian course of obedience, in the same happy and honourable manner, they must follow their example, and adhere to their doctrine and instructions. And though these useful persons had been removed, yet Jesus Christ, the great Head of the Church, was "the same yesterday, "to-day, and for ever," equally merciful, powerful, faithful, and all-sufficient. As the Son of God, he was possessed of all possible perfection from eternity; he had continued to exercise those perfections, for the good of the Church, through all preceding ages; nor was he less perfect and powerful, when manifested in the flesh, to "purchase the Church with his own blood." He continued the same, when exalted in human nature to the mediatorial throne; and when he shall come to judge the world, he will exhibit the same divine perfection and glory, and so to all eternity. The expression seems to be a periphrasis of immutability, a divine attribute, incommunicable to a mere creature: his Person is as immutable as his doctrine; his justice and holiness as his mercy and truth; and all kinds of persons will meet a Judge exactly of the same character, as he manifested when he appeared on earth as a Saviour. The Hebrews might, therefore, confide in him, to support and comfort them under their sufferings for his sake, even as he had those, who had so happily finished their course. 'That the apostle speaks here, not of their 'living, but dead guides, will appear, partly from his 'exhortation to *remember* them, the living guides being 'the objects, not of their memory, but sense; partly from the phrase, "have spoken," 'which intimates, 'that they had now left off speaking; and partly, from 'the ἐκβασις, or *close* of their conversation on earth.' (*Whitby.*)

V. 9—14. (*Note, Eph.* iv. 14.) The apostle exhorted the Hebrews to trust in Christ and cleave to him, according to the instructions of their deceased teachers; and not to be carried about with divers and strange doctrines, as the clouds are driven by the wind. Many innovations were started, by different descriptions of false teachers, which were all foreign to the simplicity of Christianity: but Christians should especially seek to have their hearts established in a single dependence on free grace, and in the experience of the sanctification of the Holy Spirit, which would both comfort them, and render them steadfast against every delusion. Whereas, if they paid any particular attention to distinctions of meats, or rested in the legal sacrifices and peace-offerings, on part of which the offerer and his friends feasted before God, as at peace with him, they would not arrive at stability. They could not indeed expect spiritual profit from such observances, seeing that they, who had heretofore been occupied in them, and had looked no further, had derived no saving benefit from them. But true believers had, in the atonement of Christ, the substance of all that had been shadowed forth by the sacrifices of the law. The flesh of many of these had been divided between the altar and the priests, who alone were to eat the most holy things. But such of the Hebrews, as continued to minister at the tabernacle or temple, and neglected the Gospel, had not the privilege of participating with Christians in feasting upon their spiritual sacrifice: of this the Lord's supper was the appointed memorial, and might perhaps be alluded to. An intimation of this might be implied in the prohibition of the priests eating any part of the most solemn sin-offerings, the blood of which was carried into the most holy place on the day of atonement, to expiate the guilt of the nation; for these were ordered to be burned without the camp. (*Notes,* &c. *Lev.* iv. xvi.) Wherefore Jesus also, that he might set apart, and consecrate to God, his people as a spiritual priesthood, by shedding his own blood as their sin-offering, previously to his entrance with it for them into the heavenly sanctuary, suffered death, not within the precincts of the temple, or even in the holy city, but without the gate, upon mount Calvary. Thus he was, as

15 [h] By him therefore let us offer [i] the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, [k] the fruit of *our* lips, * giving thanks to his name.

16 But [l] to do good, and to [m] communicate, forget not: for [n] with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

17 [o] Obey them that † have the rule over you, and [p] submit yourselves: for they [q] watch for your souls, as they that must [r] give account, that they may do it [s] with joy, and not [t] with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you.

18 [u] Pray for us: for we trust [x] we have a good conscience, [y] in all things willing to live honestly.

19 But I beseech *you* the rather to do this, [z] that I may be restored to you the sooner.

20 Now [a] the God of peace, that [b] brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, [c] that great Shepherd of the

h vii 25. John x. 9 xiv 6 Eph. ii. 18 Col. iii. 17. 1 Pet. ii. 5 —— i Lev. vii 12 2 Chr vii. 6. xxix. 31 xxxiii 16 Ezra iii. 11 Neh xii. 40 43. Ps. l. 14. 23. lxix 30, 31. cvii 21, 22 cxvi. 17 — 19 cxviii 19. cxxxvi. 1, &c cxlv. 1, &c Is. xii. 1, 2 Eph. v. 19, 20. Col i. 12 iii 16 1 Pet iv. 11 Rev. iv 8—11 v. 9—14. vii. 9—12 xix. 1-6 ——k Gen. iv. 3, 4 Hos xiv. 2 Rom. vi. 19. xii. 1. * Gr. *confessing to* Ps. xviii. 49. *Marg* Matt xi. 25 Luke x 21. *Gr.* ——l 1. 2. Ps. xxxvii. 3 Matt xxv 35 40 Luke vi. 35, 36. Acts ix 36. x 38. Gal. vi. 10. 1 Thes. v 15. 2 Thes iii. 13 3 John 11 ——m Luke xviii. 22. Rom xii. 13. 2 Cor. ix. 13. Gal. vi 6. Eph iv. 28. Phil. iv. 14. 1 Tim. vi 18. Philem 6 ——n vi. 10 Ps li. 19 Mic vi 7, 8. Phil. iv. 18 ——o *See on*, 7 1 Sam viii. 19 xv. 19, 20 Prov. v. 13 Phil ii. 12. 29. 1 Thes. v 12. 2 Thes iii. 14. 1 Tim. v 17. ——† Or, *Guide* ——p Gen. xvi 9 1 Cor. xvi. 16. Eph. v 21 Jam. iv. 7. 1 Pet v. 5. ——q Ez. iii. 17—21. xxxiii 7—9. Acts xx. 24—26 1 Cor. iv 1, 2. 1 Pet v. 2, 3

r Luke xvi. 2. Rom xiv. 12. 2 Cor v. 10, 11. s Phil. i 4 ii. 16. iv. 1 1 Thes ii. 19, 20. iii. 9, 10. t Ex. xxxii 31. Jer. xiii. 17. Phil iii. 18. u Rom. xv 30. Eph. vi. 19, 20. Col. iv. 3 1 Thes. v. 25. 2 Thes. iii. 1. x Acts xxiii. 1. xxiv. 16. 2 Cor i 12 1 Tim i. 5. 1 Pet iii. 16. 21. y Rom. xii 17. xiii 13 Phil. iv. 8. 1 Thes iv. 12. 1 Pet ii. 12. ——z Rom. i 12. xv. 31, 32 Philem 22 ——a Rom xv. 33 xvi 20. 1 Cor. xiv 33 2 Cor xiii 11. Phil iv. 9. 1 Thes. v. 13. 2 Thes iii. 16. ——b Acts ii 24 32. iii. 15 iv. 10 v. 30 x 40, 41. xiii. 20 xvii 31. Rom i. 4 iv. 24, 25 viii 11. 1 Cor vi 14. xv 15 Gal i. 1. Eph i 20 Col. ii. 12 1 Thes i. 10 ——c Ps. xxiii 1. lxxx 1 Is. xl. 11 lxiii 11. Ez xxxiv 23 xxxvii 24 John x 11. 14. 1 Pet. ii 25 v 4.

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it were, cast out of the camp as accursed; that he might appear to be the true *Sin-offering* of which all others were the types. As, therefore, it was proper for believers to renounce all dependence on legal sacrifices, and the service of the sanctuary, to follow Christ, so they ought willingly for his sake to bear the reproach cast upon them on that account; and submit to be excommunicated and vilified by the persecuting priests and scribes, going along with Christ out of the camp of Israel, and enduring every indignity for his sake and after his example. Nor should they shrink from any hardships in his cause, even if they were driven from their houses, possessions, and cities, to become exiles and wanderers, or if they were immured in prisons; for, being strangers and pilgrims, they had on earth no continuing city or quiet settlement, but were seeking one to come, even heaven itself, from which they could not be excluded. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 15, 16. The Hebrews needed no atonement but that of Christ; and therefore living on him by faith, they might disregard the legal oblations, and offer, at a distance from the temple, more acceptable sacrifices than burnt-offerings or peace-offerings, if, through the mediation of the great High Priest, they presented to God their continual and fervent praises and thanksgivings, adoring his manifested perfections, celebrating his wonderful works, and gratefully acknowledging his abundant loving-kindness towards them. This fruit of their lips would be more pleasing and honourable to him, than the fruits of the land or the firstlings of their cattle. (*Marg. Ref.*) At the same time they ought not to forget, nor neglect, to do good to their indigent brethren, or others in distress, by communicating to them according to their ability: for with such sacrifices, when offered from a principle of humble faith and love, God would be well pleased, as they were a proper expression of their gratitude to him, very honourable to the Gospel, and beneficial to mankind, and the fruits of his grace in their hearts. (*Note, Phil.* iv. 18.)

V. 17. The apostle, as a debtor to all men, had written to the Hebrews, to establish them in the truth; and he had called on them to remember and follow the faith of their deceased pastors: but he would also remind them, that they ought to obey those pious teachers and guides who now presided over them, and to submit to their instructions, admonitions, and reproofs, as ruling them with spiritual authority derived from the Lord Jesus. For they were appointed to watch for their souls, and to guard and caution them against all those errors and sins which might endanger them. They performed this important and difficult service, as men who must give an account, for every part of their conduct, to him who employed them; so that they could not deliver their own souls, without great vigilance, diligence, faithfulness, and impartiality, which would often constrain them to displease men. The people ought therefore to obey the word of God as spoken, and submit to his authority as exercised, by them; that they might be able to give up their account with joy, having been successful in their labours, and not with grief and anguish of heart, because of the untractable conduct of those to whom they had been sent; which would not be for the profit of those who occasioned grief to their faithful pastors, but infinitely injurious to them. This must principally relate to the account given before the Lord, as it were, from day to day, with joy or grief, by ministers, of the reception given to their message; for no misconduct of the people will occasion sorrow to the faithful servant of Christ, at the final day of retribution, though their salvation will be unto them a crown of rejoicing. The exhortation supposes the *faithfulness* of ministers, and that they exercise a scriptural authority in a proper manner; for no obedience and submission can be due to the usurped dominion of unfaithful stewards or blind guides.

V. 18, 19. It is plain from these verses, that the persons immediately addressed, to whom in the first instance the epistle was sent, would know from whom it came. The apostle desired them to pray for him and his fellow-labourers, as well as for their own pastors: for, however he had been calumniated, or suspected, by his nation, he trusted that he had a good conscience, tender, and duly informed, and that he was willing and desirous in all things, and among all persons, to act with integrity, and in a becoming manner. He therefore entreated their prayers for his protection, comfort and success: but, especially, that the providence of God would order things in such a manner, as to enable him to come among them the sooner: for he was persuaded many of them would be glad to see him; and he purposed to come as soon as he had fully regained his liberty and had opportunity, notwithstanding all that he had suffered in consequence of his last journey to Jerusalem. It is not known whether he accomplished this purpose or not.

sheep, through [d] the blood of the [e] everlasting * covenant,

21 [f] Make you perfect in [g] every good work [h] to do his will, † working in you that which is [i] well-pleasing in his sight, [k] through Jesus Christ; [l] to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. [m] Amen.

d *See on*, ix. 20. Ex. xxiv. 8. Zech. ix. 11. Matt. xxvi. 28. Mark xiv. 24. Luke xxii. 20.
e 2 Sam xxiii. 5. 1 Chr. xvi. 17. Is. lv. 3. lxi. 8. Jer. xxxii 40. Ez. xxxvii. 26.
* Or, *testament*. *See on*, ix. 16, 17
f xii. 23 Deut. xxxi. 4. Ps. cxxxviii. 3. John xvii. 23. Eph. iii. 16—19. Col i 9—12 iv. 12. 1 Thes. iii. 13. v. 23. 1 Pet. v 10.——g 2 Cor ix 8. Eph. ii 10. Phil i. 11. 2 Thes. ii. 17. 1 Tim v. 10.——h x. 36. Matt. vii. 21. xii. 50. xxi. 30, 31 John vii. 17. Rom. xiii 2. 1 Thes. iv 3 1 Pet. iv 2 1 John ii. 17.——† Or, *doing*. Phil. ii 13.——i 16 Rom. xii. 1. xiv 17, 18. Phil. iv. 18. Col. iii. 20. 1 John iii 22.——k John xvi. 23, 24. Eph ii. 18. Phil i. 11. iv. 13 Col iii 17. 1 Pet. ii. 5 ——l Ps. lxxii 18. 19 Rom xvi. 27. Gal. i. 5 Phil. ii. 11 1 Tim i. 17. vi 16. 2 Tim. iv. 18 1 Pet. v. 11. 2 Pet. iii. 18 Jude 25. Rev. i. 6. v. 9—13.——m *See on*, Matt. vi. 13 xxviii. 20.

22 And I beseech you, brethren, [n] suffer the word of exhortation; [o] for I have written a letter unto you in few words.

23 Know ye, that *our* [p] brother Timothy [q] is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, [r] I will see you.

24 [s] Salute all them that have [t] the rule over you, and [u] all the saints. [x] They of [y] Italy salute you.

25 [z] Grace *be* with you all. Amen.

n 1—3. 12—16 ii. 1. iii. 1. 12, 13. iv. 1. 11 vi. 11, 12. x. 19—39. xii. 1, 2. 12—16. 25—28. 2 Cor v. 20. vi 1. x 1. Philem. 8, 9.
o Gal. vi 11. 1 Pet v. 12.
p *See on*, Acts xvi. 1—3. 1 Thes iii. 2. Philem 1.
q 1 Tim. vi. 12. 2 Tim. i 8. Rev. vii. 14.
r Rom. xv. 25. 28. Philem. 22.
s *See on*, Rom. xvi. 1—16.
t *See on*, 7. 17.
u 2 Cor. i. 1. xiii. 13. Phil i 1. iv. 22. Col. i. 2. Philem 5.——x *See on*, Rom. xvi 20—24. y Acts xviii. 2. xxvii 1 ——z *See on*, Rom i. 7. xvi. 20. 24. Eph vi 24. 2 Tim. iv. 22 Rev. xxii. 21.

V. 20, 21. After desiring the prayers of the Hebrews in his behalf, the apostle gave them a compendium of his most fervent supplications for them. He addressed himself to the Lord, (by a title never used but in St. Paul's epistles,) as "the God of peace," reconciled to believers, and ready to be at peace with all sinners that came to him in the appointed way, as the Author of spiritual peace in the hearts and consciences of his people, and the Lover of peace and concord in the church and among mankind; who "had brought again from the dead the great Shepherd "of the sheep," from whom all pastors derived their authority. Jesus, the great Proprietor of the chosen flock, to whom they had been given, had laid down his life to atone for their sins, and he continually sought them, and brought them home to his fold, where he protected and fed them. (*Notes, Ps.* xxiii. *Is.* liii. 6. *Ez.* xxxiv. *Luke* xv. 1—6.) In order to show that his ransom was accepted, and that he might perform his gracious work as the great Shepherd of his sheep, God the Father had raised him from the dead, "through the blood of the everlasting "covenant." For this may either refer to the reconciled love of God to his people, through the blood of Christ, or to his being brought again from the dead, because his sacrifice was sufficient and accepted, and so he became the Shepherd of the sheep; or to the blessings for which the apostle prayed, and which were bestowed "through the "blood of the everlasting covenant:" all these things may be contained in the words, and it is not obvious to determine which was principally intended. The blood of Christ purchased the blessings of the new covenant, and ratified it as unalterable; so that it was rendered *perpetual* to the end of time, and *everlasting* in respect of the salvation conferred according to it. The apostle entreated "the God of peace," through the mediation of the great Shepherd, and on account of the blood of the covenant, that he would make the Hebrews "perfect in every good "work to do his will," rectifying every disorder of their souls, and completely fitting them for every part of his "holy service; working in them," by his new-creating grace, "that which was well-pleasing in his sight," being according to his law and image, and for his glory, and therefore acceptable with him through Jesus Christ; to whom, even to "the God of peace," he ascribed eternal glory. (*Marg. Ref.*) The apostle prayed for them, under the full persuasion, that sanctifying grace and holy obedience would surely be attended with divine consolations, which he did not particularly mention.

V. 22—25. The apostle, as not being immediately placed over the Hebrews, or disposed to speak to them in an authoritative style, entreated them to take in good part the word of exhortation, warning, and encouragement, which he had sent them from love to their souls: for he had written a letter to them in few words, compared with the vast importance and the great variety of the subjects discussed in it. Timothy had, it seems, been confined in prison for preaching the Gospel, of which the Hebrews had heard; but the writer informed them that he was at length set at liberty, and that he purposed to come with him to see them, if they were not delayed. It appears hence that the apostle either was at liberty, or had a prospect of being speedily liberated, and that the spurious postscript falsely says, that Timothy was the bearer of the epistle. After this, he concluded with salutations, especially to the pastors and rulers of their churches, and from all the Christians in Italy, as well as those at Rome.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

Brotherly love tends, in such various ways, to the benefit of the church, the comfort of believers, and the honour of the Gospel, that the enemy of our souls endeavours by every means to interrupt its exercise, and to work upon the remains of our corrupt affections for that purpose, with a vast variety of most subtle artifices, against which we should be perpetually upon our guard. Hence it is, that so little of this love is found in the church, though so much is read concerning it in the Scriptures, and that so many divisions and controversies prevail among those, who seem in a measure to have been taught of God to love their brethren! We best consult our own interest, when we are mindful to use hospitality, and to relieve or entertain our poor brethren, even though they be strangers to us: for thus we entertain Christ himself, whom all angels worship, and obey. When we are exempted from imprisonment, or other grievous adversities, we should take care not to forget how many are thus oppressed and bowed down, that we may sympathize with them in their sorrows, and help or comfort them according to our ability, being aware that we are liable to the same distresses, as long as we are in the body. Defilement and dishonour spring from contrariety to the law of God, which is perfectly suited to promote our present and future welfare: marriage therefore is honourable in all; nor can any defilement attach to it, except when the letter or spirit of God's commandments is violated by men's behaviour respecting it. But God doth, in this world, severely mark his abhorrence of those forbidden lusts, to which the depravity of the human heart leads such numbers; and he will surely condemn every impenitent fornicator and adulterer at the day of judgment, whatever disguise or excuse he may here use to cloak his wickedness. Christians, whether poor or rich, should, in all their words and actions, show, that they abhor covetousness. Having in heaven inexhaustible treasures, they should be well satisfied with mean accommodations here: and, as God hath promised "that he will never leave them, and in no case "forsake them," they have no cause to court the favour, or fear the frown of men, or to dread the want of things needful; but may courageously say, "the Lord is my "Helper, I will not fear what flesh can do unto me." The instructions and example of ministers, who have honourably and comfortably closed their testimony, should be peculiarly remembered by their survivors. Death, as it were, gives the last sanction to their doctrine and exhortations; and the happy event of their trials calls on others to follow their faith, and to consider the joyful end of their course; and ministers should have respect to this during their lives. But Jesus alone is an ever-living Friend, "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Still he fills the hungry, encourages the trembling, and welcomes penitents of every class; still he rejects proud Pharisees, abhors painted sepulchres, and teaches all whom he saves to love righteousness and to hate iniquity: and, having called them by his grace, he will love them unchangeably and for ever. Indeed, all those, and those alone, will abide the day of his coming to judge the world, who would have met with favour from him when he taught on earth.

V. 9—16.

We should be careful not to be carried about with strange doctrines, but seek to have our hearts established by grace: for notions and forms never profit those who are occupied in them. Living by faith in Christ, and being consecrated to God through his blood, let us willingly separate from this evil world, and bear the reproach of proud formalists. We have here no continuing city; our pilgrimage will soon end; let us then seek an abiding mansion in the city of our God, and consider all temporal prosperity or adversity as of scarcely any consequence. As a spiritual priesthood, let us solace ourselves in this evil world, by offering to God, through Jesus Christ, our continual sacrifice of praise, "even the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his "name." This, joined with the acceptable sacrifice of doing good to men for the Lord's sake, will be an anticipation of the joys of heaven, and a preparation for its work and worship.

V. 17—25.

Ministers should peculiarly remember, that they are called "to watch for men's souls, as those who must give "account;" for dreadful will be their condemnation, if they be slothful, selfish, or unfaithful; and Christians should obey and submit to their faithful pastors, and take in good part their loving admonitions, that they may give up their account with joy, and not with grief: for if *such* pastors lose their labour, their hearers will lose their souls. Men should also pray for ministers; who would generally walk more honourably, and labour more successfully, if the people were more earnest in praying for them; and when they see, or think they see, something amiss in those, who, upon the whole, have a good conscience, willing in all things to live honestly, they should pray the more fervently for them. Let us then approach the God of peace, who brought again from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep, and, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, let us beseech him, for ourselves and each other, "to make "us perfect to do his will, working in us that which is "well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ," that we may glorify him for ever. Then every word of exhortation, and every dispensation of Providence, will do us good, the communion of saints will be maintained, and grace will be with us all.

THE
GENERAL EPISTLE OF
JAMES.

James, the son of Alpheus, the brother of Jude, and the near relation of our Lord; called also "James the less," probably being lower in stature, or younger, than the other James, is generally allowed to have been the writer of this epistle; (Marg. Ref. Notes Matt. xiii. 54—58. Luke xxiv. 13—24:) *and they who have doubted of this, have assigned very slight reasons for their hesitation. It is recorded in ecclesiastical history, and The Acts of the apostles confirm the fact, that he generally resided at Jerusalem, superintending the concerns of the churches in that city, and in the neighbouring places, to the end of his life; which was terminated by martyrdom, the circumstances of which are differently related. He seems to have written this epistle, but a short time before his death; and it is supposed by some, that the sharp rebukes and awful warnings, given in it to his countrymen, stirred up that persecuting rage, which terminated his life: but indeed, it is peculiarly wonderful, that he should have been preserved so many years, in so perilous a situation; and it can be accounted for only by ascribing it to the Lord's immediate protection. The epistle is styled* general *or* catholic, *because it was not addressed to any particular church, but to the Jewish converts, throughout their dispersions; indeed with evident reference also to the unconverted part of the nation. This title, however, is not coeval with the epistle; but was prefixed to it, some ages after it was written; and to the subsequent epistles, in several instances with manifest impropriety. It is probable, that the apostle by means of the elders and Christians at Jerusalem, circulated copies of this epistle, by those strangers who came to the sacred festivals, from the several cities and countries where the Jews resided, and especially where there were Jewish converts to Christianity: and, as it was exclusively addressed to his countrymen, it seems for a long time to have been little known among the Gentile converts; so that its authenticity was doubted for a considerable time. 'While the second Epistle of Peter, the second and third of John, the Epistle of Jude, and the Revelation, are omitted in the first Syriac translation of the New Testament, which was made in the beginning of the second century, for the use of the converted Jews, this Epistle of James hath found a place therein. This is an argument of great weight: for certainly the Jewish believers, to whom that epistle was addressed and delivered, were much better judges of its authenticity, than the converted Gentiles to whom it was not sent; and who perhaps had no opportunity of being acquainted with it, till long after it was written.'* (Macknight.) *'It is cited by Clemens Romanus four several times: and by Ignatius, in his genuine epistle to the Ephesians; by Origen, in his thirteenth homily upon Genesis, Eusebius saith, It was known to most, and publicly read in most, Christian churches: St. Jerom, that in process of time it obtained authority. Esthius notes, That they, who before doubted of it, in the fourth century embraced the opinion of them who received it; and from thence no church, no ecclesiastical writer, is found who ever doubted of it. But, on the contrary, all the catalogues of the books of the holy scripture, published by general and provincial councils, Roman bishops, or other orthodox writers, number it among the canonical scriptures.'* (Whitby.) *'It appears to me, that the authority of this, and some other parts of the New Testament, having been early questioned by some primitive churches, affords an argument of their peculiar caution, that no other writings should be admitted into the sacred canon, however excellent; besides those which had an undoubted claim to that distinction: and justly challenges our deference to* their *judgment, who doubtless were most capable of deciding, and gave sufficient evidence of their care, as well as their capacity. The epistle before us, having passed through a severe and accurate scrutiny, appears to have been* universally received; *and accordingly has been transmitted down to the present age, as an authentic part of the oracles of God.'* (Doddridge.) *It is generally known that Luther in the earlier part of the reformation spoke very slightly of it, groundlessly supposing that it contradicted St. Paul's doctrine, in the grand subject of justification: but deeper experience, more exact investigation, more extensive observation, and a maturer judgment, induced him to retract his opinion: and at present no further doubt seems to be entertained* *among orthodox Christians, as to its divine inspiration and authority. It is not, however, so replete with the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, as St. Paul's epistles are in general; or indeed, as the other apostolical epistles: for it is supposed to have been written with a special design of counteracting those false teachers, who in different ways perverted those doctrines, and wrested them to their own destruction and that of other men. But the grand principles of Christianity are throughout taken for granted, and it will be found, on attentive consideration, entirely coincident with even St. Paul's doctrine, concerning grace and justification; though at the first glance, it may appear discordant: and it abounds with exhortations to the patience of hope, and the obedience of faith and love; with which various warnings, reproofs, and encouragements, are interspersed, according to the different characters of the persons addressed in it.*

⁂

A. D. 60. *A. D. 60.*

CHAP. I.

The apostle addresses the twelve tribes which were scattered abroad, 1. He exhorts them to joyful patience under trials, 2—4; and to ask wisdom of God in faith, and with an unwavering mind, 5—8. He counsels the poor and the rich, 9—11; and shows the happiness prepared for those who endure, 12. Men are tempted to sin, not by God, but by their own lusts, 13—15. Every good gift, especially regeneration, comes from the unchangeable God, 16—18. Cautions against pride, loquacity, anger, and malice, 19, 20: admonitions to receive the word of God in meekness, and to reduce it to practice, 21—25. The necessity of bridling the tongue, 26. The nature of true religion, 27.

[a] JAMES, [b] a servant of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, [c] to the twelve tribes which are [d] scattered abroad, [e] greeting.

2 My brethren, [f] count it all joy when ye fall into [g] divers temptations;

3 Knowing *this*, [h] that the trying of your faith worketh [i] patience.

4 But [k] let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be [l] perfect and entire, [m] wanting nothing.

a Matt. x. 3. xiii. 55 Mark iii 18. Luke vi. 15. Acts i. 13. xii. 17 xv. 13. xxi. 18 Gal i. 19. ii. 9. 12 Jude 1
b John xii 26. Rom. i. 1. Phil. i 1. Tit i. 1 2 Pet. i. 1
c Ex xxiv. 4. xxviii.21. xxxix. 14. 1 Kings xviii. 31 Ezra vi. 17. Matt. xix 28. Acts xxvi. 7. Rev. vii. 4.
d Lev. xxvi 33. Deut iv. 27. xxviii. 64 xxx. 3 xxxii. 26. Esth iii. 8. Ez. xii. 15 John vii. 35 Acts ii. 5. viii 1. xv. 21. 1 Pet. i. 1.
e Acts xv. 23. xxii 26. 2 Tim. iv. 21.——f 12. Matt. v. 10—12. Luke vi 22. 23. Acts v. 41. Rom. viii. 17, 18. 35—37 2 Cor xii. 9, 10 Phil. i. 29 ii 17. Col. i 24. Heb. x. 34. 1 Pet. iv 13—16.——g Heb. xi. 36—38. 1 Pet. i. 6—8. 2 Pet. ii. 9. Rev ii. 10.——h Rom v 3. 4 viii. 28. 2 Cor. iv 17.——i Rom. ii. 7 viii. 25. xv. 4. Col. i. 11 2 Thes i 4. iii. 5. Heb. x. 26. xii. 1. 2 Pet. i. 6——k v 7—11. Job xvii. 9 Ps. xxxvii. 7. xl. 1. Hab ii. 3 Matt. x. 22. Luke viii. 15 xxi. 19. Gal. vi. 9.——l iii 2. Prov. iv. 18. Matt. v 48. John xvii 23 1 Cor ii. 6. Phil. iii. 12—15. Col iv. 12. 2 Tim iii 17. Heb. xiii. 21 1 Pet v. 10. 1 John iv. 17, 18.——m 5. Matt. xix. 20. Mark x. 21. Luke xviii. 22. 1 Pet. ii 9.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1. It is probable, that the apostolical authority of James was not disputed among those whom he more immediately addressed; so that he waived the mention of it, and only styled himself the servant of God and of the Lord Jesus. It appears from the Acts of the apostles, as well as from historical records, that he resided chiefly at Jerusalem; and he is said to have been the first bishop of that Church; though this is spoken inaccurately; for he possessed far more than episcopal authority, however that may be defined. He is supposed to have suffered martyrdom there not very long after writing this epistle, though the date of it is uncertain. He addressed himself to the twelve tribes, which were considered as still existing, though scattered by various calamities, and from different motives, into many distant nations of the earth; but he principally intended the Christians among them: and he simply greeted them, or wished them health and peace, without using the benedictions which preface most of the other epistles. *Scattered.* 'That is, to all the 'believing Jews, of whatever tribe, who were dispersed 'over the earth, to whom, it is probable, James, remaining still at Jerusalem, sent this epistle, by those who 'were used to meet at that city from all nations, at the 'festivals.' (*Beza.*) Some of all the other tribes still subsisted, as distinct from the Gentiles, and as generally incorporated with the descendants of Judah; and the nation was dispersed abroad in almost all parts of the known world, as is evident from the Scriptures themselves, (*Marg. Ref.*) as well as from the testimony of ancient writers. *Greeting.* James, who probably drew up the epistle of the council at Jerusalem to the Gentile converts, uses the same word. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2—4. Knowing the afflicted and persecuted condition in which his brethren were, the apostle exhorted them to esteem it altogether a cause of rejoicing, when they fell into divers temptations. Conscious of their weakness, they were in general warned not to run into temptations, and taught to pray not to be led into temptation: yet if the Lord saw good, that, notwithstanding their watchfulness, they should fall into such trials as might expose them to temptation, and give them an opportunity of resisting and overcoming it, they ought to consider it as a matter of unmingled joy, an occasion of evidencing the sincerity and strength of their love to God, and as a rich advantage to their souls, though painful for the time. For they might know, from the word of God and their own experience, that the temporary trial of their faith, by

5 If [n] any of you lack wisdom, [o] let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, [p] and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

6 But [q] let him ask in faith, nothing wavering: for [r] he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed.

7 For [s] let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

8 A [t] double-minded man *is* unstable in all his ways.

n Ex xxxi 3 6. xxxvi 1—4. 1 Kings iii. 7—9 Job xxviii. 12—28. Prov. iii. 5—7. ix. 4—6. Jer. i. 6, 7. 2 Cor ii 16.

o 17. iii. 17. v. 16. 1 Chr. xxii. 12 2 Chr. i 10. Prov. ii. 3—6 Is lv. 6, 7. Jer. xxix. 12, 13. Dan. ii. 18—22. Matt. vii. 7—11. Luke xi. 9—13. John iv. 10. xiv. 13. xv. 7. xvi. 13—24. 1 John iii. 22. v. 14, 15.

p Matt. xi 20 Mark xvi 14. Luke xv. 20—22.

q Matt. xxi. 22 Mark xi 22—24 1 Tim. ii. 8. Heb. xi. 6.

r Gen xlix 4 Eph. iv. 14 Heb x. 23. xiii 9. 2 Pet. ii. 17 Jude 12, 13.

s iv. 3 Prov. xv. 8. xxi. 27 Is. i. 15. lviii 3, 4.

t iv. 8 1 Kings xviii. 21. 2 Kings xvii 33. 41 Is. xxix. 13. Hos. vii 8—11. x. 2. Matt. vi. 22 24. 2 Pet. ii. 14 iii. 16.

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which its genuine nature and strength were proved, had a tendency in the event to work patience in their disposition and conduct, and to bring them into a resigned, dependent, waiting frame of mind, connected with meekness and perseverance in well doing. But, in order to derive the full benefit from their trials, they must allow patience to perform its perfect work, and submissively wait, in reliance on the promises of God and obedience to his commandments, till he saw good to deliver them, without being induced, by the number, variety, or duration of their sufferings, to use sinful means of deliverance, or grow faint and weary in well doing, or to manifest peevishness, discontent, or despondency. Thus patience, like a salutary medicine, would have its perfect operation, and bring them into so tractable, docile, meek, compassionate, and resigned a state of mind, so endear to them the love and sufferings of Christ, so wean them from the world, and so reconcile them to death, that they would be rendered complete and mature in every part of the Christian character, and in all respects meet and prepared for the duties of their several situations, and wanting nothing in order to the performance of every good work. (*Notes*, &c. *Rom*. v. 3—5. *Heb*. xii. 5—13.) ***Temptations.*** Or, ***Trials.*** Some expositors lay considerable stress on the distinction between *temptations* and *trials*; but the original word is the same as that in the Lord's prayer, which is rendered *temptation*. Indeed, every trial is, or gives occasion to, temptation; and every temptation is a trial of our hearts, and tends to show whether divine grace or corrupt nature has, at that time, the ascendency. (*Notes*, 12—15. *Gen*. xxii. 1.) The apostle, however, no doubt especially referred to the persecutions, for the sake of their Lord, to which Christians were then peculiarly exposed.

V. 5—8. By attempting to endure and improve their trials in a proper manner, as well as by a vast variety of other matters, many of those to whom the apostle wrote would experience and discover that they were very deficient in wisdom. When, therefore, any of them perceived this, and were conscious that they were not capable of distinguishing truth from error, or of ascertaining the line of conduct which they ought to pursue, they should immediately bring the case before God, and earnestly beseech him to be their Teacher and Counsellor, by the influences of his Spirit enabling them to understand, remember, and apply the instructions of his holy word; and to remove all prejudices and carnal passions which tended to mislead them. This any person might do with confidence; seeing the Lord was ever ready to give liberally to all who asked him, of whatever description they were; nor did he ever upbraid such humble petitioners for wisdom with the folly and sinfulness of their former conduct, or with any of their mistakes and want of teachableness. So that assuredly wisdom would be given to every one, who thus sought for it, in proportion to his wants, difficulties, and duties. (*Marg. Ref.*) But in order to obtain the blessing, they must take care to ask in faith, nothing wavering: they must not allow themselves to question whether this were the proper way of seeking wisdom, or doubt of God's faithfulness to his promises; but confidently rely on him to direct them in the right way. For he that wavered in his judgment in these respects, and was disposed to listen to carnal counsellors, or to halt betwixt God and the world, would be always fluctuating and variable, being tossed from one thing to another by every change of circumstances, or every gale of doctrine, as the wave of the sea is driven about by the wind. Such wavering professors of the Gospel, therefore, who were only religious by starts, and had no abiding realizing belief of the truth, or dependence on the promises of God, could have no good reason to expect that they should receive any thing from him, as they would scarcely have presented their prayers, under some sudden pang of devotion, but they would turn to other counsels and projects. Indeed, double-minded men must be unstable in all their ways, nor can any dependence be placed on them, whilst they are aiming to unite contrary interests, and are unsettled in their principles, for want of faith in the word of God. (*Note, Gen*. xlix. 4.) 'Let him come to God with firm adherence on 'him; a mind resolved, whatsoever comes, to stick fast 'to God; to use no means of delivering himself but such 'as are acceptable to him; never entertaining a doubt, 'whether God's ways or his own are to be adhered to for 'the obtaining of his ends; making no question of God's 'power and will to answer his requests, and therefore 'praying and depending on him quietly for an issue out 'of all. Whereas, doubting or wavering keeps men in 'a perpetual tempest and agitation of mind, always tossed 'from one dependence to another.' (*Hammond*.) "A "double-minded man," 'whose schemes are divided be'tween God and the world, and who cannot cheerfully 'and resolutely commit himself, in confidence of divine 'support, to be led whithersoever Providence shall please, "is unsettled in all his ways." 'He will perpetually be 'running into inconsistencies of conduct; and those im'perfect and undetermined impressions of religion, which 'he feels, will serve rather to perplex and torment, than 'guide and secure him.' (*Doddridge*.) The divided dependence, at some times apparently on God, and at others evidently on a man's own wisdom, resolution, or righteousness, seems also implied, as well as the divided aim and purpose. Such characters differ widely from weak believers, who constantly expect and seek help from God, and do not allow any doubts of his veracity and faithfulness, though they are harassed with fears lest there be something in their case, or manner of asking, which should exclude them from the benefit. Their language is, 9 Let [u] the brother of low degree * rejoice [x] in that he is exalted:

10 But the rich, [y] in that he is made low: [z] because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.

11 For the sun is no sooner [a] risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth; [b] so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.

12 Blessed *is* [c] the man that endureth temptation: for [d] when he is tried he shall receive [e] the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to [f] them that love him.

13 Let [g] no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with † evil, neither tempteth he any man:

14 But every man is tempted, [h] when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

15 Then, [i] when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and [k] sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

u ii. 5, 6. Deut. xv. 7. 9. 11. Ps lxii. 9. Prov. xvii. 5. xix. 1. Luke i. 52.

* Or, *glory*. Jer. ix. 23, 24. Rom. v. 2, 3. Phil. iii. 3. *Gr.*

x ii. 5. 1 Sam. ii. 8 Ps. cxiii. 7, 8. Luke ix. 48. x. 20 Rom. viii. 17. 2 Cor vi. 10. Phil. iii. 14 1 Pet. ii. 9. 1 John iii 1—3. Rev. ii. 9 v. 9, 10 vii 9, 10.

y Is lvii. 15. lxvi. 2. Matt. v. 3. Phil. iii. 8. 1 Tim vi. 17.

z iv. 14 Job xiv. 2 Ps. xxxvii. 2. 35, 36. xc. 5, 6. cii. 11 ciii 15. Is. xl 6. Matt. vi. 30. 1 Cor vii. 31. 1 Pet. i 24. 1 John ii. 17.——a Is. xlix. 10 Jon. iv. 7, 8 Matt xiii 6 Mark iv. 6 ——b v. 1—7. Job xxi. 24—30 Ps. xxxvii. 35, 36. xlix. 6—14. lxxiii. 18—20. Ec v. 15 Is. xxviii. 1. 4. xl. 7, 8. Luke xii. 16—21. xvi. 19—25. 1 Cor vii. 31, 1 Pet. i. 4 v. 4.——c *See on*, 2—4. v 11. Job v. 17. Ps. xciv. 12. cxix 67 71. 75 Prov. iii 11, 12 Heb. vi. 15. x. 32 xii 5. Rev. iii. 19.——d Deut. viii. 2. xiii. 3. Prov. xvii 3. Zech. xiii. 9. Mal. iii. 2, 3. Heb. xi. 17. 1 Pet i. 6, 7. v. 10.

e Matt. xxv. 34. Luke xxii. 28—30. Rom ii. 7—10. 1 Cor ix. 25 1 Tim iv. 8. 1 Pet i 7. iv. 13. v 4. Rev. ii. 10. iii 21.

f ii 5. Ex. xx. 6. Deut. vii. 9. Neh i. 5 Ps. v. 11. Rom. viii. 28. 1 Cor. ii. 9. viii. 3 1 Pet i. 8 1 John iv. 19.

g *See on*, 2. 12. Gen. iii 12. Is. lxiii 17. Hab ii. 12, 13 Rom. ix. 19, 20

† Or, *evils*.

h iv. 1, 2. Gen. vi 5. viii 21. Josh vii 21—24 2 Sam xi. 2, 3 1 Kings xxi. 2—4. Job xxxi. 9. 27 Prov. iv 23 Is. xliv. 20 Matt v. 28. xv. 19, 20. Mark vii. 21. 22. Rom. vii 11. 13 Eph. iv. 22 Heb. iii. 13.——i Gen iii. 6 iv. 5—8 Job xv 35 Ps vii 14, 15. Is. lix 4. Mic ii. 1—3. Matt xxvi. 14, 15. 48—50. Acts v. 1—3.——k Gen ii. 17. iii 17—19. Ps. ix. 17. Rom. v. 12. 21 vi 21. 23. Rev. xx. 14, 15.

"Lord, to whom shall I go? Thou hast the words of "eternal life?"

V. 9—11. In order to attain greater simplicity and stability in the faith, it was proper for believers to know in what they ought to rejoice. The brother of low degree, the real Christian, who was poor and afflicted in his outward circumstances, should not deem himself unhappy on that account; on the contrary, he ought to rejoice or glory, 'to comfort himself and lift up his heart,' (*Beza:*) because he was exalted, in an honourable relation to Christ, in being conformed to him as to his outward condition, and in being made a Son of God and an heir of heaven. But the rich Christian ought not to rejoice or glory in his riches, or at all trust in them for happiness: rather let him rejoice in that "he was made low" in the disposition of his heart, having been convinced of his guilt, depravity, and misery, and made humbly willing, as an indigent pensioner on the mercy of God, to ask for the blessings of salvation in the same way with the poorest of his brethren; and to consider himself as no wiser or better than they, but merely intrusted with a larger stewardship, of which an account must shortly be rendered. Being thus *made low* would be a solid ground for exultation, seeing that few rich persons were thus humbled and made "poor in "spirit;" nor would the cause for this joy be abated, even if they were made low in their circumstances also, through the rapacity of their persecutors. For all outward splendour and distinction must soon pass away, as the gaudy flowers that grow among the grass are withered by the scorching sun, and lose all their beauty and transient glory, even sooner than the green blade doth; and being withered, they perish, and are less valuable than the common herbage. Thus rich men flourish only to be cut down, they grow but to wither, and their transient distinctions issue in deeper misery and disgrace, if they proceed *in their ways* of avarice, luxury, pride, selfishness, or ungodliness, and are not made low by repentance, faith, self-denial, crucifixion to the world, and submission to the righteousness and authority of God. This is an obvious and apposite interpretation; nor does there appear that difficulty in these verses which many suppose. To render the passage, (by inserting a word needlessly,) "Let "the rich be *ashamed*, in that he is brought low," as some learned men do, would wholly destroy the energy and beauty of the contrast; and to explain it *exclusively* of the rich man, who was reduced to poverty for the sake of the Gospel, would imply, that no rich man, however humble, poor in spirit, liberal, and condescending to his poor brethren, could have any ground of rejoicing or glorying in Christ, and in the hope of glory, unless he voluntarily relinquished, or were forcibly deprived of his estate and possessions, and so reduced to entire poverty; a doctrine well suited to some orders of papists, but not at all to genuine Christianity. It is proper that some should be the Lord's stewards and almoners in outward things; but if they be made low, as humble, teachable, penitent believers in Christ, and thankful to be thus employed by him, let them rejoice in this humiliation of heart under these circumstances, which generally increase pride and self-exaltation.

V. 12. Whilst the world deemed those happy who enjoyed uninterrupted prosperity, though it served to increase their pride, malice, avarice, sensuality, and impiety, they were *indeed* to be congratulated as blessed, who endured temptations, and passed through various afflictive and trying dispensations with submissive constancy, and the persevering obedience of faith and hope. For after the Christian had been thus proved, and the reality of his grace manifested, and after his holy affections had been thus invigorated, and the temper of his mind improved, he would be honoured as a conqueror in the spiritual contest; not with a wreath of fading flowers, but with the crown of life; the honour, glory, and immortality, which the Lord had promised to them that love him, as reconciled to him and made to delight in him and his ways, by faith in Christ Jesus. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13—15. When trials become *temptations* and occasions of sin, no man should venture to say that he was tempted by God, as if he were the Author of transgression, or of the dishonourable event of the trial. (*Notes*, 2—4. *Gen.* xxii. 1.) The commandments and providential dispensations of God make trial of men's hearts, and tend to discover what dispositions prevail in them; where gracious affections are prevalent, through the power of the Holy Spirit, remarkable obedience and fidelity are the consequence of the trial; but when sin and Satan rule within, 16 [l] Do not err, [m] my beloved brethren.

17 Every [n] good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down [o] from the Father of lights, with whom *is* [p] no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

18 Of [q] his own will begat he us [r] with the word of truth, that we should be [s] a kind of first-fruits of his creatures.

19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, [t] let every man be swift to hear, [u] slow to speak, [x] slow to wrath:

20 For [y] the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

21 Wherefore, [z] lay apart all [a] filthiness, and superfluity of naughtiness, [b] and

l Matt xxii. 29. Mark xii. 24. 27. Gal. vi. 7. Col. ii. 4, 8 2 Tim. ii. 18.
m 19 ii.5. Phil ii. 12. iv 1. Heb. xiii 1.
n *See on*, 5. iii. 15 17 Gen. xli. 16. 38, 39. Ex iv 11, 12 xxxi. 3–6. xxxvi. 1, 2. Num. xi. 17. 25. 1 Chr. xxii 12. xxix. 19. 2 Chr. i. 11, 12 Prov. ii. 6, Is. xxviii. 26. Dan. ii. 21, 32. 27–30. Matt. vii. 11. xi. 25, 26. xiii. 11, 12. Luke xi. 13. John iii. 27. Acts v 31, xi. 18. Rom vi 23. xi 36. xii. 6–8. 1 Cor iv. 7. xii 4–12 Eph. ii 3–5 8. iv. 8–11. Phil i 29 Tit iii 3–5 1 John iv. 10. v. 11. 12.
o Gen i 1, 2 14, 15. Deut iv. 19. Ps. xix. 1–8. lxxxiv. 11. Is xlv. 7. lx. 19 John i. 9. viii 12. 2 Cor iv 6. Eph i 18. 1 John i 5. Rev xxi. 23. xxii. 5.
p Num. xxiii. 19. 1 Sam. xv 29. Ps. cii. 26, 27. Is. xlvi. 10. Mal iii. 6 Rom xi 29 Heb i. 11, 12. xiii. 8
q John i 13. iii. 3–5. Rom. iv. 17. viii. 29–31. ix. 15–18. Eph. ii. 4, 5. Col. i. 20, 21. 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14. 1 Pet. i. 3.
r 21. 1 Cor. iv. 15. 1 Pet. i. 23. 1 John iii. 9
s Lev. xxiii. 10. Jer ii 3. Am. vi 1 *Marg.* Heb. xii. 23. Rev. xiv. 4.
t Neh viii. 2, 3. 12–14. 18 ix. 3. Prov. viii. 32–35 Ec. v. 1. Mark ii. 2 xii. 37. Luke xv. 1. xix 48 Acts ii. 42 x 33 xiii. 42–44. 48. xvii. 11. 1 Thes ii. 13.
u 26. iii. 1, 2. Prov. x. 19. xiii 3 xv. 2. xvii 27 xviii 13. 21. xxi 23. Ec. v. 2, 3.
x Neh. ix. 17. Prov. xiv. 29. xv. 18 xvi 32. xvii. 14. xix. 11. 19. xxv. 28. Ec vii. 8, 9. Matt v 22. Gal. v 20. 21. Eph iv. 26. 31. Col. viii. 15
y iii 17, 18 Num xx 11. 12. 2 Tim ii. 24, 35.
z Is. ii. 20. xxx. 22. Ez. xviii. 31. Rom xiii. 12, 13 Eph. iv 22. Col. iii. 8. Heb. xii. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 1 11.
a iv. 8. Ez xxxviii 25. 2 Cor vii. 1. Eph. v. 4.
b Ps. xxv. 9. Is xxix. 19 lxi. 1. Zeph. ii. 3. Matt v 5 Acts x. 33 1 Thes i. 5. ii. 13.

disobedience must be the effect. Nothing, therefore, that is sinful in the heart or conduct can be ascribed to God, without the same absurdity as it would be to charge darkness and coldness upon the sun; for God cannot be tempted with evil; his absolute perfection and all-sufficiency render it impossible that there should be any inducement for him, in the most minute degree, to deviate from complete and entire justice, truth, wisdom, purity, and goodness; neither doth he in this sense tempt any man, by putting evil into his heart, suggesting it to his thoughts, or necessitating his commission of it. He is not the Author of the *dross*, though his fiery trial detects and exposes it. But every man is tempted to commit sin when the inordinate desires of his heart after worldly ease, honour, wealth, or pleasure, induce him to seize the bait with which Satan entices him: thus he is drawn out of the line of duty, as the fish is dragged out of the water when it hath been enticed by the delusive morsel that covered the hook. So that when lust, or vehement desires after any object which cannot be obtained without sin, is conceived in the heart, through the suggestions of Satan and the allurements of external objects, the purpose of indulgence is admitted and cherished; thus actual transgression is brought forth, and when this is completed, it bringeth forth death as its genuine offspring, and nothing but the mercy and grace of God, through Christ Jesus, can prevent the sinner's final destruction. This may be considered as the scriptural account of the original of moral evil, the natural history of the conception, production, and progeny of the first sin, and of every sin, except as repentance, through God's mercy, prevent the effects of them. But perhaps the apostle referred to the case of apostates, who, under persecutions, through love of the world, conceived the purpose of renouncing Christianity, which, being deliberately done and persisted in, ended in their final obduracy and destruction. It is egregious trifling, and manifestly absurd, to take occasion from the English word *lust*, which is often used to mean one particular sensual inclination, when impetuous and ungoverned, to limit the passage merely to sensuality, as if the impetuous and ungoverned desire of power, praise, wealth, or revenge, were not ἐπιθυμια, as much as the sensual inclinations. The word indeed is often used in a good sense, (*Luke* xxii. 15. *Phil.* i. 23. *Gr.*) and simply means a vehement inclination, whatever be the object.

V. 16—18. It behooved believers to be very careful not to mistake in this matter, lest they should be induced to listen to temptation, and *wander* from their duty, from an erroneous supposition that their circumstances would excuse their sins, or lest they should dishonour and offend God, by ascribing that misconduct to him, which was solely the effect of their apostate nature. Every thing truly good, of whatever kind, must be considered as a gift and bounty coming down from God, being beneficial in itself and perfect in its kind, like its great Author, who is the Father, the Source, and Fountain, of light, natural, moral, and spiritual; the Author of whatever is beautiful, excellent, and good, in all creatures and in the whole universe, as well as of all true knowledge, wisdom, holiness, and felicity, in those rational agents that never sinned, and in redeemed sinners. But nothing of a contrary nature comes down from him, "with whom is no "variableness, neither shadow of turning." The sun and moon, the two great natural lights which he hath made, *appear to us* to have several changes and turnings, whence originate summer and winter, day and night; but in fact these appearances arise entirely from our situation respecting them. Thus God is immutably the Fountain of good, and of nothing else; all good is to be ascribed to him, and sought from him; but the evil which we do or suffer, with all the changes which we experience, are from ourselves; the consequences of our having turned away from God, and of a change in our situation respecting him; and must not in any degree be ascribed to Him, who is unchangeably the same in his nature and perfection, without the least variation; and whose conduct proceeds upon the same unalterable principles of justice, truth, wisdom, and goodness, whatever effect it may produce on us, according to our character, behaviour, or state in his sight; and all sin, error, ignorance, and misery, must be ascribed to the mutability, frailty, and imperfection of created beings. It should also be remembered, that all the persons to whom the apostle wrote had been in themselves dead in sin and children of wrath; and that God, of his sovereign will and free mercy, had regenerated them by his Spirit, through the word of truth, (*Notes, John* iii. 1—8. 12. *Eph.* ii. 1—9. *Tit.* iii. 3—7.) in order that they might be consecrated to his service, as a kind of first-fruits of his creatures, more excellent and valuable than the rest of them; and as an earnest of a vastly larger increase from the Gentile world in that and future ages, even as the first-fruits, presented to the Lord, were the earnest of the future harvest, and brought a blessing upon it.

receive with meekness [c] the engrafted word, [d] which is able to save your souls.

22 But [e] be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, [f] deceiving your own selves.

23 For if any be [g] a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

[c] John vi. 63. 68. Rom. vi. 17. *Marg* xi. 17. Heb. iv 2.

[d] Acts xiii. 26. Rom. i. 16 1 Cor xv. 2 Eph. i. 13. 2 Tim iii. 15–17 Tit ii. 11. Heb. ii. 3. 1 Pet i. 9.

[e] iv 17 Matt. vii 21–25 xii 50. xxviii. 20. Luke vi. 46–48. xi. 28 xii 47, 48 John xiii. 17. Rom ii 13. Phil. iv. 8, 9. Col. iii. 17. 1 John ii 3. iii. 7. 3 John 11. Rev. xxii 7.———[f] 26. Is xliv. 20 Ob 3 1 Cor. iii. 18. vi. 9 xv. 33. Gal. vi 3. 7. 2 Tim iii. 13. Tit. iii 3. 2 Pet. ii. 13 1 John i. 8. Rev. xii. 9.———[g] *See on*, ii. 14–26 Jer xliv 16. Ez. xxxiii. 31, 32. Matt. vii 26, 27 Luke vi. 49

24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth [h] what manner of man he was.

25 But whoso [i] looketh into [k] the perfect law of [l] liberty, [m] and continueth *therein*, he being not [n] a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, [o] this man shall be blessed in his * deed.

[h] Judg. viii. 18. Matt. viii 27 Luke i. 66. vii. 39. ix. 55. 1 Thes i. 5. 2 Pet. iii. 11.

[i] Prov. xiv. 15. Is. viii 20. 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Heb. xii 15

[k] ii. 12. Ps xix. 7–10. cxix 32 45. 96–105. Rom vii 12. 22, 23.

[l] John viii. 32. 36. Rom. viii. 15. 2 Cor. iii. 17, 18. Gal. v. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 16.———[m] 1 Sam. xii. 14. John viii. 31. xv. 9, 10. Acts ii. 42. xiii. 43 xxvi. 22. Rom ii. 7, 8. xi. 22. Col. i 23. 1 Tim. ii 15. iv. 16. 1 John ii. 24.———[n] 23, 24.———[o] Ps xix. 11 cvi. 3. cxix. 2, 3. Luke xi. 28 John xiii. 17. 1 Cor. xv 58. Rev. xiv. 13. xxii. 14———* Or, *doing*.

V. 19—21. As believers owed all the difference, in their state and character, to the sovereign grace of God, by means of his word, so it behooved all of them to be swift and ready to hear further admonitions, instructions, and counsels, from the same source, in a teachable and attentive manner, and to "be slow to speak;" not rash or dogmatical in their judgments and decisions, not hasty to assume the office of teachers, not allowing themselves to dispute of things beyond their depth, and not indulging a conceited loquacious humour, as speaking for the sake of speaking, or in the hope of obtaining applause, without due seriousness, modesty, recollection, and prudence. They should also be slow to wrath, not giving way to angry tempers, bitterness of spirit against opposers, or proneness to acrimonious controversy, under a mistaken notion of great zeal for the truth; on the contrary, they should be slow and backward to entertain, or express, any kind or degree of resentment, even against their most cruel persecutors; assured that the wrath of man was not a proper means of promoting the interests of religion in the world, or leading men to embrace the Gospel and lead holy lives. For such proud contentions and violent tempers tended to prejudice the minds of men against the Gospel; to disturb the peace, and corrupt the purity of the Church; to multiply iniquities, and in every way to hinder the knowledge and practice of the righteousness of God. The apostle therefore exhorted them to lay apart, and to cast off with abhorrence, as a filthy garment, all the sinful practices of their past lives, which were abominable in the sight of God, and especially to avoid and repress the "overflowings of malignity," which many indulged under a pretence of zeal; whereas they proceeded entirely from the predominancy of pride, wrath, envy, and other hateful passions. Thus they ought to be prepared to receive the word of God in a meek, docile, humble, and peaceable frame of mind; for it could profit them only, when it became an "engrafted word," or *implanted word*, living and growing in the soul by faith and love, as the principle of a new nature, changing all their views, dispositions, and affections, into conformity to its own holiness, and so producing suitable fruit in their lives; and being thus received and engrafted, it would be able to effect the complete salvation of their souls, as the means by which the Spirit of God began, carried on, and would perfect, his new creation of the soul to holiness.

V. 22—25. In order that the word of truth might produce these blessed effects upon the souls of those who heard it, they must be doers of it, and not hearers only. For if they were only hearers, however attentive, constant, or teachable, they might seem to be, their neglect of practising what they heard would prove, that the word was not *engrafted* in their hearts, and that they were putting a most fatal imposition on themselves; whether custom, curiosity, a love of speculation, or a vain confidence in knowledge without obedience, for salvation, induced them to attend. A man of this description, who heard the Gospel, and did not obey its call to repentance, faith in Christ, and a sober, righteous, and godly life, was like a person who gave a transient look at his natural face as reflected from a mirror, without attempting to alter what was unbecoming in his attire or appearance, who would therefore immediately depart, and soon forget what manner of man he was; and the glimpse which he had of himself would have no abiding effect on him. Thus the mere hearer might have short-lived convictions of his sinfulness; but, not liking the view given of his state, heart, and character, in the glass of God's word, and having no effectual desires of an entire change, he would soon lose sight of his transient discoveries, in the company, business, and pleasures of the world, and so remain ignorant of himself, and destitute of transforming grace. But whosoever looked, steadfastly and attentively into the word of God, with a real desire of learning from it his true state and character, and the way of acceptance and salvation, and continued with perseverance in this important inquiry, he, not being a forgetful hearer, but one that reduced to practice what he learned from time to time, though it cost him much humiliation and self-denial, would be blessed ***in his deed***, or ***in his doing***; for the Lord would in this way lead him into the knowledge of his truth and salvation, his obedience would evidence the sincerity of his faith, his sanctification would proportionably advance, as he became acquainted with God and with himself, and his gracious recompense hereafter would succeed his present peace and comfort. Some, by "the perfect law of liberty," suppose the moral law to be intended, in opposition to the ceremonial; and it certainly deserves that title *in itself*, as perfect obedience to it is perfect liberty, and every deviation from it is slavery; but then it cannot give liberty to us sinners. Others, therefore, suppose the Gospel to be intended; because by it we are set at liberty from condemnation and the bondage of sin. But divine revelation in general seems to be meant, as every part of it has its use in bringing the sinner to Christ for salvation, and in directing and encouraging him to walk at liberty, by the Spirit of adoption, according to the holy commandments of God. In the word of truth, as the law or rule of obtaining and enjoying liberty, the true Christian looks as

26 If any man among you [p] seem to be religious, [q] and bridleth not his tongue, [r] but deceiveth his own heart, [s] this man's religion *is* vain.

p Prov. xiv. 12. xvi. 25. Luke viii. 18. 1 Cor. iii. 18. Gal. ii. 6. 9. vi 3.
q 19. iii. 2–6 Ps xxxii. 9. xxxiv 13. xxxix. 1, 2. cxli. 3 Prov. x. 19. 31. xiii 2, 3. xv 2. xvi 10. xix 1. xxi 23. Eph. iv 29. v. 4. Col. iv. 6. 1 Pet. iii. 10.——r *See on*, 22. Deut. xi 16. Is. xliv 20 Gal vi. 3 ——s ii. 20. Is. i. 12. Mal. iii. 14. Matt. xv. 9. Mark vii. 7. 1 Cor. xv. 2. 14. Gal. iii. 4.

27 [t] Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, [u] To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, *and* [x] to keep himself unspotted from the world.

t iii. 17. Ps. cxix. 1. Matt. v. 8. Luke i. 6. 1 Tim. i 5. v. 4.
u Job xxix. 12. 13. xxxi 15–20. Ps. lxviii 5 Is. i 16, 17 lviii. 6, 7. Matt. xxv 34–46. Gal. v 6. vi. 9 1 John iii. 17–19.——x iv. 4. John xvii. 14, 15. Rom. xii. 2. Gal. i. 4. vi. 14. Col iii. 1–3. 1 John ii. 15–17. v. 4, 5. 18.

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into a mirror, that he may discover the remaining unholiness of his tempers, affections, words, and actions, in order that his soul may be purified from defilement, beautified with salvation, and transformed into the holy image of God continually more and more. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 26. So necessary was practice, in every particular, to the very existence of real Christianity, that if any man, among professed believers, appeared to be a devout worshipper of God, according to the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel, and if his conduct in other respects were not reprehensible, yet, in case he habitually neglected to bridle his tongue, and so gave a loose to vain, polluting, ostentatious, or improper discourse, especially, if he uttered bitter, malicious, slanderous, or reviling words, in an unrestrained manner, under pretence of zeal against such as differed from him, and deceived his own heart, by one vain excuse or another, to think this was allowable, or consistent with the Christian temper, his religion was thus proved to be vain and worthless, his heart was not right in the sight of God, whilst out of the abundance of it such evil things habitually proceeded; but he was still "in the "gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity." This is the general interpretation, and nothing more is at all supposed to have been intended by the apostle. Yet men do not *bridle* horses, merely to restrain them from mischief, or from going in a wrong way, but likewise in order to rule and direct them in the right way, that they may be *useful*, and not merely *inoffensive*. Surely, then, the refraining from evil discourse, and not perverting the gift of speech, by which man is distinguished from all other creatures here below, is not the *whole* which is intended by "bridling "the tongue!" Beyond doubt, the proper improvement of that important talent is also meant; the tongue must be held in and kept from improper discourse, and directed to that conversation, which tends "to the use of edifying," and is suited to "minister grace unto the hearers." It will perhaps be found, that they, who have any regard to God and their duty, offend as frequently, by silence, when they are bound to speak, as by speaking, when they should be silent; but sins of *omission* are generally less regarded than sins of *commission*. How often do cowardice, indolence, and lukewarmness, make us silent, when holy courage, active zeal, and fervent love, would excite us to attempt a word in season, which God often most eminently blesses!

V. 27. Pure religion, the acceptable holy worship and service of God, free from corrupt mixtures, and undefiled by corrupt motives and carnal passions, as exercised in the sight of God, even the Father, with his approbation, by his adopted children in Christ Jesus, essentially consisted in disinterested, humble, self-denying love to men for the Lord's sake, and from love to him, and in taking pleasure, from such principles, in visiting orphans, widows, and other afflicted or destitute persons; to soothe their sorrows, relieve their wants, and afford them protection; counsel and comfort, in their distresses; and in keeping at a distance from the sinful pursuits, interests, pleasures, maxims, fashions, and pollutions, of this wicked world; so that a man might have no stain upon his garments, no blemish on his character, no guilt upon his conscience, on that account. Without some measure of this holy love, and this mortification to the world, no doctrines, forms, confidence, high affections, zeal, or apparent devotion, can prove a man an accepted worshipper of God. Our true religion is exactly equal to the measure in which these things have place in our hearts, experience, and conduct; and these are therefore the *criteria* of pure and undefiled religion, by which we should judge of it, in ourselves and in others, both as to the reality of it, and the degree in which it is possessed. But this holy love, and mortification to the world, can only be produced by faith in a crucified Saviour, and the supply of his sanctifying Spirit; so that no *appearance* of these things can be depended on, except they spring from, and are connected with, a professed belief of the Gospel, and a reliance on the mercy of God in Christ Jesus for salvation. (*Notes*, 1 *Cor.* xiii.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

The servants of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ must consider themselves as employed to do good to the chosen tribes of the true Israel, through all their dispersions in this evil world. Divers temptations we must meet with; and if we fall into them without our own fault, and have only the distress of bearing them, without the guilt of yielding to them, we may deem it a great cause of joy to be thus proved and purified in the furnace, and made meet for future honour and felicity. For these painful, but short, trials tend to reduce the gracious heart into a more submissive temper, and a more cordial acquiescence in the will of God; and when patience, in its various exercises, is allowed to have its perfect work, it meliorates all the dispositions and affections of the soul; produces a peculiar simplicity, humility, and tenderness; corrects the harshness and roughness natural to us, and matures the fruits of righteousness to the greatest advantage. So that in this severe school the Christian makes his greatest proficiency, and becomes perfect and entire, in every part of his temper and conduct, according to the measure of attainment which may be arrived at in this world, and is defective in nothing requisite for the due performance of the services required of him. But in respect of this, and every other part of our conduct, we shall feel that we lack wisdom, in proportion as we become acquainted with ourselves; nor shall we, if we reverence the Scriptures, seek it in the schools of philosophy, or from the counsels of the wise men of this world; but we shall ask the precious boon of

CHAP. II.

Cautions against partial regard to the rich, and against contempt of the poor, as contrary to the law of love, 1—9. *The transgression of one commandment violates the whole law,* 10—12. *No mercy will be shown to the unmerciful,* 13. *As love, shown by words alone, is worthless; so faith without works is dead and unprofitable,* 14—20. *This is illustrated by the examples of Abraham and Rahab,* 21—26.

God, and obtain the substance, while others are deceived with an empty shadow. As the Lord “giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not,” and hath engaged that wisdom shall be given to them that ask him for it, so every man, who feels his want of heavenly wisdom, may apply to him for this inestimable benefit without fear of being refused. Did we fully avail ourselves of this privilege, how greatly should we be enriched with divine knowledge! And how prudently should we conduct all our concerns, and avoid every snare and device of our enemies! But pride, prejudice, and a carnal mind, co-operating with unbelief, not only preclude multitudes entirely from these treasures, but in some degree prevent all of us from drawing from them so copiously as we otherwise might do. If men be divided in their judgment, between a dependence on the promises of God in the use of appointed means, and other methods of seeking wisdom; if they do not really believe that the Lord will be as good as his word; or if they question whether heavenly things are decidedly preferable to earthly; no wonder that they are like the waves of the sea, which are driven with the wind, and tossed; and if they receive nothing of God, they have none to blame but themselves. Whilst we see so many of these double-minded men on every side, who are unstable in all their ways, we are reminded to pray for the increase of faith, that we may waver no more, but trust in the Lord, and cleave to him alone.

V. 9—18.

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If there were any substantial satisfaction in earthly things, there might be some speciousness in attempting to serve God and Mammon; but as all below is “vanity and vexation of spirit,” the poor believer may well rejoice in being exalted to an interest in Christ, and in the prospect of glory in heaven, though he have all kinds of hardships by the way; and the rich have at least equal cause for rejoicing, if God hath humbled them before his mercy-seat, though the world despise and hate them on that account; nay, though they should be stripped of their possessions for the cause of Christ. For the fashion of this world passeth away, and all its magnificence and show of happiness fadeth and withereth, like the flower of the grass, and most miserable are those rich men, who fade away in the pride of ungodly prosperity. But blessed are they, who patiently endure trials, and manfully resist temptation; for “through much tribulation shall they enter into the kingdom of God;” and, having been tried, they shall receive the unfading crown of glory, which God hath promised to them that love him. But let not hypocrites who are tempted under their trials to renounce the profession of the Gospel, or believers, who through unwatchfulness are overcome in some sharp conflict, venture for a moment to say or think that they are tempted by God; “for he cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.” And if any one should dare thus foolishly to charge God with being the Author of sin, in any way, or on any pretence, he may surely expect some dreadful rebuke for his presumption. For when the depravity of the heart hath influenced men to hearken to Satan's enticements and catch at his baits, and so sin hath been conceived and finished, and condemnation justly incurred, it is no less than blasphemy, to throw the blame upon the righteous providence or holy commandments of God. Such inferences from important truths, ill understood, should be carefully avoided, whilst we remember that every good and perfect gift cometh down from the unchangeable Father of Light, the inexhaustible Fountain of wisdom, holiness, and felicity. But if we be Christians indeed, the Lord hath, according to his determinate purpose and “the counsel of his own will,” begotten us with the word of truth; we should therefore give him all the glory of this happy change, and consecrate all our faculties to his service, that we may be “a kind of first-fruits of his creatures.”

V. 19—27.

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It behooves us all to be “swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath,” even when apparently religious zeal prompts a different conduct; for “the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God;” but is the scandal and bane of every society in which it is indulged. Let us then lay apart all filthiness, and the overflowings of maliciousness, that we may receive with humble teachableness, and maintain with meekness and love, the sacred truths contained in the holy scriptures, which, being engrafted in the heart, are effectual to the salvation of our souls. But, while we are swift to hear the word of God, let us take care to be doers of it, and not hearers only, lest we deceive our own souls; many such are found in most congregations, who deceive scarcely any body but themselves. The word of God is a faithful mirror, to show us the deformity and pollution of our souls, and a monitor, to teach us how we may remove them, and adorn ourselves with the beauties of holiness. Happy would it be for mankind, were they, in general, as assiduous in seeking this inward, durable, and spiritual adorning, as they are in decorating their poor mortal bodies, that they may appear comely in the eyes of their fellow-worms! Transient glimpses, however, and notional discoveries, leave mere hearers unchanged, and a large majority choose to go away from the sermon, and forget what manner of persons they are.—But “whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty,” and meditates continually on the holy word of God, not as a forgetful hearer, but as an obedient believer, shall be blessed in his deed; for in this way he shall find out whatever in his heart and conduct needs repentance, forgiveness, and the “sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience:” thus Christ

MY brethren, have not [a] the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, [b] *the Lord* of glory, [c] with respect of persons.

2 For if there come unto your * assembly a man with a [d] gold ring, in [e] goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man, [f] in vile raiment;

3 And [g] ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here † in a good place; and say [h] to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:

4 Are ye not then [i] partial in yourselves, and are become [k] judges of evil thoughts?

5 [l] Hearken, my beloved brethren, [m] Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, [n] rich in faith, and [o] heirs of ‡ the kingdom [p] which he hath promised to them that love him?

6 But [q] ye have despised the poor. [r] Do not rich men oppress you, [s] and draw you before the judgment-seats?

a Acts xx. 21. xxiv 24 Col. ii. 5. 1 Tim i 19. Tit i. 1. 2 Pet. i. 1. Rev. xiv. 12.
b Ps. xxiv 7—10. 1 Cor. ii. 8 Tit ii 13 Heb i. 3.
c 9. iii 17. Lev. xix 15 Deut i. 17. xvi. 19 2 Chr. xix. 7 Prov. xxiv. 23. xxviii 21. Matt xxii 16 Rom. ii. 11. 1 Tim v. 21 Jude 16
* Gr. *synagogue*
d Esth. iii. 10. viii. 2. Luke xv. 22
e Gen. xxvii. 15 Matt. xi 8, 9
f Is. lxiv 6. Zech. iii. 3, 4.
g Jude 16
† Or, *well*, or, *seemly* ——h *See on*, 6. Is. lxv. 5. Luke vii. 44—46. 2 Cor. viii. 9.
i *See on*, 1. Job xxxiv. 19 Mal. ii. 9.

k iv. 11. Job xxi. 27 Ps lviii. 1. lxxxii 2. cix. 31 Matt vii. 1—5 John vii 24
l Judg. ix 7 1 Kings xxii 28 Job xxxi. 10. xxxiv. 19. xxxvii 14. Prov. vii. 24. viii. 32. Mark vii. 14. Acts vii. 2.
m i. 9. Is. xiv 32. xxix. 19 Zeph. iii. 10. Zech. xi. 7. 11. Matt xi. 5. Luke vi. 20. ix. 57, 58. xvi. 22. 25. John vii. 48. 1 Cor. i 26—28 2 Cor viii. 9.——n Prov viii. 17—21. Luke xii. 21. 1 Cor. iii. 21—23. 2 Cor. iv. 15. vi. 10. Eph i. 18. iii. 8. 1 Tim. vi. 18. Heb xi. 26. Rev ii. 9 iii. 18 xxi. 7.
o Matt v. 3. xxv. 34. Luke xii. 32. Rom. viii. 17. 1 Thes. ii. 12. 2 Thes. i. 5. 2 Tim. iv. 8. 18. 1 Pet. i. 4 2 Pet. i 11 ——‡ Or, *that.*——p *See on*, i. 12.——q 3. Ps. xiv. 6. Prov. xiv. 31. xvii. 5 Ec. ix. 15, 16. Is. liii. 3 John viii. 49. 1 Cor xi 22.
r v. 4. Job xx. 19. Ps. x. 2. 8. 10 14 xii. 5. Prov. xxii. 16. Ec. v. 8 Is. iii 14. 15. Am ii 6, 7. iv. 1. v. 11. viii. 4—6. Mic. vi. 11, 12. Hab. iii. 14. Zech. vii. 10.
s v. 6. 1 Kings xxi. 11—13. Acts iv. 1—3. 26—29. v. 17, 18. 26, 27. xiii. 50. xvi. 19, 20.

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will become more precious to his soul, and by his grace he will daily grow more "meet for the inheritance of the "saints in light," and have more abundant anticipations of their holy felicity. But words must be attended to, as well as actions; for, whatever appearances there may be of true religion, in the creed, worship, and outward conduct of any man, yet, if he bridle not his tongue, he deceiveth his own heart, and all his religion is vain. No wonder that disputatious, contentious, and noisy talkers about forms and doctrines disrelish this epistle, when the unbridled license of their tongues exposes them to an unqualified charge of total hypocrisy in the very opening of it. But, while we depend on God's mercy in Christ Jesus for all things pertaining to salvation, let us remember the essential nature of pure and undefiled religion before God, even our Father; let us show our love to him, by "visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction," and seek grace from him to preserve us unspotted from the world. For nothing "availeth in Christ Jesus, but faith "which worketh by love," purifieth the heart, subdueth carnal lusts, and obeyeth God's commandments.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1—4. While the persons whom the apostle addressed held the doctrine of Christ, and professed faith in him as "the Lord of glory," most glorious in himself, and the Source of all that was honourable in men, they ought to take care not to show respect of persons, giving honour to some and despising others, on account of their external circumstances and appearances, without estimating the real excellency of their characters, or the contrary: for this would be very inconsistent with professing themselves the disciples of the lowly Jesus. For instance, if any person, adorned with rings on his fingers, and costly garments, as one of high rank in the community, should come into their assembly, when they were met for the worship of God, as the Jews did in their synagogues, and another should, at the same time, enter, in mean and worn-out clothes, as a poor man, and they should pay great attention to him in gay clothing, accommodating him with some chief place in the synagogue, and contemptuously order the poor man to stand in some inconvenient place, or to sit on the ground at their feet, without further inquiry into their characters and conduct, would not this prove that they were *partial* in forming an opinion in themselves concerning others, and were become judges, who were misled by vain reasonings and imaginations, by unjust thoughts and corrupt affections? For their conduct would show, that they deemed wealth and splendour, however acquired, to be honourable; and poverty, however incurred or supported, to be disgraceful: forgetting that the Lord of glory was pleased to be poor for the sake of sinners, to enrich them with eternal felicity. Some expositors, supposing that the passage thus interpreted, could scarcely consist with rendering honour to civil superiors, as required in other scriptures, have endeavoured to explain it of partiality in deciding causes, in favour of the rich and against the poor; because some courts of justice used to be held in the Jewish synagogues. But had the apostle intended to point out so gross an iniquity, he would doubtless have spoken of it with far more decided severity. If such partiality were used in their determinations of those matters, that came before the churches, it would certainly be condemned by what he said: yet the language does not seem to relate to judicial proceedings of any kind; but to an improper respect shown towards some, and contempt expressed towards others, merely on account of their external appearance.—No doubt this is very reprehensible, and the effect of a carnal judgment, how common soever it may be: nor does civil respect to superiors, or to those in authority, render such difference of conduct towards the rich and the poor in religious concerns, at all necessary: especially when the rich have nothing but their wealth and splendour, to recommend them; and the poor are persons of pious character and good behaviour. As places of worship cannot be builded and maintained without much expense, it may be proper that they, who contribute towards defraying it, should be accommodated accordingly: but were all professed Christians more spiritually minded in such matters, less disparity would be made, and the poor would be treated with more attention and regard, than they commonly are in worshipping congregations. And we may conclude, that if the apostle could witness what takes place generally in our days, in this matter, and give his opinion of it, he would repeat the censure, that we were become partial in ourselves, and judges influenced by evil thoughts, corrupt reasonings, and erroneous calculations.

7 Do not they [t] blaspheme that [u] worthy name [x] by the which ye are called?

8 If ye fulfil [y] the royal law, according to the scripture, [z] Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, [a] ye do well:

9 But [b] if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and [c] are convinced [d] of the law as transgressors.

10 For [e] whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all.

t Ps. lxxiii 7—9. Matt. xii. 21. xxvii. 63. Luke xxii. 64, 65. Acts xxvi. 11. 1 Tim. i. 13. Rev xiii. 5, 6.
u Cant. i. 3. Is. vii 14 ix 6, 7. Jer. xxiii. 6. Matt. i. 23. Acts iv. 12 Phil ii 9—11. Rev. xix. 13. 16.
x Is lxv. 15. Acts xi. 26. Eph iii. 15.
y 12. i. 25. 1 Pet. ii. 9.
z Lev. xix. 18 34. Matt. xxii. 39 Mark xii. 31—33. Luke x. 27—37. Rom. xiii. 8. 9. Gal. v. 14. 1 Thes. iv 9.——a ii 19. 1 Kings viii 18 2. Kings vii 9 Jon. iv. 4. 9 Matt. xxv 21 23. Phil. iv. 14——b *See on* 1—4. Lev xix. 15 c John viii. 9. 46 xvi. 8 *Marg*. 1 Cor. xiv 24. Jude 15——d Rom iii 20. vii. 7—13. Gal. ii. 19 1 John iii. 4.——e Deut. xxvii. 26 Matt v. 18, 19. Gal iii 10.

11 For * he that said, [f] Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. [g] Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

12 So [h] speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by [i] the law of liberty.

13 For [k] he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; [l] and mercy † rejoiceth against judgment.

* Or, *that law, which said.*
f Ex. xx. 13, 14 Deut. v. 17, 18. Matt. v. 21—28. xix. 18. Mark x. 19. Luke xviii. 20. Rom. xiii. 9.
g Lev. iv. 2 13. 22. Ps. cxxx. 3, 4.
h Phil iv. 8 Col. iii 17. 2 Pet. i. 4—8.
i 8. *See on*, i. 25.
k v. 4. Gen. xlii. 21. Judg i. 7. Job xxii. 6—10. Prov xxi. 13. Is. xxvii. 11. Matt. v. 7. vi. 15. vii 1, 2. xviii 28—35. xxv 41—46. Luke xvi 25——l Jer. ix 24. Ez. xxxiii. 11. Mic vii. 18. Eph. i. 6, 7. ii. 4—7 1 John iv. 8—16 19.——† Or, *glorieth.*

V. 5—7. The apostle called the attention of his brethren to the subject, by inquiring whether they did not know that "God had chosen the poor of this world." Were not his people generally of that rank in life, with only a few exceptions? If the Lord had therefore chiefly blessed the Gospel for the conversion of the poor, it must be evident, that he had appointed that lowly state for his chosen people, as the safest, most comfortable, and advantageous for them; as most conducive to their progressive sanctification, most favourable to their inward peace, and most suited to show forth the power and blessed effects of his grace bestowed on them. For he could have given them the riches and honours of this world, if he had seen that these would have done them good; but he had chosen them to be "rich in faith," interesting them in all the unsearchable riches of Christ, and in all the precious promises of the scripture, and had nominated them to be heirs of the kingdom, which he had engaged to bestow on all those who were taught by his grace to love him and his holy ways; which comprised such a confluence of honour, authority, greatness, riches, and enjoyments, as no earthly kingdom could ever pretend to. (i. 12.) It was therefore evident, that the Lord peculiarly honoured and favoured men of low condition: whereas his worshippers despised the poor, and slighted them, as if beneath their notice! (*Notes, Prov.* xvii. 5. *Luke* ii. 1—14.) Did they not also know that rich men were generally oppressors and persecutors, and dragged them before their iniquitous tribunals, to condemn them for their religion? And did they not often hear them blaspheme the name of Christ, from which they were called Christians, and whom they considered as worthy of all honour and worship? Could they then imagine that the enemies of Christ and his church, and persons of the vilest characters, ought to be treated with more respect, on account of their wealth alone, than their poor brethren and neighbours were entitled to? This implies, that the apostle principally referred to the case of such rich persons, as occasionally came to their assemblies, to whom vast attention was paid, whilst the poor were despised; whereas the latter were far more likely to profit by the word preached than the former; and he does not seem to have meant, that the rich, who were stated attendants on their assemblies, and godly persons, ought to have no degree of superior regard shown them, provided the poor were not despised and undervalued.

V. 8—13. The apostle reminded his brethren, that they would do well, if they attended to and fulfilled the comprehensive scriptural precept, of loving their neighbours as themselves, in the several parts of their conduct towards each other. This might be called a *royal* law, because of its pre-eminent excellency and permanent authority, and because it was the law of Christ their King, respecting their conduct towards one another and all men. (*Marg. Ref. and notes on the texts referred to.*) It is of vast importance to observe how often this abstract of the second table of the law is referred to in the New Testament, as a rule of conduct to believers; as it is alone sufficient to show the fatal mistake of those who deny the moral law to be the rule of our duty. But if Christians had respect of persons, treating the poor with contempt, and paying court to the rich, they evidently committed sin and acted unjustly, and, consequently, were convicted by the law as transgressors, as they did not show an equal love to their poor brethren. For if they were obedient in all other things to the law, and only offended in one single particular, they were guilty of all; that is, they broke the law, and fell under its condemnation, as certainly, though not so deeply, by transgressing one precept, as if they had broken them all, even as a man is liable to the sentence of death by the law of the land, who offends in one capital matter, though he be clear in all others. The chain consisting of many links is broken, when any one link is broken. According to the covenant of works, a single violation of any one command, brings a man under condemnation, from which no obedience, past, present, or future, can deliver him: and, according to the covenant of grace, the allowed, known, and habitual transgression of any part of the moral law, as given to us from the hands of a Mediator, proves a professed Christian to be impenitent, a hypocrite, an unreconciled enemy, and a rebel against God; and that his obedience in other respects is not the result of a sincere regard to the authority and glory of God: for if it were, the same principle would induce him to a constant endeavour and purpose of obeying every commandment. The authority, which prohibited adultery, forbade murder also; and the same was the case with every other requirement of the law; therefore a violation of any one of them constituted the man a transgressor, and implied rebellion against the Law-giver. Some would perhaps object, that they "were not under "the law, but under grace;" and therefore they might be

14 [m] What *doth it* profit, my brethren, [n] though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? [o] can faith save him?

15 If [p] a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

16 And [q] one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be *ye* warmed, and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; [r] what *doth it* profit?

17 Even [s] so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being * alone.

18 Yea, a man may say, [t] Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith † without thy works, [u] and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

m 16. Jer. vii. 8. Rom. ii. 25. 1 Cor xiii 3. 1 Tim. iv. 8 Heb. xiii. 9.
n 18. 26. i. 22, 23. Matt v. 20 vii. 21—23. 26, 27. Luke vi. 49. Acts viii. 13 21. xv. 9. 1 Cor xiii. 2. xvi. 22. Gal v. 6. 13. 1 Thes i. 3. 1 Tim. i. 5 Tit. i. 16. iii. 8. Heb xi. 7, 8 17. 2 Pet. i 5, 1 John v. 4, 5.——o 1 Cor. xv 2 Eph. ii. 8—10
p 5. Job xxxi. 16—21. Is. lviii. 7. 10. Ez xviii. 7. Matt. xxv. 35—40 Mark xiv 7. Luke iii. 11 Acts ix 39. Heb. xi. 37.——q Job xxii. 7—9. Prov iii. 27, 28. Matt. xiv. 15, 16. xv. 32. xxv. 42—45. Rom. xii. 9. 2 Cor. viii. 8. 1 John iii. 16—18.
r *See on*, m 14.
s 14. 19, 20. 26. 1 Cor. xii. 3 13. 1 Thes. i. 3. 1 Tim. i. 5. 2 Pet. i. 5—9.
* Gr. *by itself.*
t 14. 22. Rom. xiv. 23 1 Cor. xiii. 2. Gal. v. 6. Heb. xi. 6. 31.
† Some copies read, *by thy works.*
u 22—25. iii. 13. Matt. vii. 17. Rom viii. 1. 2 Cor. v. 17 vii. 1. 1 Thes. i. 3—10. 1 Tim. i. 5. Tit. ii. 7. 11—14.

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in a state of acceptance, though the law condemned their conduct in various particulars: but though this in a certain sense was indeed the case with true believers; yet it behooved them, in every respect, to speak and act as persons who were to be judged according to "the perfect law of "liberty." (*Note*, i. 25.) For the whole tenour of revelation, and the Gospel itself, by which men were set at liberty from condemnation and every yoke of bondage, would condemn all those who did not repent, and forsake every sin, and obey the commandments of God in sincerity and simplicity, from faith and love to the Lord Jesus. So that if they habitually allowed themselves in the practice of any known sin, the Gospel would adjudge them to be unbelievers; they especially who showed no mercy to their neighbours, inferiors, and dependents, would certainly have judgment without mercy, and be punished with the utmost rigour of the law. As no man could be a true believer, whose heart was not humbled and softened into a compassionate, forgiving, kind, and loving disposition. (*Notes*, &c. *Matt.* v. 7. vi. 14, 15. xviii. 21—35.) The exercise of mercy indeed might be ascertained by its "rejoicing "against judgment," and by any one's taking pleasure in abating from the demands of rigorous justice, and showing kindness to those who had no legal claim to favour. Thus God deemed it his glory and joy, to pardon and bless those who might justly have been condemned at his tribunal, and his grace taught those who were partakers of his mercy, to copy it in their conduct towards their afflicted and offending brethren: and all, who were not taught to show mercy to others, must expect to be dealt with according to the severity of justice, in respect of their eternal state. What then must be the doom of the cruel oppressors and iniquitous tyrants of the human species?—Some explain the expression, "mercy rejoiceth against "judgment," to denote the cheerful expectation of a future judgment, with which the exercise of mercy to others inspires the true Christian's heart: but, though this may be implied, yet it seems not to be the proper meaning of the passage, or construction of the words; for to "glory "*against*," or "to rejoice *against*," does not properly denote, to rejoice and glory in expectation of an event, but to rejoice and glory in obtaining the ascendency or victory over a competitor, as *mercy* is figuratively represented to do over the severity of God's judgment, when *they* are justified and saved, who deserve to be condemned.

V. 14—18. It is plain that the apostle here argued against those who substituted a notional belief of the Gospel for the whole of evangelical religion, and who were ready to answer exhortations and reproofs, (as many now do,) by saying, 'We are not to be justified by our works, 'but by faith; we believe, and have all things in Christ.' He therefore inquired of them, what it profited a man, "though *he said* that he had faith, and had no works" of true piety and holiness, to which he could appeal as the fruits and evidence of it: "Could faith save him?" No doubt true faith, interesting men in Christ's righteousness, atonement, and grace, saves their souls; but then it also produces holy fruits, and is evinced to be genuine by its effect on their hearts and lives: whereas a speculative assent to any doctrine, or a historical belief of any facts, essentially differs from this saving faith. The worthlessness of such a dead faith is here shown by an apposite illustration: If any poor Christians were destitute of proper clothing or food for the day, and so in immediate distress, and in danger of perishing, and a professed Christian, who was able to relieve them, should avow much brotherly love, and express a cordial wish and desire that they might be furnished with raiment and support by some kind friend, but at the same time should give them nothing towards the supply of their urgent necessities, would any man be so destitute of common sense, as to suppose these unmeaning expressions constituted that most excellent grace of "brotherly love," which Christ and his apostles so greatly insisted on and extolled? Or would a poor starving person be persuaded to account it any better than a cruel mockery of his misery? What then would such a love profit either the possessor or his poor brother? Thus faith is most excellent and advantageous, when genuine and efficacious; yet that faith, which has no good works springing from it, is dead and worthless, and as it is inactive and unfruitful, so it can by no means justify the possessor, being *alone*, and separated from repentance, love to God and man, and every other holy affection. It would therefore be most absurd to suppose that the Lord would approve such a *faith*, when no poor Christian would value *love* of exactly the same kind. So that a Christian, who was more attentive "to the work "of faith and labour of love," than to the disputatious profession of certain doctrines, being questioned by one of another stamp, might say to him, "Thou hast faith, and "I have works; show me, therefore, thy faith without "thy works," if any conceivable method can be found of doing this, and in the mean time, 'I will proceed to show 'thee, and all around me, that faith in Christ influences 'and rules in my heart, by the works of a sober, right'eous, and godly life.' Most copies read "show me "thy faith by thy works, and I will show thee my faith "by my works." 'Thou professest to believe, and disgracest that profession by thy conduct; but do not expect 'to be considered as a believer, till thou showest thy faith 'by the good works of a holy life: and thou censurest

19 Thou [x] believest that there is one God; [y] thou doest well: [z] the devils also believe, and tremble.

20 But wilt thou know, [a] O vain man, [b] that faith without works is dead?

21 Was not [c] Abraham our Father [d] justified by works, [e] when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

22 * Seest thou how [f] faith wrought with his works, and by works was [g] faith made perfect?

23 And [h] the scripture was fulfilled which saith, [i] Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called [k] the friend of God.

24 Ye [l] see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

25 Likewise also, [m] was not Rahab the harlot [n] justified by works, [o] when she had received the messengers, and had sent *them* out another way?

26 For [p] as the body without the † spirit is dead, [q] so faith without works is dead also.

x Deut. vi. 4. Is. xliii. 10. xliv. 6. 8 xlv. 6 21, 22 xlvi. 9. Zech. xiv. 9. Mark xii. 29. Johnxvii 3 Rom. iii. 30. 1 Cor. viii. 4. 6. Gal. iii. 20 Eph. iv 5, 6. 1 Tim. ii. 5. Jude 4.
y 8. Jon. iv. 4. 9. Mark vii 9.
z Matt. viii. 29. Mark i. 24. v. 7. Luke iv. 34. Acts xvi. 17. xix. 15 xxiv. 25. Jude 6. Rev. xx. 2, 3. 10.
a i. 26 Job xi 11, 12. Ps xciv 8—11. Prov. xii. 11. Jer. ii. 5. Rom. i. 21. 1 Cor. xv 35, 36 Gal vi 3 Col ii. 8 1 Tim i. 6. Tit i 10.——b *See on*, 14 ——c Josh. xxiv. 3 Is. li. 2. Matt. iii 9 Luke i. 73. xvi. 24. 30. John viii 39. 53. 56. Acts vii. 2. Rom. iv. 1. 12. 16 ——d 18 24 Ps. cxliii. 2 Matt. xii. 37. xxv. 31—40. Rom iii. 20 ——e Gen. xxii 9—12. 16—18 ——* Or, *Thou seest.*——f 18. Gal. v. 6. Heb xi. 17—19.——g 1 John ii. 5. iv. 17, 18.
h Mark xii 10. xv. 28. Luke iv. 21. Acts i. 16. Rom ix. 17 xi. 2. Gal iii 8—10 22 2 Tim iii. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 6.
i Gen xv 6. Rom. iv. 3—6. 10, 11, 22—24. Gal. iii. 6.
k Ex. xxxiii. 11. 2 Chr. xx 7. Job xvi 21 Is. xli. 8. John xv. 13—15.
l 15—18. 21. 22.
m Josh. ii. 1. Matt. i. 5. *Rachab.*
n 18—22.
o Josh. ii. 9—21. vi. 17. 22—25. Heb. xi 31.
p Job xxxiv. 14, 15. Ps civ. 29 cxlvi. 4 Ec. xii. 7 Is ii 22. Luke xxiii. 46. Acts vii. 59, 60.——† Or, *breath* ——q *See on*, 14. 17. 20.

‘me, as not sufficiently exact, or zealous in respect of faith; but I deem it better to evince it by my works, than by disputing about it.’ Either reading warrants the same inference; namely, that there is no possible way to show that we really do believe in Christ, except by being “zealous of good works,” from evangelical motives, and for evangelical purposes; and where good works are evidently wanting, the most confident profession of the most orthodox creed, can only prove a man to be a well-instructed hypocrite, who has received a system of doctrine into his understanding as true, but has never been so convinced of its excellency, as to admit it into his heart experimentally, as the influential principle of his conduct towards God and man. ‘A wicked opinion having sprung up, even in the apostle's days, by misunderstanding Paul's arguments, Peter, John, James, and Jude, aimed, in their epistles, principally at this end, to vindicate the doctrine of Paul from the false consequences charged upon it, and to show that faith, without works, is nothing worth. But indeed Paul does not speak of faith at large, but only of that living, fruitful, and evangelical faith, which, he says, “worketh by love.” ‘As for that faith, void of good works, which these men thought sufficient to salvation, he declareth positively against it. Peter calls it *wresting*, (2 *Pet.* ii. 16.) because Paul was in truth of the same opinion with the other apostles, and held eternal life impossible to be attained by any faith which had not the attestation of a holy life.’ (*Augustine.*)

V. 19, 20. To show the vanity of such a faith as did not influence the heart and conduct, the apostle mentioned the fundamental article of all religion, the existence of one God as the only Object of all worship and service. Now the professed Christian, before described, believed this important truth, but without making any practical use of it. No doubt he acted more properly in believing this truth, than they did who denied it; but of what advantage could this be to him, seeing the very devils believed it also? Nay, they trembled at the thoughts of the omnipotent power and righteous vengeance of the one living and true God; yet they continued implacably to hate his perfections, government, cause, and service. If any man therefore believed all the truths of the Gospel in the same manner, with the utmost exactness, he could not know them more accurately, or assent to them with greater certainty, than devils did. Would not then the vain antinomian disputer be at length convinced by the testimony of an apostle, and such irrefragable arguments, that faith without works was dead, worthless, and useless; like a dead tree, fit only to be cut down and cast into the fire; or a dead corpse, to be buried out of sight, that its putrefaction might not annoy the living? It is vain to say, as some have done, that devils are not under a dispensation of mercy, and therefore they have no ground for *appropriating* the revelation and promise of salvation to themselves. For the apostle is not speaking of the different circumstances of fallen angels and fallen men, but of the difference between dead, inactive, inefficient faith, and that “faith which worketh by love;” and his argument proves, beyond all doubt, that a faith, which is of no better kind than that of the devils, cannot possibly profit the possessor, however he may be circumstanced; for this plain reason, because it is not that faith to which the promises are made.

V. 21—26. The apostle next proved his assertion by examples. Was not Abraham, the father of the Israelites, and *spiritually* of believers, justified by works, when, at God's command, he did not hesitate to offer his beloved Isaac for a burnt-offering? (*Notes*, &c. *Gen.* xxii. *Heb.* xi. 17—19.) Did not his works evidence the reality and holy efficacy of his faith, and prove him accepted before God? The attentive reader must see in what a powerful manner his faith in the promises of God operated to produce good works, in obedience to his commands, in the most trying circumstances, universally, and without reserve; and thus “by works was his faith made perfect,” as the tree is in its perfect state when grown to maturity, and loaded on every branch with abundance of valuable fruit. Thus the scripture was fulfilled, which declared that “Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness;” in consequence of which he was admitted to such a state of peace and intimate communion with God, that he was honoured with the privileges and appellation of his “friend.” (*Marg. Ref.*) Abraham's justification by faith took place many years before he was commanded to sacrifice Isaac; but his obedience in that respect proved him to be a sound character, and justified him as a true believer, and a devoted servant of God. So that it was evident there was a good and important sense, in which “a man was justified by works, and not by faith only,” as his works must be appealed to for the justification of his professed faith before men; and as they will be adduced

CHAP. III

A caution against an assuming and aspiring conduct, 1, 2. *The fatal effects of an unbridled tongue, and the difficulty and duty of governing the tongue,* 3—12. *The nature and effects of earthly and heavenly wisdom contrasted,* 13—18.

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before the tribunal of God to distinguish true believers from hypocrites; nor will faith justify any man before God, who is not thus justified before the world by his works also. Not that this will be a second justification by works in the sense for which many contend, as the merits of Christ, depended on by living faith, can alone justify a sinner before God from first to last; but the good works of the true believer, from the time when he received Christ to that of his death, how long or how short soever that space may be, will suffice to distinguish his living faith from the dead faith of mere professors, to *justify* him against every charge of hypocrisy, and to prove him entitled "to the gift of God, even eternal life through Jesus Christ." In like manner, even Rahab, who had been a harlot, was justified by works, when her faith wrought by love to the people of the Lord, and she entertained the messengers and dismissed them in peace, at the hazard of her life, (*Notes, Josh.* ii. *Heb.* xi. 31.) for this conduct proved her faith to be living and influential; it showed that she did indeed believe with her heart, and not merely by an inefficacious assent of the understanding. For as the human body, when destitute of the spirit or soul, is a mere dead corpse, without motion or activity, however exactly formed in every part, and thus differs essentially from a living man; even so faith, without works, is a dead carcass, not only worthless, but polluting and offensive. It is unnecessary to use further arguments to prove the consistency of James' doctrine with that of the apostle Paul. St. Paul evidently meant that faith alone interested a sinner in the mercy of God, through the merits of Christ, for justification; but the faith, of which he spake, wrought by love constraining to obedience, and was connected with a new creation unto holiness. St. James meant that no faith, which was not productive of good works, could justify a man before God: that a speculative assent, or an indolent reliance, separate from repentance, diligence in the use of appointed means, and holy obedience, was dead and unprofitable; and that, consequently, there was a sound sense, in which a man might be said to be justified by his works, and in perfect consistency with "his faith being imputed to him for righteousness," as in the case of Abraham. But St. Paul opposed those who objected to the doctrine of justification by faith, and St. James wrote against such as perverted it. Both views of the subject are useful to the humble, upright, and attentive; but the Lord sees good, that the self-wise, the proud, the heedless, and the licentious, should have somewhat to cavil at and stumble over. Indeed, the same interpretation, which is necessary to render one part of these verses consistent with another, at the same time renders them consistent with the doctrine of St. Paul concerning justification by faith. (23.) 'It is a different thing to say that the faith which is without works is dead, from saying that faith is dead without works; as if faith derived its *life* and *power* from works, which is not less absurd, than if we should say that the body is dead without sense and motion, as if sense and motion were the cause of life; when we should say that the body, which is without sense and motion, is dead; for the cause is understood from the necessary effects, and works are the evidences and effects of living faith, and not the cause of it.' (*Beza.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

The Lord Jesus is the true Fountain of honour, and they are the most honourable who best serve him and most resemble him, whatever their external rank or appearance may be. But how difficult is it for us to divest ourselves of carnal reasonings and corrupt prejudices in such matters! and to give decent respect to superiors, without a partial regard to the affluence and splendour, which too often are the appendages, or heralds, of vice and folly. But if this does not become the disciple of the lowly Jesus, it is still more criminal to treat the poor with contempt, because of their mean garments and indigent circumstances, when perhaps they are adorned with wisdom and grace, angels delight in ministering to them, and Christ rejoices over them to do them good. We should watch and pray against so corrupt a judgment, and such evil thoughts, in all cases, but especially in the worship of God, before whom the rich and the poor meet together, and are regarded entirely according to their characters, and not in the least according to their rank. It is greatly to be desired, that every degree or appearance of the evil here reproved could be removed from our congregations, and that we should more constantly remember that "God hath chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to those who love him." The poor should hence learn to seek these riches and honours, and the assurance of them, with increasing earnestness; to be contented in their low estate, to rejoice in their spiritual privileges, to be cheerful in the humble duties of their station, to be thankful for their advantages, and to pray for their rich neighbours, that they may not be put off with a perishing inheritance. The rich also should learn to rejoice with trembling in their perilous pre-eminence, not to trust in their earthly treasures, and not to despise their poor brethren, but to seek the true riches, and to improve their talents with a constant recollection of the time when they must give an account of their stewardship. For soon the condition of the wealthy oppressor, persecutor, and blasphemer of Christ, and that of the poor despised believer, will be reversed, when the latter will be comforted, and the former tormented, for evermore. (*Notes, Luke* xvi. 19—31.)

V. 8—13.

We should in all things observe and endeavour to fulfil the royal law of loving our neighbours as ourselves; but if

MY brethren, [a] be not many masters, [b] knowing that we shall receive the greater * condemnation.

a Mal. ii. 12. Matt. x. 24. xxiii. 8—10. Matt. ix. 11. John iii. 10. Acts xiii. 1. Rom. ii 20, 21. 1 Cor xii. 28 Eph iv. 11 1 Tim. ii 7. 2 Tim. i. 11. *Gr.*——b Lev. x 3. Ez. iii 17, 18 xxxiii. 7—9. Luke xii. 47, 48 xvi. 2 Acts xx 26, 27. 1 Cor. iv 2—5. 2 Cor. v. 10 Heb. xiii. 17.——* Or, *judgment.* Matt. vii. 1, 2. xxiii. 14. 1 Cor. xi 29—32. *Gr.*

2 For [c] in many things we offend all. [d] If any man offend not in word, the same *is* [e] a perfect man, *and* able also [f] to bridle the whole body.

c 1 Kings viii 46 2 Chr. vi. 36. Prov xx. 9. Ec vii 20. Is lxiv. 6. Rom iii. 19. vii. 21. Gal. iii. 22. v 17. 1 John i. 8—10.

d 5, 6. *See on,* i. 26. Ps. xxxiv. 13. 1 Pet. iii. 10.——e *See on,* i. 4 Col. i 28 iv. 12. Heb xiii. 21. 1 Pet v. 10.——f 1 Cor. ix. 27.

we have respect of persons, we commit sin and are convicted as transgressors, even though we be not guilty of any gross violation of justice and truth. If our obedience be sincere, it will be universal, as far as we are acquainted with our Lord's will, for the same authority is affronted whatever command is broken. In vain do men urge that they are not under the law, whilst they allow themselves in known sin; the very Gospel will consign them over to the righteous vengeance of God, and all the curses of the law will be executed upon them, with a tremendous increase of punishment, for having "sinned on that grace might abound." But the hard-hearted, selfish, implacapable, and oppressive professor of Christianity, has the greatest cause to tremble; for if "he shall have judgment without mercy, who hath showed no mercy," the meanest slave, that ever was whipped and worked to death, must be considered as happy, compared with his haughty cruel tyrant; and this will sufficiently appear, "when the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

V. 14—26.

Vain men, while neglecting judgment, mercy, and the love of God, quiet their conscience, and ward off reproof, by talking of faith, of mercy, of salvation; but God will no more regard their heartless assent to truth, or their indolent presumptuous reliance on his mercy, than their hollow expressions of love to their poor destitute neighbours. Let no man deceive himself: faith, being alone and not productive of good works, is no better than the faith of devils, and will leave the possessor in their company to all eternity. Would we be, with Abraham, "the friends of God," we must both believe his promise, trust his mercy, and obey his commandment; or else publicans and harlots will enter heaven before us: and a believing Rahab shall be justified by her works, and distinguished from all open unbelievers, and those whose faith was dead, before the assembled world, when many disputers for orthodox creeds, which they have disgraced by their lives, shall have their portion with the workers of iniquity, "in outer darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth."

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1, 2. The word, here rendered "masters," signifies *teachers:* some ought to be teachers but none ought to domineer, assume authority in the Church, or indulge a censorious arrogant temper. 'When the apostle forbids many to be such, he seems to allow that *some* may; and consequently I think "teachers" ought to be explained in an innocent sense.' (*Doddridge.*) An arrogant, self-preferring, dictatorial temper, whether it led men, without a proper call or suitable qualifications, to aspire to the office of teachers, or whether it induced them to assume pre-eminence in other ways, was the general object of the apostle's reprehension; though the former, as the effect of such a temper, seems to have been principally intended. Many converts to Christianity would be desirous of the distinction of teachers, with a view to the credit and pre-eminence of that office, or from a mistaken idea that they could not glorify God, and do good to man, in other stations; while perhaps they were not aware of the weight and difficulty of the work, and the solemn account which must be given of it. But they ought to know, and seriously consider, that teachers must stand a greater or more strict judgment than other men, and that false, unfaithful, ambitious, and selfish teachers, would be subject to a greater and more awful condemnation than other sinners. This is also in a degree applicable to the case of censorious, assuming, and domineering persons in any station. (*Notes, Matt.* vii. 1—6. *Luke* vi. 37, 38.) Indeed, even true believers, though preserved from final condemnation, if employed as teachers, must expect to be called to a more strict account than their brethren; and as their conduct would be more severely scrutinized by men than that of others, so they would be more sharply rebuked and chastened by God for their offences, in order to the display of his glory, and the prevention of scandals in the Church; so that every attempt to force themselves into eminent and conspicuous stations, would ensure a larger measure of painful and mortifying trials. (*Note* 1 *Cor.* xi. 31—34.) Nor could any man expect to behave so as to escape correction or condemnation; for in many things all offended, without excepting the apostles themselves; all frequently tripped or stumbled in their walk, though they did not utterly fall; and the more men were advanced and distinguished, the greater would be their dangers, the more noticed their transgressions, and the more needful their rebukes and chastisements. Especially it would be found extremely difficult for them to speak so much, and so often, as the public and private duties of the ministry required, without often uttering unadvised words, dishonourable to God, injurious to men, or the result of pride, anger, or some selfish passion. So that idle and evil words must be multiplied, in consequence of men's improperly entering into the pastoral office; nor could any wholly escape this guilt; though such as were duly called to the service might expect proportionable grace and mercy. (*Notes, Is.* vi. 5—8. *Matt.* xii. 34—37.) If indeed any man were able to bridle his tongue, so as not at all to offend in his words, he must be a perfect man, able also to govern, restrain, and use all the appetites, senses, and members of his body, "as instruments of righteousness," in subserviency to the glory of God and in obedience to his will, seeing he was found able to govern the most unruly of them all. (i. 26.) No man actually attained to this absolute perfection; for in many things all offended; but the degree of a man's wisdom and grace might be ascertained, by the measure in which he was enabled to govern his tongue: so that, if nothing in principle or practice proved the contrary, he, who most avoided all improper

3 Behold, [g] we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body.

4 Behold also the ships, which though they *be* so great, and [h] *are* driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.

5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and [i] boasteth great things. Behold, how great a * matter a little fire kindleth!

6 And [k] the tongue *is* a fire, [l] a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the † course of nature; and [m] it is set on fire of hell.

7 For every † kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, [n] is tamed, and hath been tamed of § mankind.

8 But the tongue can no man tame: *it is* [o] an unruly evil, [p] full of deadly poison.

9 [q] Therewith [r] bless we God, even the Father; and [s] therewith curse we men, which are [t] made after the similitude of God.

10 Out [u] of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, [x] these things ought not so to be.

11 Doth a fountain send forth at the same || place sweet *water* and bitter?

12 Can [y] the fig-tree, my brethren, bear olive-berries? either a vine, figs? [z] so *can* no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

g i. 26. 2 Kings xix. 28. Ps. xxxii 9. xxxix. 1. Is. xxxvii. 29.
h Ps. cvii. 25—27. Jon. i. 4. Matt. viii. 24 Acts xxvii. 14, &c.
i Ex v. 2. xv. 9. 2 Kings xix 22—24. Job xxi. 14, 15. xxii. 17. Ps. x. 3. xii. 2—4. xvii 10 lii. 1, 2. lxxiii 8,9. Prov. xii. 18. xviii. 21. Jer. ix 3—8 xviii. 18. Ez xxviii. 2 xxix. 3 Dan. iii. 15. iv. 30. 2 Pet. ii. 18. Jude 16. Rev. xiii 5, 6.
* Or, *wood.*
k Judg. xii. 4—6. 2 Sam. xix 43. xx. 1. 2 Chr. x. 13—16. xiii. 17. Ps. lxiv. 3. cxl. 3. Prov. xv. 1. xvi. 27. xxvi 20, 21. Is. xxx. 27.
l ii. 7. Gen. iii. 4—6. Lev. xxiv. 11. Num xxv 2. xxxi. 16. Deut. xiii. 6. Judg xvi. 15—20. 1 Sam. xxii. 9—17. 2 Sam. xiii. 26—29. xv. 2—6. xvi. 20—23 xvii. 1, 2. 1 Kings xxi 5—15 Prov. i. 10—14. vi. 19. vii. 5. 21. viii. 21—23. Ec. vii. 5, 6. 17. Jer. xx. 10. xxviii 16. Matt. xii. 24 32—36. xv. 18, 19. Mark vii. 20—22 xiv. 55—57. Acts vi. 13. xx. 30. Rom. iii. 13, 14 xvi. 17, 18. Eph. v. 3, 4 Col. iii. 8, 9 2 Thes. ii. 10—12. Tit. i. 11. 2 Pet. ii 1, 2. iii. 3. 3 John 10. Jude 2—10. 15—18 Rev ii 14, 15 xiii. 1—5. 14. xviii. 23 xix. 20
† Gr *wheel.* Ez i. 15, 16.
m Luke xvi. 24. Acts v 3. 2 Cor. xi. 14—16. 2 Thes. ii. 9. Rev. xii. 9
‡ Gr. *nature.*
n Mark v. 4. *Gr.*
§ Gr. *the nature of man.*
o *See on,* 6. Ps. lv. 21. lvii. 4. lix. 7. lxiv. 3, 4.
p Deut xxxii. 33. Ps. lviii. 4. cxl. 3 Ec. x. 11. Rom. iii. 13. Rev. xii. 9.
q Ps. xvi. 9. xxx. 12. xxxv. 28 li. 14. lvii. 8. lxii. 4. lxxi. 24. cviii. 1. Acts ii. 26.
r 1 Chr. xxix 10. 20. Ps. xxxiv. 1. lxiii. 4 cxlv. 1. 21. Is. xxix 13. Eph. i. 3. 1 Pet. i. 3.
s Judg. ix 27. 2 Sam. xvi. 5. xix. 21 Ps. x. 7. lix. 12. cix. 17, 18 Ec. vii. 22. Matt v. 44. xxvi. 74. Rom. iii. 14.
t Gen i. 26, 27. ix. 6 1 Cor. xi. 7.
u Ps. l. 16—20. Jer. vii. 4—10. Mic. iii. 11. Rom. xii 14. 1 Pet. iii. 9.
x Gen. xx. 9. 2 Sam xiii. 12. 1 Cor. iii. 3. 1 Tim. v. 13.
|| Or, *hole*
y Is. v. 2—4 Jer. ii. 21. Matt. vii 16—20 xii 33. Luke vi. 43, 44 Rom. xi. 16—18.
z Ex. xv. 23—25 2 Kings ii. 19—22. Ez. xlvii. 8—11.

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words, and spake most to the glory of God and the edification of men, must be deemed the most eminent Christian: whereas falehood, boastings, revilings, and corrupt conversation, brought a man's character into suspicion or disrepute, whatever else seemed to be good in it. The Jews at that time, even when grossly ignorant and vicious, were exceedingly prone to consider themselves as called and qualified to be the religious teachers of mankind; (*Rom.* ii. 17—21:) and, probably, the apostle saw, that many of the Jewish converts to Christianity were influenced, by the remains of the same disposition, to aspire prematurely, from questionable motives, or without proper qualifications and weight of character, to the office of teachers or ministers, which he counted it needful thus to repress.—The word, rendered *condemnation*, means *judgment*, in many places at least. (*Matt.* vii. 2 *Acts* xxiv. 25. *Rom.* v. 16. 1 *Cor.* xi. 29. 32. *Gr.*)

V. 3—6. To show the importance of the subject, the apostle observed, that the estimate must not be made according to appearance, but by the effect. The horse, though a powerful and spirited animal, might be directed by the bit in his mouth according to the will of the rider, and his whole body followed that guidance; whereas, if that were omitted, great danger and mischief would ensue; and the ships, though of vast bulk, and driven by violent winds on the impetuous ocean, might be directed by a very small helm according to the motion of the pilot's hand. Even so the tongue, though a little member, boasted and gloried of being able to do great things: when properly bridled and directed, it could produce the most blessed effects, but if neglected, the most fatal consequences must follow. For let any man consider how vast a quantity of fuel a small match, or even a spark of fire, would suffice to kindle, and what tremendous conflagrations might follow; and hence learn the importance of the tongue; which is, in fact, a fire to destroy all before it, and a world of iniquity, comprehending, in the abuse of it, all the wickedness of the universe, in miniature, or rather in embryo. Its situation and office among the members is such, that it defileth the whole body, and inflames or gives vent to all those corrupt passions, by which men are instigated to commit the several vices, of which the other members are the instruments. Nay, it setteth on fire the whole circle of nature, through every generation, and produces the most extensive and prolific mischiefs all over the earth; being indeed set on fire of hell; as the devil, working on the various lusts of man's apostate nature, and exciting men to vent their abominable thoughts by their tongues, disseminates from one to another, all over the earth, atheism, infidelity, heresies, blasphemies, impiety, lies, slanders, emulations, lewdness, and discords, whence all kinds and degrees of atrocious and destructive crimes proceed. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 7—12. Every kind, or nature, of living creatures, however monstrous, ravenous, fierce, or venomous, has been and is *subdued* by the reason, courage, and persevering efforts, of the human species, by which means the mischiefs, which otherwise would have been occasioned by them, are in a great measure prevented; but no man could ever find out a way to subdue the tongue, or to hinder wicked men from corrupting the principles, polluting the imaginations, and inflaming the passions of others, by their mischievous discourse. No one, however wise, powerful or excellent, has ever been able, by laws, punishments, arguments, or any other method, to stop the progress of this evil, which effects far more tremendous desolations, in communities, churches, and families, and does far more to make men miserable, here and hereafter, than all the venomous and voracious creatures in the world combined together can do. The word, rendered *tamed* properly means *subdued*. It could scarcely be said that all, kinds of sea-monsters, crocodiles, and serpents, had been *tamed*, or rendered tractable, by men; but they have all been brought under subjection in one way or anoth

13 Who [a] *is* a wise man and [b] endued with knowledge among you? [c] let him shew out of [d] a good conversation his works [e] with meekness of wisdom.

14 But [f] if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, [g] glory not, [h] and lie not against the truth.

15 This [i] wisdom descendeth not from above, [k] but *is* earthly, * sensual, [l] devilish.

a 1. Ec. viii. 1. 5. Jer. ix. 12. 23. Matt. vii 24 1 Cor vi. 5.
b 2 Chr. ii. 12, 13. Job xxviii. 28. Is. xi. 8. Dan ii. 21.
c ii. 18. Is lx. 6. 2 Cor. viii 24. 1 Pet. ii. 9
d Phil. i. 27. 1 Tim. iv. 12 Heb. xiii. 5. 1 Pet ii 12. iii. 1, 2 16
e 17. i. 21. Num. xii 3. Ps xxv. 9. xlv 4 cxlix. 4 Is. xi. 4 xxix. 19. lxi. 1. Zeph. ii. 3. Matt. v. 5 xi. 29. xxi. 5. 2Cor. x. 1 Gal. v. 23 vi 1. Eph. iv. 2. Col. iii 12. 1 Tim. vi. 11. 2 Tim. ii. 25. Tit iii. 2. 1 Pet iii 4 15.
f 16. iv. 1 5 Gen. xxx. 1, 2 xxxvii. 11 Job v. 2. Prov. xiv 30. xxvii. 4. Is xi. 13. Hab. i. 3. Matt. xxvii. 18. Acts v. 17. vii 9. xiii. 45. Rom. i. 29. xiii. 13. 1 Cor iii. 3. xiii. 4 2 Cor. xii. 20 Gal. v. 15. 21. 26. Phil. i. 15. ii. 3. 1 Tim. vi. 4. Tit. iii 3. 1 Pet ii. 1, 2.
g Rom. ii. 17, &c. 1 Cor. iv. 7, 8. v. 2. 6. Gal. vi. 13.——h 2 Kings x. 16 31. John xvi. 2. Acts xxvi 9.——i 17. i 5. 17. John iii. 27.——k 2 Sam. xiii. 3. xv 31. xvi 23 Jer. iv. 22. Luke xvi 8. Rom. i. 22. 1 Cor. i. 19, 20 27. ii. 6, 7. iii. 19. 2 Cor. i. 12. Jude 19.
* Or, *natural*. 1 Cor. ii. 14.——l Gen. iii. 1—5. John viii. 44. Acts xiii. 10. 2 Cor. xi. 13—15. 1 John iii. 8—10 Rev. ix. 11. xii. 9, 10.

18 For [m] where envying and strife *is*, [n] there *is* † confusion and [o] every evil work.

17 But [p] the wisdom that is from above is [q] first pure, then [r] peaceable, [s] gentle, *and* easy to be entreated, [t] full of mercy and good fruits, [u] without ‡ partiality, and without [x] hypocrisy.

18 And [y] the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that [k] make peace.

m *See on*, 14.
n Gen. xi. 9. *Marg* Acts xix. 29. 1 Cor. xiv. 33.
† Gr *tumult*, or, *unqietness*.
o 1 John iii. 12.
p 15. i 5 17. Gen. xli. 38, 39 Ex. xxxvi. 2. 1 Kings iii. 9 12 28. 1 Chr. xxii. 12. Job xxviii. 12 23. 28. Prov. ii. 6 Is. xi. 2, 3. Dan. i. 17. Luke xxi. 15. 1 Cor ii. 6, 7. xii. 8.
q iv. 8. Mal. iii. 3. Matt. v. 8. Phil. iv. 8. Tit i. 15. 1 John iii. 3.
r 1 Chr xxii. 9 *Marg*. Is ii. 4. ix. 6. 7. xi. 2—9. xxxii. 15—17. Rom. xii. 18.——s Is. xl 11. 1 Cor xiii. 4—7. 2 Cor. x. 1. Gal. v. 22, 23. Eph. v. 9. 1 Thes. ii. 7. 2 Tim. ii. 24. Tit. iii. 2——t John i. 14. Acts ix. 36. xi 24. Rom. xv 14. 2 Cor. ix. 10. Phil. i. 11. Col. i 10.——u ii. 4. Mal. ii. 9. 1 Tim v. 21.——‡ Or, *wrangling*.——x Is. xxxii. 6. Matt xxiii 28. Luke xii. 1, 2. John i. 47.——y i. 20. Prov. xi. 28. 30. Is. xxxii. 16, 17. John iv. 36.——z Matt. v. 9.

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whereas no efforts could ever prevent the malignant effects of the unbridled tongues of ungodly men; for the tongue is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison, the chief instrument by which the desperate wickedness of men's hearts is propagated to poison the principles, and inflame the corruptions of multitudes around them. With the tongue, indeed, true Christians blessed and praised God, according to the honourable use for which it had been created, and many did this outwardly, who were destitute of true piety; yet with this same member some of them slandered, reviled, anathematized, and imprecated vengeance on other men, from the malignity and pride of their hearts, though men were first created after the image of God, still retained his natural image, and were capable of being renewed to a conformity to his holiness! So that out of the same mouth the language of love, gratitude, and adoration of God, and that of enmity and rancour against men, proceeded!—Some might pretend that they thus vented their indignation against opposers of the Gospel from zeal for the truth, and against error; but these things ought not by any means to be so, and every Christian, who acted in such a manner, belied his profession, and yielded to the suggestions of Satan and to his own corrupt passions. Indeed, it was an absurdity which could not be paralleled; for no fountain from the same *opening* sent forth water, sometimes sweet, at others bitter; sometimes fresh, and at others salt, and every plant produced uniformly its natural fruit, and no other. But pious, pure, loving, candid, sincere, humble, and edifying language was the genuine produce of a sanctified heart, and none, who understood Christianity, would expect to hear curses, lies, boastings, and revilings, from a believer's mouth, any more than they would look for figs upon a vine, or olive-berries on a fig-tree. (*Marg. Ref.*)—*Curse*, &c. (9.) 'Perhaps the 'apostle in this glanced at the unconverted Jews, who 'often cursed the Christians bitterly in their synagogues.' (*Macknight.*)

V. 13—16. The apostle had rather digressed from his subject, but he was showing the consequences of an assuming temper and an improper desire to be teachers. If, therefore, any of those, into whose hands this epistle might come, were, or desired to be thought, persons of superior wisdom and capacity, and endued with much knowledge of the Gospel, let them not think themselves buried in a private or obscure station, or indulge a proud, aspiring, and discontented spirit; but let them show forth by the general tenour of a good conversation, in the several relations and employments of life, their works of piety, equity, purity, and mercy, "in meekness of wisdom," exercising that prudence which is characterized by a meek and quiet spirit, and inseparably connected with it, and with a readiness to forgive and to be at peace with all men. (*Notes, 2 Tim.* ii. 24—26.) But if any of them indulged bitter envyings, or proud, fierce, and malevolent zeal for their party or sentiments, in their hearts, and so rivalled others for pre-eminence, reputation, or authority, as to censure, revile, and calumniate them in a vehement and malignant manner, and to take pleasure in contending and quarreling with such as differed from them, let them not absurdly glory in these tempers and behaviour, as if they arose from extraordinary zeal, boldness, or faithfulness; neither let them defame the truth, by pretending that such were the necessary effects of embracing, professing, and earnestly defending it, or that those were lukewarm, who did not dispute for it in this violent manner. For this wisdom, though it would have numbers of injudicious admirers, even among apparently religious people, did not descend from above, (i. 5,) but was "earthly," as it sought earthly distinctions and advantages, and was of an earthly origin; it was also "natural," the result of such principles as unregenerate men are actuated by; and it was "devilish," being at first derived from the devil, and constituting the image of his pride, ambition, policy, sagacity, envy, malignity, and falsehood. The word, rendered *sensual*, is elsewhere translated *natural*, and I apprehend it should be so rendered in this place; for it seems rather to relate to man's natural depravity in general, than to his sensuality in particular, to which ambitious disputants are commonly less addicted than to malignant passions. (*Note*, 1 *Cor.* ii. 14—16.)—The apostle added, that where envy and strife are found, there is of course confusion and every evil work; for those passions, when given loose to by one man, are excited in others, till churches, communities, and families, are thrown into confusion, and all species of crimes are perpetrated, whilst men are blinded and hurried on by their violent resentments and prejudices.

V. 17, 18. On the contrary, "the wisdom which is "from above," even that wisdom, which God gives to his people in answer to their humble and believing prayers, "is first pure," in respect of its objects, motives, and ten-

CHAP. IV.

Wars and contentions spring from the lusts of the human heart, which produce the most fatal effects, and end in disappointment, 1, 2; *because men do not seek good gifts from God; or because they ask amiss,* 3. *The friendship of the world is enmity against God,* 4. *The spirit that is in us lusts to envy and pride; but God resists the proud, and shows favour to the humble,* 5, 6. *Exhortations to repentance, and submission to God,* 7—10. *Cautions against detraction and censoriousness, and against carnal security; with instructions to consider the uncertainty of life, and to trust in God in every undertaking,* 11—17.

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dency; it relates to the holy and purifying truths and precepts of scripture, and tends to holiness of heart, language and conduct. As far as it can consist with this, and with steadily avowing the truths, and obeying the commandments of God our Saviour, this wisdom is peaceable; the possessor of it is disposed to give up every thing for peace, except truth and duty, and these he will firmly adhere to, but in a peaceable and loving manner It is also gentle, and influences men to be slow to anger, candid, calm, forbearing and courteous. Moreover, it is easy to be entreated, and persuaded to what is reasonable, or forgiving, and to listen to the words of truth and equity, though spoken by an inferior, a child, or an enemy; and it is full of mercy, compassion, tenderness, and all good fruits. (*Note, Gal.* v. 22, 23.) It is likewise "without partiality," in judging of persons or actions, free from bigotry for one party or against another, and from contending for one part of religion, to the neglect and disparagement of others, or producing that partiality to the rich, and that prejudice against the poor, which the apostle had before reproved, (*Notes,* ii. 1—6.) Finally, it is free from hypocrisy, leading a man to a greater regard to the acceptance of God, than to the good opinion of men. (*Notes,* &c. 1 *Cor.* xiii.) Heavenly wisdom, according to St. James's description of it, is nearly allied to that love, for which St. Paul contended; and we may observe of both, that they are described as they are in themselves, and that every man may ascertain the reality, or the degree of his attainments in them, by the effects of them on his temper and conduct. For, whatever bigots and zealots may imagine, "the fruit of righteousness," or that good seed whence this blessed fruit grows here on earth, "is sown "in peace;" men of peaceable, loving tempers, preaching the Gospel, adorning it in their lives, and watering it with their prayers, sow the seed, which God blesseth to the conversion of sinners and the propagation of true religion in the world. It is sown in peace, not amidst a great noise and disturbance, and "by those that make peace," who are both peaceable and peace-makers in the church and in the world. (*Note, Matt.* v. 9.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

Did men duly weigh the importance and difficulty of the sacred ministry, the account which must be given of it, and the trials and temptations to which it exposes them, they would be less forward, than they sometimes are, in aspiring to that distinction. Indeed, every conspicuous station must be connected with many painful and mortifying events; and numbers, who intrude into them, will receive the heavier condemnation on that account. If then, the glory of God, the good of mankind, and an evident call in providence, did not require the contrary; a wise and humble man, possessed of much self-knowledge, and knowledge of human nature, and the state of the world and the church, would choose obscurity and privacy, to be out of the way of temptation, to shun the danger of dishonouring the gospel, and to escape trials, as much as this present state will admit. For in many things we offend all: and though a well-informed christian will readily acknowledge, that his rule of duty is perfect, he will also know that *in fact* no man on earth lives up to it. But nothing is more arduous, than the proper government of the tongue; and though the minister, who is satisfied that Christ hath sent him to preach the gospel, will trust in his abundant mercy and all-sufficient grace; yet he will also perceive, that no outward appendages of the work can counterbalance the additional danger of contracting guilt, to which that work exposes him. Facts abundantly prove, that more professed Christians succeed in bridling their senses and appetites, than in duly restraining their tongues: and whilst we contemplate with grief and astonishment the horrible effects produced by this unruly evil, "this world of iniquity, this deadly prison, this "fire that sets the whole course of nature" in a flame, in every part of the earth, and hath done so through all the ages of time; and while we recollect with admiring gratitude and joy, that the Lord makes use of this very member, when he has filled the heart with holy affections, to spread the word of truth and righteousness throughout the earth; let us particularly inquire, what use we make of our tongues. It behooves us to bridle them, that they may obey the dictates of our enlightened understandings and holy affections, as the well-managed horse does the rider; or as the ship is turned by the helm in the hand of the pilot: that neither pride, passion, lust, or levity, nor yet any temptation, may lead us to speak corrupt or unadvised words, or any thing contrary to the glory of God and the edification of men. As no man is able to subdue and tame the tongue, no, not his own tongue, without the help of divine grace; we are reminded to beg of God to do it for us: for "the things, which are impossible with man, are "possible with God." Depending on his grace, let us take heed to bless, and curse not; let us aim at a consistency of conversation and conduct, and see to it that our love to men proves the sincerity of our professed love to God; and that our conduct, out of the place of worship, corresponds with our language and professions in it. For many things *are* even among Christians, that *ought not to be so,* FROM [a] whence *come* wars and *fightings among you? [b] *come they* not hence, *even* of your † lusts that war [c] in your members?

2 Ye [d] lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, [e] because ye ask not.

3 Ye [f] ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that [g] ye may consume *it* upon your ‡ lusts.

a iii. 14—18. * Or, *brawlings.* b i. 14 Gen. iv. 5—8. Jer. xvii 9. Matt. xv. 19 Mark vii. 21—23. John viii. 44. Rom. viii. 7. 1 Tim. vi. 4—10. Tit iii 3. 1 Pet. i 14. ii. 11. iv. 2, 3. 2 Pet. ii. 13. iii. 3. 1 John ii. 15—17 Jude 16—18. † Or, *pleasures.* c Rom vii. 5 23. Gal. v 17. Col. iii. 5. d v. 1. 5. Prov. i 19. Ec. iv. 8. Hab. ii. 5. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10 ——e i. 5. Is. vii. 12. Matt. vii. 7, 8. Luke xi. 9—13 John iv. 10 xvi. 24 ——f i. 6, 7. Job xxvii. 8—10. Ps xviii 41. lxvi. 18, 19. Prov i 28. xv. 8 xxi. 13 27. Is i. 15, 16. Jer. xi. 14 xiv. 12 Mic. iii. 4. Zech. vii. 13. Matt. xx. 22. Mark x. 38. 1 John iii. 22. v. 14.——g Luke xv. 13. 30. xvi. 1, 2.——‡ Or, *pleasures.*

4 Ye [h] adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that [i] the friendship of the world is [k] enmity with God? [l] whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, [m] is the enemy of God.

5 Do ye think that [n] the scripture saith in vain, [o] The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth § to envy?

6 But he giveth more grace: wherefore he saith, [p] God resisteth the proud, but [q] giveth grace unto the humble.

h Ps l. 18. lxxiii. 27, Is. lvii. 3. Jer. ix 3. Hos. iii. 1 Matt. xii. 39 xvi. 4 i John vii. 7. xv. 19. 23. xvii. 14. 1 John ii 15, 16. k Gen. iii. 15. Rom. viii. 7. l Gal. i. 10. m Ps. xxi. 8. Luke xix. 27. John xv 23, 24. Rom v. 10. n John vii. 42. x. 35. xix. 37. Rom. ix. 17. Gal iii 8. o Gen. iv. 5, 6. vi. 5. viii 21. xxvi. 14 xxx 1. xxxvii. 11. Num. xi 29 Ps. xxxvii. 1. cvi. 16 Ec. iv 4. Is. xi 13. Acts vii. 9. Rom. i. 23. Tit. iii. 3.——§ Or, *enviously* ——p Ex. x 3, 4. xv. 9, 10. xviii. 11 1 Sam. ii. 3. Job xl. 10—12 Ps cxxxviii 6. Prov. iii. 34. vi 16, 17 xxix. 23. Is. ii. 11. 12. 17. x. 8—14 xvi. 6, 7 Dan. vi. 37 v. 20—23. Matt. xxiii. 12 Luke i. 52. xiv. 11. xviii. 14. 1 Pet. v 5.—q 2 Chr xxxii. 26. xxxiii. 12. 19. 23. xxxiv 27. Job xxii. 29. Ps ix. 12. Prov. xv. 33. xviii 12. xxii. 4. Is. lvii. 15.

V. 13—18.

Instead of seeking the reputation of wisdom and knowledge, by ostentatiously aspiring after pre-eminence, let us be careful to "show out of a good conversation our "works with meekness of wisdom;" avoiding all bitter envyings and strife in our hearts, as well as in our words and actions, not glorying in such things as are indeed a shame to any man, or scandalizing the truth by disgraceful contentions about it. Such wisdom is common enough in the world, and in the visible Church, and it thrives here, being in its proper soil and climate; for it descendeth not from above, but is earthly, natural, and devilish, producing confusion and every evil work. May the Lord then bestow upon us the wisdom which is from above; may the purity, peace, gentleness, docility, and mercy, manifested in all our actions, and the fruits of righteousness abounding in our lives, evince that God hath replenished us with this most excellent gift! May we avoid all partiality, respect of persons, narrow prejudices, and a half religion, as well as hypocrisy; and, in our words and works, be employed as peace-makers, to sow that good seed, which yields the fruits of righteousness on earth, to the glory of God and the salvation of men.

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1—3. The apostle is generally supposed in this place, to have addressed the unconverted Jews, to whose conduct his language is peculiarly applicable, according to the history of those times. Indeed, we can scarcely conceive that persons, continuing members of the Christian Church at so early a period, were guilty of the enormities here mentioned, though the passage is applicable enough to nominal Christians in subsequent ages. But the apostle seems to have cautioned his Christian brethren against envy, strife, and ambition, which gained ground within the Church, by the example of their nation, and the still more tremendous effects which sprang from the same cause among them. He, however, employed such language, as would be a direct and pointed address to those Jews that might happen to read his epistle, when he inquired, "whence wars and fightings" among them originated; seeing the nation was divided against itself, and was split into parties, which destroyed each other by most furious contests, while their continual insurrections were drawing down destruction on them from the Roman power. Did not these calamities arise from their *lusts*, or their *pleasures?* that is, from those corrupt passions which they sought their pleasure in gratifying? These lusts warred in their members; either the members of the corrupt nature, the old Adam, in which one lust warred against another, as all could not be gratified, and each strove for the mastery; or their carnal passions, working within, and overcoming the feeble resistance of reason and conscience, made use of the members of the body as weapons or instruments of unrighteousness, for perpetrating their criminal purposes. They lusted after, and eagerly craved, worldly prosperity, and the several things connected with it, but they did not possess them; and, in consequence of this disappointment, they were ready to murder, or actually did murder, such persons as stood in their way, yet they could not after all obtain the advantages which they so inordinately coveted; this, therefore, rendered them still more violent, and intestine discords and public insurrections were excited; but instead of prospering by them, they were only the more impoverished and distressed, because they sought not the desired benefit from God by prayer. This seems to refer to the eager desires of the Jewish nation after temporal prosperity, and liberty from the Roman yoke, and to the violent and impious measures which they adopted, in order to obtain them; for these things only increased their miseries, and were hastening their destruction, because they trusted not in God. Some of them, however, it might be supposed, kept up the form of religion, and prayed for liberty from their oppressors, and for temporal prosperity; but they did not receive what they asked for, because they asked amiss; their very prayers were dictated by carnal affections, they were presented in a formal manner, and by those who continued to reject their Messiah, vainly expecting a temporal deliverer, whom they would gladly have welcomed. So that they only asked for worldly advantages and possessions, and in order that they might spend and waste them in gratifying their passions.

V. 4—6. The Jews were still the professed worshippers of God, and the nation had been espoused to him by special covenant; idolatry, therefore, and other direct violations of the national covenant, were spiritual adultery; and the rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah was the grossest instance of that crime that could be committed. They

7 [r] Submit yourselves therefore to God. [s] Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

8 [t] Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. [u] Cleanse *your* hands, *ye* sinners; and [x] purify *your* hearts, [y] *ye* double-minded.

9 Be [z] afflicted, and mourn, and weep: [a] let your laughter be turned to mourning, and *your* joy to heaviness.

10 [b] Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and [c] he shall lift you up.

1 Sam. iii. 18. 2 Sam xv. 26. 2 Kings i. 13—15. 2 Chr. xxx. 6. xxxiii. 12, 13. Job i. 21. xl. 3—5 xlii. 1—6 Ps xxxii. 3—5 lxvi 3 lxviii. 30. Jer. xiii. 18 Dan iv 25. 32 34—37. Matt. xi. 29. Acts ix 6. xvi 29—31. xxvi. 19 Rom. x. 3. xiv. 11. Eph. v. 20. Heb. xii. 9. 1 Pet. ii. 13——s Matt iv. 3—11. Luke iv. 2—13 Eph. iv. 27 vi. 11, 12. 1 Pet v. 8, 9. Rev. xii. 9—11.——t Gen xviii. 23. 1 Chr xxviii 9. 2 Chr xv. 2. Ps. lxxiii. 28. cxlv. 18 Is. xxix. 13. lv. 6, 7. Hos. vi 1 2. Zech. i. 3 Mal. iii. 7. Heb. vii. 19 x 22.——u Job ix 30. xvi. 17 xvii. 9. Ps xviii. 20. xxiv. 4 xxvi 6. lxxiii. 13. Is. i. 15, 16. xxxiii 15. Matt. xv. 2. xxvii 24. 1 Tim. ii. 8. 1 Pet. iii. 21.

x Ps. li. 6, 7. 10. Jer. iv. 14 Ez. xviii. 31. xxxvi. 25—27. Matt. xii. 33 xxiii. 25, 26. Luke xi 39, 40. Acts xv. 9. 2 Cor. vii. 1 1 Pet. i. 22. 1 John iii. 3. y *See on*, i 8. z v. 1, 2. Ps cxix. 67. 71. 136. cxxvi. 5, 6. Ec. vii. 2—5. Is. xxii. 12, 13. Jer. xxxi 9. 13 18—20. Ez. vii. 16. xvi 63. Zech. xii. 10, &c. Matt. v. 4. Luke vi. 21 2 Cor. vii. 10, 11.——a Job xxx. 31 Prov. xiv. 13. Ec. ii 2. vii 6. Lam v. 15. Luke vi. 25 xvi. 25 Rev xviii. 7, 8.——b *See on*, 6, 7.——c 1 Sam. ii. 9. Ps. xxvii 6. xxviii. 9 xxx. 1. cxiii. 7. cxlvii. 6 Job xxii. 29.

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moreover idolized worldly interests and pleasures, in the most excessive manner, as if these had been their portion, and religion no further valuable than as it subserved that primary object. It is also probable, that many nominal Christians had renounced, concealed, or belied their profession, from regard to the world, to such a degree as to merit the severe rebuke contained in this address. Both descriptions might justly be called "adulterers and adul-"teresses," in respect of their unfaithfulness to that God, whose professed worshippers they were, though perhaps not guilty of adultery in the common acceptation of the word. And did not they, to whom the oracles of God were committed, know "that the friendship of the world "was enmity with God?" This was so evidently the case, that if any man resolved to live upon friendly terms with the world, he must be the enemy of God. The world, or mankind in general, being under the influence of Satan, and consequently governed by unholy maxims, the result of a carnal judgment and dispositions, the man, who will at any rate be upon good terms with the world, must not profess the truth, attend on the ordinances, or keep the commandments of God, or be zealous for the honour, cause, and Gospel of Christ, in that manner and measure, which every believer is bound to. The friendship of the world, implies an intimate alliance with the determined enemies of God, which no man can maintain, without habitual rebellion against him, to please his enemies. To live in friendship therefore with the world, denotes that a man is carnally-minded, at enmity with God, unregenerate, unpardoned, and unreconciled, whatever his notions, convictions, or professions, have been and are. This must be the case, till Satan, the god and prince of this world, is dethroned, and mankind in general become true Christians. The servants of Christ are indeed friends *to the world*, or to men in general, and desirous in every way of doing them good, far beyond what any other persons are; but they cannot possess the friendship of the world in any measure, without acting contrary to the spirit of their profession. Did then the Jews, or the inconsistent professors of Christianity, suppose that the Scripture spake in vain, without truth or meaning, in all those numerous passages, which describe the ungodliness, selfishness, carnality, pride, and malignity of the human heart, and declare that the spirit, which naturally "dwell-"eth in us, lusteth to envy," or enviously? Since it was evident, from the whole tenour of the Old Testament, that the natural disposition of fallen man, as instigated by Satan, so eagerly covets worldly things, as to envy all those that possess them, and thus prompts to ambition, contention, hatred, fraud, injustice; and that it leads them to envy, or to hate, those who love God, as Cain envied, hated, and murdered his brother Abel. Must not then such persons be enemies to God, his truths, ways, cause, and people? Could they hope to reconcile the friendship of so wicked a world with that of God? Or would they deem themselves his people, whilst evidently under the power of this envious spirit? Some expositors, not finding any text, in the Old Testament, expressly declaring that "the spirit which is in us lusteth to envy," and not satisfied with the general tenour of the Scripture on that point, read the last clause as a separate interrogation; "Do ye think that the Scripture speaketh in vain against "this worldly mindedness? Or doth the Spirit that dwell-"eth in us lust to envy?" That is, doth the Holy Spirit, which dwelleth in all Christians, or that new nature which he createth, produce such fruit? But the meaning is nearly the same. The apostle would further remind them, that God giveth his people more grace, than to leave them slaves to such vile passions: and, having begun to sanctify their hearts, he gives them more and more of the transforming influences of his Holy Spirit, to deliver them gradually from every evil temper, and to make them spiritual in all their affections and dispositions. So that, whilst he fighteth against the proud, the self-sufficient, the ambitious, the scornful and obstinate, the self-willed, the impenitent, and unbelieving; he showeth favour, and communicateth grace, to the humble and lowly, who are supplicants for spiritual blessings at his mercy-seat. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 7—10. From the preceding reproofs and arguments, the apostle took occasion to exhort the unconverted Jews, or nominal Christians, who should read his epistle, to submit themselves to God. For he would certainly fight against the proud, as his peculiar enemies and competitors, till they were either brought to submit to him, or destroyed; and, as he was waiting to be gracious to the humble supplicant, let them be persuaded to submit to his teaching and authority, to own the justice of his judgments and threatenings, to plead guilty, and cast themselves upon his mercy; to resign themselves to his will, and to obey him as his willing subjects. In order to this, it behooved them to resist the devil, and to reject his suggestions, whether immediate or by his agents, which tended to excite their carnal passions, or to prejudice them against his holy salvation and service; for if they resisted the tempter resolutely, in dependence on the grace of God, and opposed to his suggestions the plain truths, promises, instructions, and precepts of Scripture, he would be driven from them by the power of the Lord, and flee away as a vanquished enemy. Let them also draw near to God, as in Christ Jesus, and upon a mercy-seat, by believing prayer, seeking reconciliation to him; and he would draw

11 ¶ [d] Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of *his* brother, [e] and judge thhis brother, [f] speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law; but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the [g] law, but a judge.

12 There is one [h] Lawgiver, who is [i] able to save and to destroy: [k] who art thou that judgest another?

13 [l] Go to now, ye that say, [m] To-day or to-morrow, we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, [n] and buy, and sell, and get gain:

d *See on*, Ps. cxl. 11. Eph. iv. 31. 1 Tim. iii. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 3. Tit. ii. 3. 1 Pet. ii. 1.
e Matt. vii. 1, 2. Luke vi. 37. Rom. ii. 1. xiv. 3, 4. 10—12. 1 Cor. iv. 5.
f Rom. vii. 7. 12, 13.
g i. 22, 23. 25. Rom. ii. 13.
h Is. xxxiii. 22, 23.
i Matt. x. 28. Luke xii. 5. Heb. vii. 25.
k 1 Sam. xxv. 10. Job xxxviii. 2. Rom. ii. 1. ix. 20. xiv. 4. 13.
l v. 1. Gen. xi. 3, 4. 7. Ec. ii. 1. Is. v. 5.
m Prov. xxvii. 1. Is. lvi. 12. Luke xii. 17—20.——n Is. xxiv. 2. lvi. 11. Ez. vii. 12. 1 Cor. vii. 30.

14 Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? * It is even [o] a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

15 For that ye *ought* to say, [p] If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that.

16 But now [q] ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.

17 Therefore to him that [r] knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin.

* Or, *For it is.*
o i. 10. Job vii. 6, 7. ix. 25, 26. xiv. 1, 2. Ps. xxxix. 5. lxxxix. 47. xc. 5—7. cii. 3. Is. xxxviii. 12. 1 Pet. i. 24. iv. 7. 1 John ii. 17.
p 2 Sam. xv. 25, 26. Prov. xix. 21. Lam. iii. 37. Acts xviii. 21. Rom. i. 10. xv. 32. 1 Cor. iv. 19. xvi. 7. Heb. vi. 3.
q iii. 14. Ps. lii. 1, 7. Prov. xxv. 14. xxvii. 1. Is. xlvii. 7, 8. 10. 1 Cor. iv. 7, 8. v. 6. Rev. xviii. 7.
r Luke xii. 47, 48. John ix. 41. xiii. 17. xv. 22. Rom. i. 20, 21. ii. 17—23. vii. 13.

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nigh to them, to support, sanctify, comfort, and bless them. But at the same time, they, who were living ungodly and wickedly, or practising any kind of sin, must cleanse their hands from it, by repenting of it, forsaking it with abhorrence, and renouncing all the carnal pleasure or profit connected with it. (*Note, Is.* i. 10—20. *Marg. Ref.*) Also the double-minded or hypocritical professors, (*Note,* i. 8.) the men, who cleaved to the world and its friendship and interests, neglecting God and his will, must purify their hearts, in dependence on the mercy and grace of the Gospel, from every pollution, that they might be prepared, in the fear and love of God, and by all holy affections, for a life of humble and devoted obedience. Instead therefore of proceeding in a thoughtless course of sin, or a formal and unfruitful profession of Christianity, "let them "be afflicted, and mourn, and weep," on account of the dishonour which their sins had done to God, the mischief which they had occasioned to men, and the danger to which their own souls were exposed; and because of the rebellious ingratitude, contempt, and enmity, of which they had been guilty, especially in their opposition to Christ and his salvation. Their carnal mirth and laughter, as well as their scornful derision of divine things, ought, without delay, to be turned into mourning and godly sorrow, and their worldly joy into heaviness, depression of spirits, self-abasement, brokenness of heart, and serious concern for their souls. For if they humbled themselves inwardly, and in the sight of God, by unfeigned repentance, submission to his righteousness, and acceptance of his salvation, he would certainly lift them up from their dejection, heal their wounded spirits, comfort them with his reconciled love, exalt them to most valuable privileges, and enrich them with everlasting glory and felicity, as well as exempt them from the miseries which were about to come on their nation.

V. 11, 12. The apostle next warned his brethren, or those who professed and appeared to be Christians, to avoid detraction, slander, and uncharitable judgments on each other's motives, actions, characters, or state. As these things were expressly forbidden in the divine law, (*Notes, Ex.* xx. 16. *Lev.* xix. 16—18.) the man, who thus reviled, slandered, or decided against his brethren, did in fact judge and condemn the law itself, as if it were unjust, unnecessary, or unfit to be obeyed. This conduct, therefore, was indeed no less a presumption, than for a man to quit his station as the subject of God, who should be a doer of the law, and to usurp the place of a lawgiver and judge, whose office it was to determine what ought to be commanded, to prescribe to men their conduct, to call them to account for it, and to pass sentence upon the guilty. But there was one Lawgiver, who was fully authorized and qualified to enact laws for his church and for the universe, to enforce them, and to vindicate their obligation and honour; being able to destroy the obstinate transgressor, and to detect the masked hypocrite, as well as to save the humble penitent; and to whom all authority and judgment belonged. Who then was the poor worm, the vile sinner, that, forgetful of his own deserts, dared to usurp the throne of judgment, as if he were the competitor of Christ, and to decide on the actions, and denounce sentence against the persons of his brethren, in a dictatorial manner, and according to his own rules, as if that were his province and duty? (*Notes, Matt.* vii. 1, 2. *Rom.* xiv. 1—13.) Nothing can more completely demonstrate any proposition, than this passage demonstrates that the moral law is the believer's rule of duty, and that every word or action, which dishonours the law, is rebellion, if not blasphemy, against our one Lawgiver and Judge; at the same time that it exposes, in a most striking manner, the wickedness of that presumptuous, rash, and censorious way, in which zealots and bigots condemn and anathematize those who in any respect differ from them, to the immense scandal of the Gospel and disturbance of the church; and this conduct in fact is often connected with antinomian tenets, and is perfectly congenial to them. The coincidence of St. James' exhortation with that of the apostle of the Gentiles, in the fourteenth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, is well worthy our special notice; for it is generally supposed, that James here refers to the same subject, namely, the difference of opinion and conduct between the Jewish and Gentile converts, concerning meats and days and the other ceremonies of the law.

V. 13—17. The apostle here proceeds to reprove and expose the self-sufficiency, worldly spirit, and unbelieving, irreligious language, which were manifested by many, in another way. The expression, "Go to now," or, "Come "now," here implied strong disapprobation, and a call to any one to consider the absurdity or baseness of his conduct. The persons reproved were eager in pursuing

CHAP. V.

Judgments are denounced on the rich and wicked Jews, 1—6. *Christians are exhorted to patience and meekness under their trials, in hope of a speedy deliverance,* 7—11. *A caution against swearing, and an admonition to prayer and praise,* 12, 13. *Instructions concerning the elders visiting the sick,* 14, 15; *and concerning Christians confessing their sins to each other, with prayer for one another; and a declaration of the efficacy of fervent prayer,* 17, 18. *An encouragement to attempt the conversion of sinners, and the recovery of their offending brethren,* 19, 20.

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worldly advantages, pleased with the sagacious plans which they had formed for obtaining them, and sanguine in expecting success; but they neither considered the shortness and uncertainty of life, nor their entire dependence on God in every thing. Thus some would say, 'We shall set out 'to-day, or to-morrow, and go to such a city, where we 'purpose to reside for a year, and by carrying on such or 'such a trade, we expect to enrich ourselves.' Whereas they could not know what might take place respecting them, even on the morrow, or for a single day. (*Notes*, &c. *Prov.* xxvii. 1. *Luke* xii. 13—21.) For indeed what were their lives to be compared unto, but a vapour, or luminous meteor, which, gliding through the air in the night, may perhaps appear beautiful for a moment, but then vanishes for ever? So short, unreal, unsubstantial, uncertain, and fading, was human life, and all the splendour, prosperity, or enjoyments, that attended on it; though an eternity of bliss or wo, to each of them, must be determined according to their conduct during this fleeting moment! They ought therefore to say, with serious recollection, submission to God, and indifference about earthly things, 'If the Lord will, I shall live, and do this 'or that: it is in the line of my duty; and if he spare my 'life, I shall go about it according to his commandments, 'and in dependence on him; and he will succeed the de'sign so far as it is for my real good.' But as the persons reproved "rejoiced in their boastings," concerning the policy of their schemes, and their prospect and confident expectation of success, they must be reminded, that "all "such rejoicing was evil;" the result of a proud, carnal, unbelieving, and ungodly disposition; a self-idolatry, as well as an idolizing of the world, and a forgetfulness of God, of death, and of a future judgment. This *heathen* temper and conduct was less excusable in them than in the Gentiles; for, having the word of God and the instructions of his ministers, they could not but know that they ought to be spiritually minded, and "to acknowledge God in all their ways:" if therefore they knew, in this and other things, what the good and perfect will of God was, and yet did not obey it, their omission would be emphatically sinful, and expose them to severe rebukes or final condemnation. This is a rule universally applicable, and every man ought most carefully to consider it, in respect of sins of omission, which the conscience does not so readily remonstrate against, as it does against those of commission. (*Notes, Luke* xii. 47, 48. *John* xiii. 17.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

All the wars, murders, massacres, persecutions, oppressions, and bloody contests, that ever desolated the earth, or harassed the church, originated from the lusts of man's apostate nature, and the perverse pleasure which he takes in breaking the commandments of God. The carnal affections of the heart having cast off the rule of reason and wisdom, anarchy and civil war takes place in the soul; while one member of the corrupt nature wars against the rest, and they in turns prevail and are gratified; and while the members of the body are the instruments of their pernicious purposes, and obey the dictates of the tyrant of the hour. This being, in one way or another, the case with the unnumbered millions of the human species, (except the remnant of those who are born again,) we need not wonder at the confusion, crimes, and miseries, which have, in every age, abounded in all parts of the world, though we ought to mourn over them. But satisfaction cannot be found in ungodliness, whatever method the carnal mind may select in order to obtain it. In respect of spiritual blessings, it may be said of many, "ye have "not because ye ask not, or because ye ask amiss;" yet all who ask in sincerity will surely receive: and humble, believing prayer is the best means of obtaining all desirable success in temporal things. But if men ask worldly prosperity and affluence, that they may gratify their lusts, and waste the bounty of God in violating his commandments, their requests will either be rejected, or they will receive the things for which they prayed as a scourge, or a curse. Alas! how many nominal Christians might be addressed in the apostle's words, "as adulterers and adulteresses," both literally and spiritually! And yet, how would they be disgusted and enraged, if a minister were to accost them in such language, however justly and scripturally applied! But, in whatever terms the offensive truth be conveyed, we are bound to delare, *most perspicuously*, that "the friend"ship of the world is enmity against God, and that who"soever will be the friend of the world is the enemy of "God." Such a profession of the Gospel, as gives no offence to a world that lieth in wickedness, will leave a man to perish with the enemies of Christ. Let us then endeavour to be friends to mankind, and to do good to all men, and at the same time to disregard the friendship or enmity of the world, to refuse conformity to its vain fashions, to separate from the intimate society of ungodly men, and to profess the truths, and obey the precepts of Christ, without inquiring how far we may do it without incurring reproach, contempt, opprobrious names, or other kinds and degrees of persecution. The envious, ambitious, and aspiring spirit of ungodly men is totally contrary to the Christian temper, and the influences of the Holy Spirit; and "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none "of his." The Lord giveth grace to his people, though

[a] GO to now, [b] *ye* rich men, [c] weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon *you*.

2 [d] Your riches are corrupted, and [e] your garments are moth-eaten.

3 Your gold and silver is [f] cankered; and the rust of them shall be [g] a witness against you, [h] and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. [i] Ye have heaped treasure together for [k] the last days.

4 Behold, [l] the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and [m] the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the [n] Lord of sabaoth.

5 Ye [o] have lived in pleasure on the earth, and [p] been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, [q] as in a day of slaughter.

6 Ye [r] have condemned *and* killed the just; [s] *and* he doth not resist you.

a *See on*, iv. 13. b i. 11. ii 6 Deut. viii 12—14. xxxii. 15. Neh ix. 25, 26. Job xx. 15—29. Ps. xvii. 14. xlix. 7—20. lxxiii. 3—9. 18—20. Prov. xi. 4. 28. Ec v 13, 14. Jer ix. 23 Mic. vi. 12. Matt. xix. 23, 24 Luke vi. 24 xii. 16—21. xvi. 19—25 1 Tim vi 9. 10. Rev. vi. 15—17. c iv 9. Is. xiii. 6. xxii. 12, 13 Jer. iv. 8. Ez. xxx. 2. Joel i 5. 11. 13 Am. vi. 6, 7 Zech. xi. 2. 3. Luke vi. 25. xxiii. 28, 29 ——d Matt. vi. 19, 20 Luke xii 33. 1 Pet. i. 4. e ii. 2. Job xiii 28. Ps. xxxix 11. Is. l. 9. li. 8. Hos. v. 12.——f 2 Tim. ii 17.——g Gen. xxxi. 48. 52. Josh. xxiv 27. Job xvi. 8.——h Jer. xix. 9. Mic. iii. 3 Rev. xvii. 16. xx. 15. xxi 8.——i Deut. xxxii. 33, 34. Job xiv. 16, 17. Rom. ii. 5 ——k *See on*, Gen. xlix. 1. Is. ii. 2. Mic. iv. 1. Acts ii. 17 2 Pet. iii. 3.——l Lev xix. 13 Deut. xxiv. 14, 15. Job xxiv. 10, 11. xxxi. 38, 39. Is. v. 7. Jer. xxii. 13. Hab. ii. 11. Mal. iii. 5.

m Gen iv. 10. Ex. ii. 23 24. iii 9. xxii. 22—24. Job xxxiv 28 Ps ix. 12. xxxv. 9. 12. Luke xviii. 7 n Rom. ix. 29 Is. i. 9 *Heb.* o 1 Sam xxv. 6. 36 Job xxi. 11—15. Ps. xvii. 14 lxxiii. 7 Ec. xi. 9 Is. v 11. 12. xlvii. 8 lvi 12 Am vi 4—6. Luke xvi 19 25. 1 Tim. v. 5. 2 Tim iii. 4. Jude 12 Rev. xviii. 7. p Is. iii 16 Rom. xiii. 13. q Prov. vii. 14. xvii. 1. Is. xxii 13 Ez. xxxix 17. Rev xix 17, 18.——r ii. 6 Matt. xxi. 38 xxiii. 34. 35 xxvii. 20. 24. 25. John xvi. 2, 3 Acts ii. 22, 23. iii. 14, 15. iv 10—12 vii 52. xiii. 27, 28. xxii 14. 1 Thes. ii 15, 16 s iii. 7. Matt. xxvi. 53, 54. Luke xxii. 51—53. John xix 9—11. Acts viii. 32. 1 Pet. ii. 22. 33.

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he often denies them wealth and honour, and he will give more grace to those, who long to have all sin mortified, and their hearts completely sanctified; but he resisteth the proud, as his rivals and personal enemies, while he communicates the blessings of his special favour and grace, exclusively, to the poor in spirit and the broken in heart.

V. 7—17.

If any of our fallen race desire to be happy here and hereafter, let them submit themselves to God, and seek his grace and favour; let them resist the devil and reject his temptations, and he shall flee from them; and let them draw near to God upon his mercy-seat, and he will draw near to save and help them. But repentance must be shown "by works meet for repentance;" the sinner, who comes to God, must cleanse his hands from the allowed practice of every transgression, however secret, gainful, or pleasant to corrupt nature; and the double-minded must cleanse his heart from hypocrisy, partiality, and worldly lusts, earnestly calling upon God to enable him for these things, which would otherwise be entirely impracticable. All sin must be wept over or lamented, either here in godly sorrow, or hereafter in wailing and gnashing of teeth; men may defer this inseparable consequence of wickedness, but they cannot escape it. Well may we then call on the gay triflers around us, to "be af-"flicted, and mourn, and weep," as well as on the haughty and presumptuous, "to humble themselves under the mighty "hand of God, that he may exalt them in due time;" for this is the only road to everlasting honour and felicity; nor will the Lord refuse to comfort one godly mourner for sin, or to exalt one who abases himself before him. But while ministers and Christians, in their several places, protest against ungodliness, impenitence, pride, unbelief, and all iniquity, they should carefully avoid calumniating, reviling, and judging others, or deciding either on their state or conduct, except when their duty to them, or to others, renders it unavoidable. Alas! there are too many professed Christians, who seem openly to quit the place of the Lord's servants and doers of his commandments, to set up for judges, and to prescribe to their fellow-servants, or decide on their eternal state. Such men speak evil of the divine law and defame it, while they vent their own passions under the colour of zeal for the truths of the Gospel. But let us leave them, and all others, to their own Master, remembering that "there is one Lawgiver, "who is able to save and to destroy;" and let us be careful to judge ourselves, that we may not be condemned by him.—Let us also watch against the worldly spirit and conduct so common among professors of the Gospel, who scheme, purpose, and speak, as if they were to live here for ever, as if this were their rest and portion, and as if God were not in all their thoughts. Let us remember, that our life is but "a vapour, that continueth a little while and then "passeth away," just when and as the Lord pleaseth, that the world is full of vexation and disappointment, and that we have nothing to do on earth, but to secure the salvation of our souls, to glorify God, and to serve our generation. Then we shall cordially say, "If the Lord will, we shall "live, and do this or that," and keep at a distance from the self-conceited, and foolish boastings of ungodly men. Let us learn also to reduce all our knowledge to practice, remembering, that in all things, to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin, heinous and aggravated sin.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1—6. The apostle here evidently meant a direct address to the unbelieving Jews, among whom were, in general, the rich and great men of the nation. He wrote but a short time before the destruction of Jerusalem, and those desolations which Christ had predicted, and his disciples expected; and as the more prosperous of his countrymen rejected the Gospel from regard to their worldly interests, and were become most atrociously wicked, he foresaw the speedy termination of all their enjoyments, and the most grievous temporal calamities about to overwhelm them, as well as the event of their crimes in future misery, if they continued unbelieving and impenitent. He, therefore, called on them to come and attend to his words, and to consider the danger of their condition, that they might weep and howl with most doleful lamentations, on account of the complicated miseries that were even then coming upon them. As to their treasures, they would not at all profit them in the day of the Lord's vengeance. (*Notes, Is.* ii. 20. *Zeph.* i. 18. *Matt.* vi. 19, 20.) Their corn, or other perishable goods, which they had avariciously hoarded, were corrupted, or they would be of no more use to them, than if they were entirely decayed. Their costly garments, which

7 * Be [t] patient therefore, brethren, [u] unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, [x] until he receive the early and latter rain.

8 Be [y] ye also patient, [z] stablish your hearts: [a] for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

9 [b] † Grudge not one against another, brethren, [c] lest ye be condemned: behold, [d] the Judge standeth before the door.

10 Take, my brethen, the prophets [e] who have spoken in the name of the Lord, [f] for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.

11 Behold, [g] we count them happy which endure. [h] Ye have heard of the patience of Job, [i] and have seen the end of the Lord; that [k] the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

* Or, *Be long patient*, or, *Suffer with long patience*.

t Luke viii. 15. Rom. ii. 7. viii 24. 25 xv. 4 2 Cor vi 4. 5 Gal. v. 5 vi 9. Col. i 11. 1 Thes. i 3 Heb vi. 15 xii 1–3

u 8, 9. Matt xxiv 27 44. Luke xviii. 8 xxi 27. 1 Cor. i 7. 1 Thes. ii. 19 iii 13 2 Pet iii 4.

x Deut. xi. 14 Jer v 24. Hos. vi. 3 Joel ii 23 Zech x 1.

y Gen. xlix 18 Ps. xxxvii. 7 xl 1–3 cxxx. 5 Lam. iii 25, 26. Mic. vii 7. Hab. ii 3. Rom. viii. 25. Gal v 22. 1 Thes i. 10 2 Thes. iii. 5. Heb. x. 35–37 ——z Ps xxvii. 14.——a 9. Phil. iv. 5. 1 Pet. iv 7.——b Lev. xix. 18. Ps lix. 15 Mark vi. 19. *Marg* 2 Cor ix 7. 1 Pet. iv. 9 ——† Or, *Groan not one against*; or, *grieve not one*. iv. 11. Gal. v. 14 26 ——c Matt. vi. 14, 15 vii. 1, 2

d Gen. iv. 7. Matt. xxiv. 33. 1 Cor. x. 11.

e Is. xxxix. 8 Jer. xxiii. 22. xxvi. 16. Acts iii. 21. Heb. xiii. 7.

f 2 Chr. xxxvi 16. Jer ii 30 Matt. v. 11, 12. xxi. 34–39. xxiii. 34—37. Luke vi. 23. xiii. 34. Acts vii. 52 1 Thes. ii. 14 15 Heb. xi 32–38

g *See on*, i. 12. Ps. xciv. 12 Matt. x. 22. Heb. iii. 6. 14 x. 39.

h Job i 21, 22. ii. 10 xiii. 15, 16. xxiii. 10.——i Job xlii. 10–17. Ps. xxxvii. 37. Ec. vii. 8. 1 Pet. i. 6, 7. 13. 2 Pet ii 9.

k Ex. xxxiv. 6 Num. xiv 18 1 Chr. xxi. 13 2 Chr xxx. 9. Neh. ix. 17. 31. Ps. xxv 6, 7. li. 1. lxxviii. 38 lxxxvi. 5. 15 ciii. 8. 13 cxvi. 5. cxix. 132. cxxxvi. 1, &c. cxlv 8. Is. lv. 6, 7. lxiii 7. 9 Lam. iii 22. Dan. ix. 9. 18, 19. Joel ii. 13. Jon. iv. 2. Mic. vii. 18. Luke i. 50. vi. 36. Rom. ii. 4. Eph. i 6 ii. 4.

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they kept in splendid wardrobes, were consuming by moths, and there was such a curse upon them, that they would soon be of no value. Nay, even their gold and silver, which should have been brightened by circulation, were laid by till they were tarnished, as with rust, and the very appearance of their money would bear witness against their covetousness; whilst, in consequence of heaping it up, their enemies would have the richer plunder; the anguish of having it torn from them would be a torment to their minds, and their guilty consciences would upbraid them with the crimes by which they became rich, and the bad use which they had made of their abundance; so that they would be tortured, as if the rust of their metals were converted into a caustic to burn their flesh like fire. Indeed, with much wickedness and great labour, they had amassed treasures for the last days of their city and nation, when God was about to execute tremendous vengeance upon them for their personal and public iniquities, and when riches would no more profit them than in the hour of death and at the day of judgment, which was in fact to "treasure up wrath against the day of wrath." For, behold, the hire of their poor labourers, who had reaped their harvest, and toiled to increase their wealth, had been fraudulently withholden, and it cried for vengeance from heaven upon them; (*Marg. Ref.*) So that the bitter and loud complaints of the oppressed, against their cruel tyrants, were heard by "the LORD of Sabaoth," or of *armies*, who was about to send the Roman armies to execute his judgments on them for their iniquity. They had indeed lived for a time luxuriously and delicately, and had rioted in sensuality, as cattle in a rich pasture; and the pride and carnality of their hearts had been nourished by prosperity and self-indulgence, as in a day of slaughter when many sacrifices were offered and a great feast was made; or rather, as the ox is fattened for the day of slaughter, and even enjoys his luxuriant pasture securely to that very time. But, above all their other crimes, the Jews had iniquitously condemned and crucified, with the suffrage, as it were, of the whole nation, that "Just One" who had come among them, even Jesus Christ the righteous; they still perpetuated that enormous crime, by persecuting his meek and harmless followers: hitherto he had not resisted them, and they had no pretence for their outrageous enmity and cruelty to him and his disciples. But he was about to come and execute most terrible vengeance upon them.

V. 7—11. After the preceding awful warning and sharp reproof of the wealthy Jews, who were the principal opposers of the Gospel, and peculiarly exposed to the approaching judgments of God, the apostle addressed himself to his poor, afflicted, and persecuted fellow-Christians, whom he exhorted to bear their sufferings with resignation and constant perseverance, till the coming of the Lord. He primarily meant the providential coming of the Lord Jesus, to deliver them from the persecution of the Jewish rulers, and to execute vengeance upon that devoted nation; yet he might intend to lead their thoughts forward to the hour of death, and the coming of Christ to judgment. (*Notes, Matt.* xxiv. xxv.) They might observe, that the husbandman, when he has tilled his ground and sown the seed with great labour and expense, does not reap the harvest immediately, but waits patiently for some months, amidst the fluctuations of the weather, and continually renewing his labour, as occasion requires, till the Lord, on whom the increase entirely depends, is pleased to send the former and the latter rain; (*Marg. Ref.*) and at length the crop ripens, and his toil and waiting are amply compensated by the harvest. Thus ought they to wait, with patient hope and persevering diligence, not yielding to weariness or desponding fears, but stablishing their hearts by faith in the promises of God, against all temptations to draw back or to turn aside; for the time of their waiting would not be long, as in every sense the coming of the Lord approached, and a most glorious and precious harvest would soon amply repay all their losses, hardships, and sufferings. They ought not, therefore, to grudge one another the transient advantages which they possessed, or to give way to envy, discontent, repinings, or resentment, lest the coming of the Lord should be to their condemnation instead of their redemption. For they must carefully observe, that the Judge, even then, as it were, stood before the door, and was about to enter. Very soon would he decide between his true people and mere professors of Christianity, as well as execute vengeance on their enemies; and they ought to prepare for his coming, and leave him to plead their cause, without attempting to avenge themselves, or *groaning* under injuries and distresses, or murmuring for want of such transient benefits, as all temporal possessions must be. Instead therefore of copying the fierce passions of their unbelieving countrymen, who were ready to rage under their calamities like a wild bull in a net, they ought to

12 But [l] above all things, my brethren, [m] swear not; neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: [n] but let your yea, be yea: and *your* nay, nay; [o] lest ye fall into condemnation.

13 Is [p] any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is [q] any merry? [r] let him sing psalms.

l 1 Pet. iv. 8. 3 John 2.
m See on, Matt. v. 33—37. xxiii. 16—22.
n See on, 2 Cor i. 17—20.
o iii. 1, 2. 1 Cor. xi. 34.
p 2 Chr xxxiii. 12, 13. Job xxxiii. 26. Ps xviii 6. l. 15 xci. 15 cxvi 3—5 cxviii. 5. cxlii. 1—3 Lam. iii. 55, 56 Hos. vi. 1. Jon. ii 2. 7 Luke xxii 44. xxiii. 42 Acts xvi 24, 25. 2 Cor xii 7—10. Heb. v. 7.
q Judg. xvi. 23—25. Dan. v. 4.
r 1 Chr. xvi. 5 Ps. xcv. 2 cv. 2. Mic iv 5. Matt. xxvi. 30. 1 Cor. xiv 26. Eph. v 19. Col iii. 17. Rev. v. 9—14. viii. 10 xiv. 3. xix 1—6.

14 Is any sick among you? let him call [s] for the elders of the church; and let them [t] pray over him, [u] anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

15 And [x] the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and [y] if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

s Acts xiv. 23. xv. 4. Tit. i. 5.
t 1 Kings xvii 21, 22. 2 Kings iv. 33 v. 11. Acts ix. 40 xxviii. 8.
u Mark vi. 13.
x See on, 13—16. i 6. Matt. xvii. 20, 21 xxi. 21, 22. Mark xi. 22—24. xvi. 17, 18. 1 Cor xii. 28—30.
y Is. xxxiii. 24. Matt. ix. 2—6. Mark ii 5—11. John v. 14. 1 Cor xi 30—32. 1 John v. 14—16.

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study and imitate the example of the ancient prophets, by whom the Lord had sent his word to their nation, and who had been abused, reviled, and even put to death, for their faithfulness; yet they had persevered with calm confidence in God, and submission to his will, and with a meek and compassionate fortitude among their enemies. They ought also to remember, that the apostles of Christ, and other faithful ministers of the New Testament, and all experienced Christians, counted those happy, who patiently endured affliction and persecution, not such as were exempted from suffering, or turned aside to avoid it. (*Note*, i. 12.) They had often heard of the patience of Job, under the most complicated and aggravated distresses that could be imagined; and how he steadfastly adhered to God, and determined to hope in him in his utmost extremity, notwithstanding the excessive confusion into which his temptations had thrown his mind; and they perceived that the end of his afflictions, and the temporal and spiritual advantages which he derived from them, sufficiently demonstrated that the Lord was most tenderly compassionate and propense to mercy, even when he most heavily afflicted, or sharply tried, his believing servants. This had not appeared during Job's calamities, but it was manifest in the event of them; and they also would find the same in the event of their trials, provided they endured them patiently, and persevered in faith and obedience. (*Notes*, *Heb.* xii. 5—12.)

V. 12. Above all things, the apostle called on those whom he addressed to beware, lest their trials and provocations should lead them to swear in a passionate, rash, or profane manner, in their own justification, and to escape persecution, or by any customary oath, according to the general custom of the Jews, but in direct opposition to the express command of Christ. On the contrary, in their ordinary conversation, and at all times, when a solemn appeal to God, as an act of religious worship, was not proper, they ought simply to affirm or deny, and to establish their assertion or engagement by a serious repetition of it, when necessary. At the same time, their veracity and punctuality ought to be so approved, that every one might be ready to credit, and confide in them without hesitation, or requiring the security of an oath; otherwise they would fall under condemnation for swearing falsely, without necessity, or without due reverence of God, or of an oath.—The Jews are recorded to have been remarkably guilty of common swearing at this time, which might induce the apostle to enter this solemn protest against it. (*Notes*, *Matt*, v. 33—37. xxiii. 16—22.)

V. 13. Whilst worldly men, under their afflictions, either yielded to bitter complaints and desponding murmurs, or sought relief in sensual indulgence, or tried to extricate themselves by sinful means, Christians should be excited by their sorrows to pray more frequently, copiously, and earnestly, that they might receive from God comfort, deliverance, and a sanctified use of their afflictions. On the other hand, when any of them prospered, or was cheerful in spirit, they ought to express their joy in the voice of praise and thanksgiving, and by singing the psalms which inspired men had written for that use, or such songs of praise as they or other Christians had composed for similar purposes, instead of running into the excesses of carnal rejoicing, or singing those frivolous, polluting, or profane songs and odes, which were used by ungodly men, when they attempted to be merry.

V. 14, 15. Sick persons, also, should send for the elders of the church, many of whom were at that time endued with miraculous powers, that they might pray for their forgiveness and recovery, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord Jesus, as expecting a cure from his power and love. And when this was done, in that faith by which miracles were wrought, the prayer offered in behalf of the sick person would be the means of saving his life, and the sins committed by him, for which the chastening was sent, would be pardoned. (*Notes*, *Mark* vi. 13. xvi. 17, 18.)—As miraculous cures are not now expected, so the symbolical action of anointing with oil cannot properly be retained. It need scarcely be observed, that the *extreme unction*, used by the church of Rome, totally differs from the anointing recommended by St. James; for it is never administered till the sick person is supposed to be at the point of death, and no hope is entertained of his recovery; so that a spiritual benefit alone can be *proposed* by such a ceremony, which indeed serves only as an opiate, to quiet and stupify the consciences both of the dying and of the living.—It cannot be supposed that these miraculous cures could be performed at all times; but there seems to have been some impression on the mind of the person who wrought the miracle, and a peculiar exercise of faith in Christ for that purpose. But it might be proper for Christians always, when they were sick, to send for their pastors, to counsel and pray for them; though the visiting of the sick, by ministers exclusively, is not so particularly spoken of in Scripture, as might have been expected. When indeed this charitable service is performed with prudence, tenderness, and faithfulness, it may be very useful, especially to believers, and to those around them; but the *indiscriminate* visiting, praying with, and giving the Lord's supper to, sick and dying persons, without particular and appropriate instructions and exhortation, as it is too commonly managed, is doubtless of

16 [z] Confess *your* faults one to another, and [a] pray one for another, [b] that ye may be healed. [c] The effectual fervent prayer of [d] a righteous man availeth much.

17 [e] Elias was a man [f] subject to like passions as we are, [g] and he prayed * earnestly that it might not rain: [h] and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

18 And [i] he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

19 Brethren, if any of you do [k] err from the truth, [l] and one convert him;

20 Let him know, [m] that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, [n] shall save a soul [o] from death, and shall [p] hide a multitude of sins.

z Gen xli 9, 10. 2 Sam xix. 19, 20 Matt iii. 6. xviii 15 — 17. Luke xvii. 3, 4. Acts xix. 18
a Col i. 9 1 Thes v. 17 23 25 Heb. xiii. 18.
b Gen. xx. 17. 2 Chr. xxx. 20. Luke ix. 6. Acts x. 38.
c Gen xviii. 23—33. xix. 29 xx. 7. 17. xxxii. 28. Ex. ix. 28, 29 33 xvii 11. xxxii 10—14. Num. xi. 2. xiv. 13—20. xxi. 7—9. Deut. ix. 18 20 Josh x. 12. 1 Sam. xii 18. 1 Kings xiii. 6 xvii. 18—24. 2 Kings iv. 33—35. xix. 15—20. xx. 2—5. 2 Chr. xiv. 11, 12. xxxii 20—22. Job xlii. 8. Ps. xx. 17, 18. xxxiv. 15 cxlv. 18 Prov. xv. 8. 29 Jer. xv 1. xxix. 12, 13. xxxiii. 3. Dan. ii. 18—23. ix. 20—22. Hos xiii. 3, 4 Matt. vii. 7—11. xxi. 22 Luke xi 11—13. xviii. 1—8. John ix. 31. Acts iv. 24—31 xii. 5—11. 1 John iii. 22.——d Rom. iii. 10. v. 19 Heb. xi. 4. 7.——e 1 Kings xvii 1. *Elijah*,——f Acts x. 26. xiv. 15.——g Rom. xi. 2. Rev. xii. 6——* Or, *in his prayer*——h Luke iv. 25.

i 1 Kings xviii. 42—45. Jer. xiv. 22. Acts xiv. 17.
k Ps. cxix. 21. 118. Prov xix. 27. Is. iii 12. 1 Tim vi. 10. 21. 2 Tim ii. 18 2 Pet. iii. 17 Jude 11.
l 20. Ez. xxxiv. 4 16 Matt xviii. 15. Luke xxii. 32. Gal vi. 1. Heb xii. 12, 13. Jude 22, 23.
m See on, 19
n Prov. xi. 30. Rom. xi 14. 1 Cor ix. 22. 1 Tim. iv. 16. Philem. 19
o i. 15 Prov. x. 2. xi 4. John v. 24. Rev. xx. 6.——p Ps xxxii. 1, Prov x. Pet iv. 8.

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extremely bad tendency, and is a relict of popish superstition and formality; for it not only gives a false quiet to many of those who have then first begun to think about God and their souls, but it encourages others to procrastinate, under a deluding imagination, that a confession, a prayer, a ministerial absolution, and the sacrament, will set all right at last, without any previous diligence in the duties of a godly life.—If, however, nothing but a miraculous cure was sought, there could be no sufficient reason why the elders of the church, rather than others, who were endued with miraculous gifts, should be sent for.—The plural number is used, and where it could be obtained, the presence of more than one minister would be desirable; but it cannot be supposed that this was indispensably necessary. That any difficulty should be found about the persons intended by "the elders of the church," would have been inconceivable to the author, had he never read any thing on the subject except the New Testament. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 16—18. The apostle next exhorted Christians to confess their faults to one another: this may mean, either mutual acknowledgment of the faults into which they had fallen, in their conduct towards one another, which would tend greatly to peace and brotherly love, if it were practised; or a communication reciprocally of their experiences, and a confession of those things which burdened their consciences: which, when prudently managed, would make way for them to counsel, encourage, and exhort one another, and be a direction to their prayers for each other, and thus tend to their inward peace, and the healing of their souls, as well as to the removal of the chastisements which they had incurred. But this does not at all resemble the practice, which the church of Rome hath absurdly grounded upon it, of the laity being required to confess all their secret sins to the priests, in order to their being pardoned and absolved. Thus that order of men (who are in themselves no less ambitious, interested, and prone to vice, than other orders in society,) is put in possession of the secrets of families, nay, of councils and princes, of which they have made abundant use, to their own aggrandizement, and enslaving the laity, and for many other mischievous purposes. Thus, also, they have discovered the weak and vulnerable side of almost every individual, which hath opened the way to their attempting and committing crimes of every kind. But the confession of sins, spoken of by the apostle, is no more that of a layman to a priest, than that of a priest to a layman: it is reciprocal between Christians one among another, and voluntary, that it may be regulated according to prudence and propriety, for the benefit of mutual exhortations and prayers. To encourage his brethren to this beneficial practice, the apostle showed them the value and efficacy of prayer. When a righteous person, a true believer justified in Christ, and, by his grace, walking before God in holy obedience, presented an *effectual* fervent prayer, (one that was *wrought in* his heart by the energy of the Holy Spirit, exciting holy affections and believing expectations, and so leading him to be fervent and earnest in pleading the promises of God at his mercy-seat, in behalf of himself or others,) it "availed much" in obtaining the blessings thus sought, being the means through which God was pleased to work his own gracious purposes, as really as any other which he employs for that end. Elias, or Elijah, for instance, was a man of the same sinful nature with others, and he was no more exempt from human passions and infirmities, when he executed his ministry, than the apostle and his brethren were; yet he prayed, (under the influence of the prophetical Spirit, out of zeal for the glory of God, and to prevent the total apostacy and idolatry of Israel,) that it might not rain on the *land*, and in answer to his prayer there was no rain for three years and a half; and at length the calamity was terminated in answer to his prayers for rain, after he had slain the priests of Baal. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xvii. xviii.) This example seems rather to favour the opinion of those, who suppose the apostle to refer to "the prayer of faith," as it respected miraculous interpositions; but the efficacy of that prayer, which is in all ages presented under the teaching and influences of the Holy Spirit, is, throughout the scripture, so fully declared, that the exclusive interpretation is inadmissible.

V. 19, 20. Among other works of love, which believers ought to attempt by faith and prayer, the recovery of such nominal Christians as had run into dangerous heresies, or fallen into sin, was peculiarly to be attended to, especially as many evils of this kind had taken place among them. If any one therefore had turned aside from the truth, and had got into some destructive path, and one of his brethren had been instrumental to his conversion, so that he was at length become a true Christian, he should consider himself as under far greater obligations to the person who thus restored him, than if he had wrought a miracle to heal his sickness, and preserve his life. And the man, who had been employed in this good work, ought to deem it a far more desirable service, than if he had been enabled to work miracles for the recovery of the sick; seeing he had been employed by the Lord in saving an immortal soul from eternal destruction, and of bringing a perishing transgressor to Christ, that his atoning blood might cover the multitude of his sins, never more to appear in judgment against him, or to prevent his admission into eternal happiness. Neither this, nor any other good work, could cover the multitude of the man's sins who performed it, by inducing God to pardon him for the sake of it: for the most successful minister needs self-denying diligence, lest, "after having preached to others, he himself should be a cast-away;" and the whole plan of the Gospel runs counter to such an idea. 'Surely it cannot be the apostle's intention to tell us, that the turning of a sinner from the error of his way will conceal, from the eye of God's justice, a multitude of sins committed by the person who does this charitable action, if he continueth in them. Such a person needs himself to be turned "from the error of his way," in order that his own soul may be saved from death.' (*Macknight.*) In no sense, or way, can it be said, that our good works, of whatever kind, "cover the multitude of our sins," or any of our sins, without either implying, that they purchase for us an *indulgence* or *dispensation* to continue in sin, or that they are efficacious in atoning for sin; either alone, or along with the blood of Christ. The words are quoted from the Proverbs; the context there evidently excludes this interpretation and the use afterwards made of them by St. Peter, by no means favours it. (*Notes, Prov.* x. 12. 1 *Pet.* iv. 8.) 'He shall save a soul from eternal death; and shall be the means that the many sins of that convert shall, through his true repentance, be forgiven, and not imputed to him.' (*Bp. Hall.*) The zeal and diligence thus shown might indeed be an evidence of grace, and conduce to a man's enjoying the comfort of the pardoning love of Christ, notwithstanding his manifold defects; yet this falls vastly short of the energy of the apostle's words, and seems not at all to have been in his thoughts; so that many learned men have laboured in vain to put this construction upon them. As there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, zealous Christians cannot want any inducement of this kind, to animate them in attempting so blessed a service, when they have any prospect of success: nor can they need any of their own works to cover the multitude of their sins, who know the all-sufficiency of the Saviour's atoning blood. But the apostle meant to show his brethren that this was a far more important usefulness, than even healing the sick by miracle could be, though nature would prompt them most to covet or value miraculous powers, and they might be led to overlook or neglect a much more charitable work.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

The rich, luxurious, and haughty, yea, all, who now scornfully refuse to mourn for their sins, will soon be forced to weep and howl under the miseries which are coming upon them. All their idolized treasures will soon corrupt and perish, except as they will rise up in judgment against them, and torment them as fire, by increasing their condemnation. The doom of unfaithful stewards will then be very dreadful: but the cruel injustice and oppression, with which many treat their dependents and labourers, by whose toil and ingenuity they are enriched, and whom they leave to penury and distress, will cry for most tremendous vengeance in the ears of "the LORD of hosts." What then will it avail them, that they have "lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton," and cherished their carnal hearts, as the fatted ox for the slaughter? They have only heaped up perishing treasure, to leave it behind them, or "fared sumptuously every day," as a prelude to lifting up their eyes in hell, being in torments. Such warnings, however, when impartially given, will expose the servants of Christ to their contemptuous indignation, and hence prosperous sinners have often been excited to condemn and murder the righteous and unresisting disciples, as the Jews did the Lord of glory himself. But let the poor and afflicted Christian patiently wait for the coming of his Lord, as the husbandman waits for the precious fruit of the earth: for the good seed, which he now sows in pain, and waters with tears, will spring up, and soon ripen to a harvest of eternal joy. Let us then patiently continue in well-doing, having our hearts established with grace, and realizing expectations of the great day of retribution. It does not become Christians to grudge one against another, or to envy, repine, despond, or dispute: rather let us prepare to meet our Judge, who "standeth at the door," that we may not be condemned at his coming: for all our eternal interests are secure, if we have trusted them in his hand: and all else is a mere vanity, that will soon be done with for ever. May we then follow prophets and apostles, as they followed Christ, in patiently suffering affliction and meekly bearing injuries: for they and they only are and will be happy, who endure amidst tribulations even unto the end. The event will clear up the darkness of all the Lord's dealings with his people: and, whatever they or others have thought during the continuance of their trials, in the end it will appear as evident in the case of every one of them, as it did in that of Job, nay, far more illustriously evident, that "the Lord is pitiful and of tender mercy," and that they are happy, who patiently trust in him and keep his commandments.

V. 12—20.

It is peculiarly important to the interests of genuine piety, that all who profess the Gospel should reverence the name of God, and keep at a distance from swearing, and the profane language which abounds in the world, and from that insincerity which is intimately connected with it, that their yea may be yea, and their nay, nay. Indeed, such as neglect these things have little reason to conclude that they shall escape condemnation when the Judge appeareth. The voice of prayer should always accompany that of our lamentations, when we are afflicted; and our joy should be expressed in the language of praise and thanksgiving. We should receive pain and sickness as the chastisement of the Lord, and seek relief from him, whatever instruments or means we employ for that purpose. The counsels and prayers of the ministers and disciples of Christ are peculiarly desirable on such occasions: and we ought more earnestly to seek the pardon of our sins, and the healing of our souls, than the removal of our bodily sufferings. Christians may profitably confer together con-

concerning their conflicts, sins, and temptations, that they may encourage, warn, counsel, exhort, and properly pray for, each other: and they should never be backward to confess those offences that they have committed against their brethren, or to forgive such as have been done against them. We ought greatly to desire, and highly to value, the prayers of our fellow-Christians, and to abound in supplications for them, "as the effectual fervent prayer of "a righteous man availeth much." Nor ought we to be discouraged from this duty by the consciousness of our weakness, unworthiness, or sinful passions, as they, who of old received such signal answers to their prayers, were men of like passions with us: and we have as good reason to expect that God will answer our humble believing requests, for such things as he hath promised, and as are really for our good and for his glory, as Jacob, Moses, Elijah, Hezekiah, or Daniel had, or any other person who wrestled with him and prevailed. In the use of all proper means, every one of us should seek the spiritual good of our children, relatives, friends, enemies, and all around us, and the conversion of sinners, as well as the recovery of such as have wandered from the way of truth and holiness; considering, that if in one instance only, during the course of our whole lives, and after ten thousand disappointments, we are made successful instruments in saving a soul from death, and covering a multitude of sins, the event is of so vast importance, as abundantly to repay all our toil, anxiety, and disappointment, being far greater than the preservation of the lives of multitudes, or promoting the temporal prosperity of whole nations. (*Note*, *Luke* xv. 8—10.) Let us then, in our several stations, keep these things in mind, and spare no pains in so charitable a service; and the event will prove that "our "labour was not in vain in the Lord."

THE

FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL OF

PETER.

We have had repeated opportunities of considering the character and apostleship of Peter, who wrote this epistle and that which follows, as far as are made known by the holy scriptures. Much additional information concerning him, however, has been conveyed down by tradition, and by ecclesiastical history: but a large proportion of this is absolutely incompatible with the Acts of the apostles, and many things in St. Paul's epistles; much more is dubious; and the pretensions of the church and bishop of Rome, as grounded on these records and traditions, are so absurd and extravagant, as to deserve little notice, or to require any further refutation. It is not absolutely *certain that Peter ever was at Rome; though it is highly probable that he went thither, towards the close of his life; and that he was there put to death by crucifixion, at, or near the same time, when Paul as a Roman citizen was beheaded, during Nero's persecution. He wrote this epistle, probably some time before, to the Christians in the different provinces of Asia Minor. Many indeed have endeavoured to prove that, as the apostle of the circumcision, he addressed the Jewish converts only; but Peter was distinguished, not only as the chief preacher to the Jews on the day of Pentecost, but also as the first preacher to the Gentiles. And as Paul, the apostle of the uncircumcision, wrote to the Hebrews, and in all his epistles addressed the Jewish as well as the Gentile converts; we may well suppose, that St. Peter addressed the Gentile as well as the Jewish converts: though perhaps with a peculiar reference to the case of the latter. Indeed, the contrary opinion is founded on some passages in the epistle, which are capable of another, and far more natural, interpretation; but the apostle's language in other places cannot at all consist with it. It also seems evident, that he wrote to the very churches, which had been founded by St. Paul, to corroborate his testimony, and to confute those who pretended that his doctrine differed from that of the other apostles; and he sent the epistle by Silvanus, St. Paul's faithful and constant coadjutor. The epistle is dated from Babylon, in the remains or vicinity of which city, it is probable a Christian church had been planted, perhaps consisting principally of the descendants of the Jews, who remained in those regions after the Babylonish captivity. For no satisfactory reason can be assigned, for supposing, as many have done, in ancient and modern times, that Babylon signifies Rome. Language of this kind suited the nature of St. John's Revelation; but was wholly unsuitable to the date of the letter. We here find the same great doctrines, with which St. Paul's epistles are replete, applied to the same practical purposes. And it is peculiarly remarkable for the sweetness, gentleness, and humble love, with which it is written; which indeed forms a striking contrast to the domineering pride and severity, that characterize the pretended successors of this sacred writer. Various opinions have been entertained of the time when the epistle was written; but, as no certainty seems attainable, it is dated according to the author's opinion on the subject, in which, however, he is by no means confident.*

A. D. 63. *A. D.* 63.

CHAP. I.

The apostle addresses the strangers in Pontus, &c. with salutations and thanksgivings to God for his abundant mercy, and the inestimable blessings bestowed on them, 1—5. *He shows the nature and benefit of their trials, and the joy by which they were counterbalanced,* 6, 7. *Through faith, they loved, and rejoiced in an unseen Saviour, and received his salvation,* 8, 9. *The ancient prophets had most diligently inquired into this salvation; angels desired to look into it; and the Holy Spirit confirmed and prospered the preaching of it,* 10—12. *This should animate Christians to a holy and circumspect conduct; as the worshippers of a holy God,* 13—17; *and as redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, through whom they believed and hoped in*

God, 18—21. *Exhortations to pure and fervent love of one another, being brethren by regeneration, through the word of God, which, as an incorruptible seed, endureth for ever, in the endeared relation, thus formed,* 22—25.

[a] PETER, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to [b] the strangers [c] scattered throughout [d] Pontus, [e] Galatia, [f] Cappadocia, [g] Asia, and [h] Bithynia,

2 [i] Elect according to [k] the foreknowledge of God the Father, through [l] sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, [m] and [n] sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: [o] Grace unto you, and peace [p] be multiplied.

3 [q] Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, [r] which according to his * abundant mercy [s] hath begotten us again [t] unto a lively hope, [u] by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

4 To [x] an inheritance [y] incorruptible, and [z] undefiled, and that [a] fadeth not away, [b] reserved in heaven † for you,

5 Who are [c] kept by the power of God [d] through faith [e] unto salvation, [f] ready to be revealed [g] in the last time:

a *See on,* Matt. iv. 18 x. 2 John i. 41, 42. xxi. 15—17.
b ii 11 Acts ii. 5—11. Eph. ii. 12. 19 Heb. xi 13
c Lev xxvi. 33. Deut. iv 27. xxviii. 64. xxxii. 26. Esth iii 8. Ps. xliv. 11 Ez vi. 8 John xi. 32. Jam. i. 1.
d Acts ii. 9. xviii. 2.
e Acts xvi. 6. xviii. 23. Gal i 2.
f Acts ii 9.
g Acts vi. 9. xvi. 6 xix. 10 xx. 16—18 1 Cor. xvi. 19 2 Cor. i. 8. 2 Tim. i. 15. Rev. i. 11.
h Acts xvi 7
i ii. 9. Deut. vii. 6. Is. lxv. 9. 22. Matt. xxiv. 22. 24. 31. Mark xiii. 20. 22. 27. Luke xviii. 7. John xv. 16—19. Rom. viii. 33. xi. 5—7. 28. Eph i 4, 5 Col iii 11 2 Tim. ii. 10. Tit. i 1. 2 John I. 13.——k Acts ii. 23 xv. 18. Rom. viii 29, 30. ix. 23, 24. xi. 2.——l Acts xx. 32. Rom. xv. 16. 1 Cor. i. 30. vi. 11. 2 Thes ii. 13 ——m 22 Rom. i. 5 viii. 13. xvi. 19. 26. 2 Cor. x. 5. Heb v. 9.——n *See on,* Heb. ix. 19—22. x. 22. xi. 23. xii. 24.

o *See on,* Rom i. 7. 2 Cor. xiii 14.
p Is. lv 7. *Marg.* Dan. iv. 1. vi. 25. 2 Pet. i. 2. Jude 2
q 1 Kings viii. 14. 1 Chr xxix. 10—13 20 Ps xli. 13. lxxii. 18, 19. 2 Cor. i. 3 Eph. i. 3. 17. iii. 20, 21.
r Ex xxxiv. 6. Ps lxxxvi. 5. 15. Jon. iv 2 Rom. v 15—21. Eph. i 7. ii. 4. 7—10. 1 Tim. i. 14, 15. Tit iii 4—6.
* Gr. *much.*
s 23. ii. 2. John i. 13 iii. 3—8. Jam. i 18. 1 John ii. 23 iii. 9 iv. 7. v. 1 4 18.——t Rom. v 4, 5. viii. 24 xii. 12 xv. 13. 1 Cor xiii. 13. Col. i. 23 27. 1 Thes i 3. Tit. ii. 13. Heb. iii. 6 vi. 18, 19. 1 John iii. 3. u iii. 21 Is. xxvi 19. Rom. iv. 25 v. 10. viii 11. 1 Cor. xv. 20 Eph. ii. 6 1 Thes iv. 14. x iii. 9. Matt xxv. 34. Acts xx 32. xxvi 18. Gal. iii 18 Eph. i. 11. 14 18. Col i 12. Heb. ix. 15.——y 1 Cor. ix. 25. xv. 52—54.——z Rev xxi. 27.——a v. 4. Is. xl. 7, 8. Ez xlvii. 12. Jam i 11.——b Ps. xxxi. 19 Col i. 5. iii 1. 4 2 Tim iv. 8.——† Or, *for us,* c 1 Sam ii. 9. Ps xxxvii. 23, 24. 27. ciii. 17 18 cxxv. 1, 2 Prov ii. 8. Is. liv. 17. Jer. xxxii. 40. John iv 14. v 25. x 28—30. xvii. 11, 12 15 Rom viii. 31—39. Phil. i 6 Jude i. 24 ——d Rom. xi. 20. 2 Cor. i. 24 Gal. ii. 20 Eph ii. 8. iii 17 2 Tim iii. 15. Heb. vi 12.——e Is. xlv. 17. li 6. 1 Thes. i. 3 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14. Heb. ix 28.——f 13. 1 Tim. vi. 14, 15 Tit. ii. 13. 1 John iii. 2.——g Job xix. 25. John xii. 48.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. The churches, here addressed, were situated in Asia Minor, (as distinguished from the continent of Asia,) and Asia, (as mentioned separately,) was the proconsular district, of which Ephesus was the capital city; so that they were chiefly the churches which had been planted by St. Paul, and the evangelists that accompanied or helped him. As the apostle called the persons to whom he wrote "strangers," some have laboured to prove that they were proselytes of the gate, who had embraced the Gospel, as Cornelius and his friends are supposed to have been before their conversion. Others confine it to the Jewish converts, who, living at a distance from the promised land, among the Gentiles were thus called. But as Christians are "strangers and pilgrims upon earth," and as the sojourning of the patriarchs, or of the Jews, in foreign nations, was a type or emblem of this pilgrimage, (ii. 11.) it is more natural to understand it of believers in general, who were pilgrims or strangers in every city or country where they lived, and who were scattered through the nations, to be as "lights in the world, and as the salt of the earth." These the apostle addressed as "Elect," or chosen in Christ, "according to the foreknowledge of God." (*Notes, Rom.* viii. 28—31. *Eph.* i. 1—12. 2 *Thes.* ii. 13, 14.) This eternal purpose and special love of God the Father had been rendered effectual, "through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience," begun in regeneration, and carried on in the continued mortification of their whole sinful nature, and the progressive renewal of their souls to the holy image of God, thus preparing them for evangelical obedience; and this was accompanied with "the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus," or the continual application of the virtue of his atonement to their consciences, by divine faith, for the removal of their guilt, and the rendering of their persons and services accepted with God; as the blood of the legal sacrifices was applied by sprinkling it around the altar, and before the mercy-seat, or as the blood of the sacrifices was sprinkled on the people, when the covenant was ratified with Israel at mount Sinai. (*Marg. Ref.*) To these persons the apostle wished, and prayed, "that grace and peace might be multiplied," according to the salutation generally used by St. Paul. (*Note, Rom.* i. 7.) Thus they were taught, at the opening of the epistle, to ascribe their salvation to the electing love of the Father, the redemption of the Son, and the sanctification of the Holy Spirit, and so to give glory to one God in three persons, into whose name they had been baptized. ***Elect,*** &c. 'Those who in their outward profession, and in the due judgment of charity, are justly reputed for the elect of God, according to the eternal decree and good purpose of God the Father.' (*Bp. Hall.*) *Sprinkling,* &c. 'Men are not easily convinced of the deep stain of sin, and that no other laver can fetch it out but the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Some, that have moral resolutions of amendment, dislike at least gross sins, and purpose to avoid them, and it is to them cleanness enough to reform in these things; but they consider not what becomes of the guiltiness that they have contracted already, or how that shall be purged. Be not deceived in this; it is not a transient sigh, or a light word, or a wish of, God forgive me; no, nor the highest current of repentance, nor that which is the truest evidence of repentance, amendment; it is none of these that purifies in the sight of God, and expiates wrath. They are all imperfect, and, stained themselves, cannot stand and answer for themselves, much less be of value to counterpoise the former guilt of sin. The very tears of the purest repentance, unless they be sprinkled with this blood, are impure; all our washings, without this, are but the washings of a blackamoor, it is labour in vain.' (*Arbp. Leighton.*)

V. 3—5. (*Note, Eph.* i. 3.) St. Peter, as well as his beloved brother Paul, opened his subject, by calling on his fellow Christians to join with him in blessing God for his distinguishing mercy and grace, under the character of "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." "Of his abundant mercy," or the greatness of his compassionate love to the guilty, the polluted, and the wretched, even such as were "dead in sin and children of wrath, he had *regenerated* them," (*Notes, John* iii. 1—8. *Eph.* ii. 1—10.) and from this gracious change, wrought in them

6 Wherein [h] ye greatly rejoice, though now [i] for a season, [k] (if need be,) [l] ye are in heaviness through [m] manifold temptations:

h 8. iv. 13. 1 Sam. ii. 1. Ps. ix 14. xxxv. 19. xcv. 1. Is. xii. 2, 3. lxi. 3. 10. Matt. v. 12. Luke i. 47. ii. 14. x 20 John xvi. 22. Rom. v. 2. 11. xii. 12. 2 Cor. vi. 10 xii. 9, 10. Gal. v. 22. Phil. iii. 3. iv. 4. 1 Thes. i 6 Jam i 2. 9, 10.——i iv. 7. v 10 2 Cor iv. 17——k 7. Ps. cxix. 75. Lam. iii 32, 33. Heb. xii. 10.——l Job ix. 27, 28 Ps. lxix. 20. cxix. 28. Is lxi. 3. Matt. xi. 28 xxvi. 37. Rom. ix. 2. Phil. ii 26 Heb. xii. 11. Jam. iv. 9——m Ps. xxxiv. 19. John xvi. 33. Acts xiv. 22. 1 Cor. iv. 9–13. 2 Cor. iv. 7–11. xi. 23–27. Heb. xi. 35–38. Jam. i. 2.

7 That [n] the trial of your faith, being much more [o] precious than of gold [p] that perisheth, though it be [q] tried with fire, [r] might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, [s] at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

n Job xxiii. 10. Ps lxv. 10–12. Prov. xvii. 3. Is xlviii. 10. Jer. ix. 7. Zech. xiii. 9 Mal iii. 3. Rom. v. 3, 4. Jam. i 3, 4. Rev. ii 10. iii 10.——o ii 4 7 Prov. iii. 13–15 viii 19 xvi. 16 2 Pet. i. 1. 4.——p Es. v. 14. Jer. xlviii 36. Luke xii 20, 21. 33 Acts viii. 20 Jam v 2, 3. 2 Pet. iii. 10–12. Rev. xviii 16, 17——q iv 12. 1 Cor, iii. 13. Rev. iii. 18.——r 1 Sam. ii 30 Matt. xix 28. xxv. 21 23. John v. 44 xii 26. Rom. ii. 7. 10. 29 1 Cor. iv. 5. 2 Thes. i. 7–12. Jude 24.——s *See on*, 5.

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by his divine power, their repentance, faith, and obedience, had originated. Thus, as the children of God, they had been taught to entertain "a lively," or *living* "hope." They were no longer left to be influenced principally by any of the hopes which worldly men indulge, of obtaining satisfaction in temporal things; or to the presumptuous and inefficacious hope of mercy and salvation, by which formalists and hypocrites are deceived: but they were made partakers of a well-grounded hope of salvation, which was an active living principle in their souls of patient and cheerful obedience. This regeneration, and the hope resulting from it, were consequences arising from "the resurrection of Christ." His vicarious sacrifice having been accepted, he had been raised from the dead, to prove that he was the Son of God, and that he had done his work on earth, and in order to the performance of his mediatory office in heaven; that by communicating, through his intercession, the Holy Spirit, to give efficacy to the preaching of the Gospel, sinners might be raised from the death of sin, by a continuation, as it were, of that power which restored to life the dead body of Christ. (*Notes, Eph.* i. 19, 20.) Thus they had obtained a title to an inheritance, which was of a very different nature from those which worldly men sought for, as well as a warranted hope of it, and a meetness for it. For earthly inheritances are *corruptible* in themselves, and in respect of their possessors; *defiled*, in respect of the means by which they are obtained, the use which is generally made of them, and the persons who possess them; and *fading*, as to the very trivial comfort, honour, or distinction, which they confer. But the inheritance to which the regenerate were entitled, and for which they hoped, is *incorruptible* in itself, and they will be rendered incorruptible and immortal to enjoy it; it is *undefiled*, in respect of its pleasures, and the character of all those who partake of them; and *unfading*, as to its satisfaction, glory, and splendour, which will be unalloyed, unsullied, permanent, uninterrupted, always increasing, and eternal. This inheritance was "reserved in heaven," out of the reach of all enemies and changes, in the place of perfect holiness and felicity, "for them," even for all the elect, or the regenerate, who "were kept," as in a strongly fortified and garrisoned castle, by "the power of God," engaged by covenant to fulfil his irrevocable promises, and the purposes of his everlasting love. So that, having entered, through Christ the Door, into this strong tower, by faith, and still exercising faith on the promises of God, and on his perfections as engaged to perform them, and this faith being preserved from failing, through the continual intercession of Christ, and grace bestowed by him, they were sure of being preserved in all dangers, and protected against all enemies, internal and external, unto complete salvation. This was in all respects prepared and ready for them, though the appointed season of it was not yet arrived; so that it still remained, as it were, veiled: but it would be revealed, manifested, and publicly conferred on them, at the last time, even at Christ's coming to raise the dead, to judge the world, and to destroy all ungodly men. *A lively hope*, 'living in death itself. The world dares say no 'more for its device, than *dum spiro, spero:* (while I 'breathe, I hope;) but the children of God can add, *dum* '*expiro, spero;* (when I expire, I hope.) It is a fearful 'thing when a man and his hopes expire together.' (*Arbp. Leighton.*)

V. 6, 7. In the earnests and hopes of eternal salvation, true Christians greatly rejoice, or, at least, were required to do so. This was the genuine effect of their faith, in proportion to its strength; though at the present, for a transient season, they might be, and often were, "in heaviness," and even dejected, through a variety of afflictions and trials in their outward circumstances, through the remaining sinfulness of their hearts, and the harassing assaults of Satan: (*Notes, James* i. 1—3. 12—15.) These troubles and conflicts interrupted their rejoicings by short intervals; but they were needful, in order to their best good and for the glory of God: otherwise he would no more have appointed such trials to them, than a kind and wise father would *needlessly* afflict his beloved child, or a physician would prescribe nauseous medicines, without occasion, to his dearest friend. The intent of all these troubles was, to make a proper trial of their faith, that it might be proved to be genuine. They professed to believe in Christ, and to love him; and it was proper that the sincerity of their profession should be ascertained, that they might be distinguished from hypocrites. This was effected by persecutions, afflictions, and temptations, as gold is distinguished from base metal, (as well as purified,) by being cast into the furnace. But the faith of Christians was immensely more precious than gold, which is of a perishing nature, and can only purchase perishing things; whereas faith interested the soul in the unchangeable promises of God, and entitled it to eternal felicity. It was therefore proper that this faith should be tried in the fire of tribulation, by which the dead faith of hypocrites was generally consumed, as they commonly renounced Christ to escape the cross, and secure worldly advantages: but the living faith of the regenerate was thus manifested to be genuine, by their steadfastly cleaving to Christ and his will, at any price, their faith indeed being increased and purified by the trial. They would also have the comfort of it, and God the glory, at present; and it would be "found to praise, and honour, and glory," in the presence of the whole creation, when Christ shall appear to judge the world; when no degree of applause, or

8 Whom [t] having not seen, [u] ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet [x] believing, ye rejoice with joy [y] unspeakable, and [z] full of glory:

9 [a] Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.

10 Of [b] which salvation the prophets have enquired [c] and searched diligently, who prophesied of [d] the grace *that should come* unto you:

11 Searching what, or what manner of time, [e] the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand [f] the sufferings of Christ, and [g] the glory that should follow.

12 Unto whom [h] it was revealed, [i] that not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them, [k] that have preached the gospel unto you [l] with the Holy Ghost [m] sent down from heaven; [n] which things the angels desire to look into.

John xx. 29. 2 Cor. iv. 18. v. 7. t Heb xi. 1. 27. 1 u John iv. 20. ii. 7. Cant. i. 7. v. 9 16. Matt x. 37. xxv 35–40. John viii 42. xiv. 15. 21. 24. xxi 15–17. 1 Cor. xvi. 22. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. Gal. v. 6. Eph vi. 24. 1 John iv. 19. x *See on*, 6. Hab iii 17, 18. Acts xvi. 34. Rom. xiv. 17. xv. 13. Phil. i. 25. iii 3. iv. 4. y 2 Cor. ix. 15. xii. 4. z v. 2, 4. 2 Cor. i 22 Gal. v. 22. Eph. i 13, 14——a Rom. vi. 22. Heb. xi. 13. Jam. i. 21.——b Matt. xiii. 17. Luke x. 24 xxiv. 25–27. 44. Acts iii. 22–24 vii. 52. x. 43. xiii 27 29. xxviii. 23 ——c 11. Prov. ii 4. John v. 39. vii. 52. Acts xvii. 11.——d Heb. xi. 13. 40.——e iii. 19. Rom. viii. 9. Gal. iv 6 2 Pet i. 21. Rev. xix. 10.

f Ps. xxii. 1–21. lxix. 1–21. lxxxviii Is. lii. 13, 14 liii. 1–10 Dan ix. 24–26 Zech. xiii. 7. *See on*, Luke xxiv 26, 27. 44. g Gen. iii. 15. xlix. 10 Ps. xxii. 22–31. lxix. 30–36. cx 1 6. Is ix. 6, 7. xlix 6 liii. 11, 12 Dan. ii. 34, 35. 44. vii. 13, 14. Zech. ii. 8–11. xiv. 9. John xii. 41. Acts xxvi. 22, 23. h Is liii. 1. Dan. ii. 19. 22. 28, 29. 47. x 1. Am. iii. 7 Matt. xi. 25. 27. xvi. 17. Luke ii. 26. Rom. i. 17, 18. 1 Cor ii. 10 Gal. i. 12. 16. i Dan ix. 24. xii 9. 13. Heb. xi. 13 39, 40.——k Mark xvi. 15. Luke ix. 6. Acts viii 25. xvi. 10. Rom. 1. 15 x. 15. xv. 19. 1 Thes. ii. 9. Heb. iv. 2.——l John xv 26. xvi. 7–15. Acts ii. 4. 33 iv. 8 31. x. 44, 45. 2 Cor. vi. 6. 1 Thes. i. 5, 6. Heb. ii. 4.——m Prov. i. 23. Is. xi. 2–6. xxxii 15. xliv. 3–5. Joel ii. 28 Zech xii 10. John xv. 26. Acts ii. 17, 18. n Ex xxv 20 Dan. viii. 13 Luke xv. 10 Eph. iii. 10. Rev. v. 11–13.

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weight of glory, could excite pride, as they would do whilst sin remained in their hearts. To this joyful event all true believers looked forward with serious preparation.

V. 8, 9. The Christians, to whom St. Peter wrote, had, in general, never seen Christ during his humiliation, and they were not at present admitted to see him in his glory: yet they loved his Person, his divine perfections, his human excellencies, and his mediatorial suitableness; they were earnestly desirous of his favour and salvation; they were thankful for his unspeakable love, and the benefits conferred on them; they rejoiced in his exaltation, and were zealous for his glory; and this led them to cleave to him and obey him; to love his people, ordinances, truths, and commandments; and to give up whatever intervened between him and their souls, or was his rival in their affections. This love of an unseen Saviour sprang from faith in him; they believed the testimony of God by his apostles concerning him and his glorious excellencies; and concerning what he had done and suffered for sinners, and his power, grace, and truth. In this faith they had intrusted their souls into his hands, and depended on him to cleanse and save them. From this faith, "working by "love," they derived a joy, that was in its nature so excellent, holy, substantial, and satisfactory, that it could not be expressed by words, as it was "full of glory," or *glorified;* of the same nature and effects with the glory and felicity of heaven: and they shared this joy, in proportion to the degree of their living faith and obedient love; whilst they inwardly delighted in the salvation which was wrought by him, and in their enrapturing discoveries of the glory of God, harmoniously uniting with the everlasting felicity of all believers in Christ; and whilst they possessed the earnests of this felicity, in the graces and consolations of the Holy Spirit, and in communion with the Father and his beloved Son. This faith, love, and joy, in respect of an unseen Saviour, constituted the peculiar experience, and formed the distinguishing character, of real Christians, who thus were assured that they should receive that salvation of their souls, which was the end proposed by them when they believed; and they were continually *receiving* that salvation, in the earnests, comforts, and sanctification of it, amidst their trials, and proportioned to the degree of their faith and grace. (*John* xx. 29.)

V. 10—12. The salvation, to which men were called by the preaching of the Gospel, had been predicted by the prophets from the beginning; so that their writings were peculiarly worthy of the attentive consideration of Christians. These ancient servants of God had themselves, most earnestly and diligently, investigated the meaning of their own predictions; not being able fully to understand what that grace was, which was intended for those who should live after the coming of the Messiah. They therefore searched, as miners do for the precious metals, that they might discover when, and in what manner of time, those things would occur, which the Spirit of Christ, who dwelt in them, did intend by the predictions which he suggested to them, for they did not know the full import of their own words, while they testified, so long before, that the Messiah would pass through a variety of complicated sufferings, even unto death; and that he would afterwards be glorified, in his personal exaltation, and in the extent, peace, and duration of his mediatorial kingdom, the happiness of his subjects, and the destruction of his enemies. (*Notes*, &c. *Ps.* xxii. lxix. *Is.* liii. *Dan.* ix. 24—27.) The Holy Spirit is here spoken of as a distinct Person, and as the Spirit of Christ, not only in that he spake of him, but as sent forth by him long before his incarnation.—The same order was evidently observed, both in the express prophecies of Christ, and in all the typical persons, events, and institutions, that related to him; his sufferings were uniformly represented as introducing his glory, and the glories of his kingdom. The prophets had been immediately instructed, that they should not live to witness the accomplishment of their own predictions; and that neither they nor their contemporaries would derive the principal benefit of their ministry, or enjoy the privileges announced by them; but that they were labouring for the benefit of future generations, whilst they declared those great events, which had at length taken place, and had been reported to the Jews and Gentiles by the apostles of Christ, who had preached the Gospel to them; whose ministry was attested by the miraculous operations of the Holy Spirit, and rendered successful by his efficacious influences; and who was sent down from heaven to bear testimony to the performance of those prophecies, which he had of old inspired. Indeed, these mysteries of redemption contained such displays of the wisdom, power, truth, justice, holiness, and mercy of God, that the angels desired, with great earnestness and persevering attention, to bow down to look into them, and to join in adoration of the divine Redeemer, like

13 Wherefore, [o] gird up the loins of your mind, [p] be sober, [q] and hope [*] to the end, for the grace that is to [r] be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

14 As [s] obedient children, [t] not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts [u] in your ignorance:

15 But [x] as he which hath called you [y] is holy, [z] so be ye holy [a] in all manner of conversation;

16 Because it is written, [b] Be ye holy; for I am holy.

17 And if ye [c] call on the Father, [d] who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, [e] pass the time of your sojourning *here* [f] in fear:

18 Forasmuch as ye know that [g] ye were not redeemed with [h] corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your [i] vain conversation [k] *received* by tradition from your fathers;

19 But [l] with the precious blood of Christ, [m] as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot:

20 Who [n] verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, [o] but was manifest [p] in these last times for you,

21 Who [q] by him do believe in God, [r] that raised him up from the dead, and [s] gave him glory; that [t] your faith and hope might be in God.

[o] Ex. xii. 11. 1 Kings xviii. 46 2 Kings iv. 29. Job xxxviii. 3. xl 7 Is. xi. 5. Jer. i 17. Luke xii 35. xvii. 8 Eph vi 14.

[p] iv 7 v. 8 Luke xxi. 34, 35 Rom. xiii. 13. 1 Thes. v 6, 7.

[q] *See on,* 3—5. iii. 15 Rom xv. 4—15. 1Cor. xiii. 13. 1 Thes. v. 8. Heb. iii. 6 vi. 19. 1 John iii. 3.

[*] Or, *perfectly.*

[r] 4—9. Luke xvii. 30 1 Cor i. 7. 2 Thes i 7. 2 Tim. iv 8. Tit. ii. 11—13. Heb. ix. 28.

[s] Eph. ii. 2 v 6 *Gr.*

[t] iv 2, 3 Rom. vi. 4. xii 2. Eph. iv. 18—22. Col. iii 5—7.

[u] Acts xvii 30. 1 Thes. iv 5. Tit. iii. 3—5.——[x] ii. 9. v. 10. Rom. viii 28. 30 ix 24. Phil. iii. 14. 1 Thes. ii. 12. iv. 7. 2 Tim i 9 Pet. i. 3. 10.——[y] Is. vi. 3. Rev iii. 7 iv. 8 vi. 10.——[z] Matt v. 48. Luke i. 74, 75. 2 Cor vii. 1. Eph. v. 1, 2. Phil. i. 27 ii 15, 16. 1 Thes. iv 3—7. Tit. ii 11—14. iii. 8. 14. Heb xii. 14. 2 Pet. i 4—10.——[a] ii. 12 iii. 16 Phil. iii. 20. 1 Tim. iv. 12. Heb. xiii. 5. Jam. iii. 13. 2 Pet. iii. 11—14.——[b] Lev xi 44. xix. 2. xx. 7. Am. iii. 3.

[c] Zeph. iii. 9. Matt. vi. 9. vii. 7—11. 1 Cor. i. 2. Eph. i. 17. iii. 14.——[d] Deut x 17. 2 Chr xix. 7. Job xxxiv 19. Matt. xxii. 16. Acts x. 34, 35. Rom. ii 10, 11 Gal ii. 6. Eph. vi. 9. Col. iii. 25.——[e] Gen. xlvii 9. 1 Chr. xxix. 15 Ps. xxxix. 12. Heb. xi. 13—16.

[f] Prov. xiv. 16. xxviii. 14. Rom. xi 20. 2 Cor. vii. 1. 11 Phil. ii. 12 Heb. iv 1. xii 28.

[g] Ps. xlix 7, 8. 1 Cor vi 20. vii 23.

[h] *See on,* 7.

[i] Ps. xxxix 6. lxii. 10. Jer iv 14. Rom. i. 21. 1Cor. iii. 20.

[k] Jer. ix. 14. xvi. 19 xliv 17. Ez. xx 18 Am. ii. 4. Zech. i. 4—6. Matt. xv. 2, 6. Acts vii. 51, 52 xix 34, 35. Gal. i. 14, 15.

[l] ii. 22—24 iii. 18. Dan. ix. 24. Zech. xiii. 7. Matt xx. 28. xxvi 28 Acts xx. 28. Eph. i. 7. Col. i 14. Heb. ix. 12—14. 1 John i. 7. ii. 2. Rev i. 5. v. 9.

[m] *See on,* Ex. xii. 5. Is. liii. 7. John i. 29. 36. Acts viii. 32—35. 1 Cor v. 7, 8. Rev. v. 6. xiv. 1.——[n] Gen. iii. 15. Prov. viii. 23 Mic. v 2. Rom. iii. 25, xvi. 25, 26. Eph. i. 4. iii. 9. 11. 2 Tim. i. 9, 10. Tit i. 2, 3. Rev. xiii. 8——[o] Acts iii. 25. 26 Col i. 26 1 John i. 2 iii. 5 8. iv. 9, 10.——[p] Gal. iv. 4 Eph i. 10 Heb. i. 2 ix. 26.

[q] John v. 24 xii 44. xiv. 6. Heb vi. 1. vii. 25.——[r] *See on,* Acts ii. 24. 32. iii. 15. iv. 10.

[s] 11. iii. 22. Matt. xxviii 18. John iii 34. v. 22, 23. xiii. 31, 32. xvii. 1. Acts ii. 33. iii. 13. Eph. i. 20—23. Phil. ii. 9—11 Heb. ii. 9——[t] Ps xlii. 5 cxlvi. 3—5. Jer. xvii. 7. John xiv. 1. Eph. i 12. 13. *Marg.* 15. Col. i. 27. 1 Tim. i. 1.

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the cherubim, who were represented as bowing down to look upon the ark of the covenant. (*Marg. Ref.*) They, as it were, left the glories of heaven, to study the divine perfections, and to learn new songs of adoring praise, in the stable at Bethlehem, in Gethsemane, on mount Calvary, and from the Church, which “God manifested in the flesh,” had “purchased with his own blood.” (*Notes, Eph.* iii. 10. 1 *Tim.* iii. 16.)—***The Spirit of Christ.*** (11.) ‘That is, say the Socinians, the Spirit in them, which spake of Christ, &c. But in this sense he might as well have been styled the Spirit of Antichrist, or of the false prophets, because he also spake of them. All the ancients agree in the other sense, that Christ spake by his Spirit in the prophets, they being inspired with his grace, and taught by his Spirit; their words sprang from the divine Word moving them, and by him they prophesied. He spake in Isaiah, in Elias, and in the mouth of the prophets. So the fathers. Shall holy prophets be so desirous to know the time when these things should happen, and holy angels to look into these glorious revelations; and shall we, to whom, and for whose happiness, this Gospel was revealed, neglect, not only to obtain, but even to know, this great salvation?’ (***Whitby.***)

V. 13—16. As the salvation of Christ had attracted the attention of prophets from the beginning, as it was preached by apostles with the holy Spirit sent down from heaven, and as angels desired to look down unto it, so it behooved those who were so highly favoured to avail themselves of their advantages, and to make suitable returns, with all diligence and alacrity. They ought therefore “to gird up the loins of their minds,” (*Notes, Luke* xii. 35. *Eph.* vi. 14;) by laying aside all carnal prejudices and superfluous cares, with such occupations, desires, and pursuits, as might prevent their clearly understanding, cordially choosing, and cheerfully obeying, the word of the Gospel, and using all means of removing impediments, of invigorating holy affections, and of animating themselves and each other, in diligently serving and patiently suffering for Christ. (*Note, Heb.* xii. 1—3.) They are also especially required to be “sober,” serious, considerate, moderate, and temperate in all things, vigilant, and steadfast in the faith; “hoping *perfectly*,” or, “to the end,” that, notwithstanding all inward conflicts and outward discouragements, the Lord would fulfil his promises, and bring them to his eternal glory; entirely relying on his omnipotence, omniscience, and infinite perfections, to protect, uphold, new-create, and save them, in all cases and against all enemies. Thus they should hold fast the blessed hope of that grace, or free unmerited favour, which will be brought to all true Christians, and be publicly conferred on them, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed, to judge the world and destroy the wicked, (*Notes,* 2 *Thes.* i. 7—10.) They had indeed been children of disobedience and of wrath, but, being born of God, they had become “children of obedience,” and disposed to obey their heavenly Father. This was their profession and character: and, in consistency with it, they must not order their conduct and discourse, or form their plans, in any respect, according to the maxims of the world, or the lusts which they had obeyed and indulged, when they were ignorant of God and true religion, as both Jews and Gentiles had done, while unregenerate, being destitute of any humbling or spiritual knowledge of divine things. But as this blessed change had taken place in them, by the efficacious calling of God, who, being perfectly holy in himself, had purposed to make them happy in his holy service and favour, so they ought now to be holy in every part of their temper, conduct, and conversation, in imitation of his holiness, and in conformity to it. This had been required of Israel under the law; (*Notes, Lev.* xi. 44. xix. 2;) and without this, they could not comfortably walk with God, acceptably worship him at present, or enjoy heaven at last.

V. 17—21. Seeing they, to whom the apostle wrote, now professed themselves the worshippers of God, and called on him as the Father of the Lord Jesus, and their

22 Seeing [u] ye have purified your souls, [x] in obeying the truth [y] through the Spirit, [z] unto unfeigned love of the brethren, [a] *see that ye* love one another with [b] a pure heart fervently:

23 Being [c] born again, [d] not of corruptible seed, [e] but of incorruptible, [f] by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever.

u John xv 3 xvii. 17. 19. Acts xv. 9. Rom vi 16, 17. 2 Thes. ii. 13. Jam. iv. 8. ——x iii. 1. iv. 17. Acts vi. 7 Rom i. 5. ii 8. Gal. iii. 1 v 7. Heb v. 9 xi. 8.——y Rom. viii. 13 Gal. v. 5 2 Tim i. 14. Heb. ix 14.——z ii. 17. iii. 8 iv 8. John xiii. 34, 35. xv 17. Rom xii. 9, 10. 2 Cor vi. 6. Eph iv 3. 1 Thes. iv 9. Heb. vi 10 xiii. 1 Jam ii. 15, 16 2 Pet i 7. 1 John iii 11 14—19 23. iv. 7. 12. 20, 21. v. 1, 2 ——a Phil i. 9. 1 Thes. iii. 12. 2 Thes. i. 3. Rev. ii. 4.

b 1 Tim. i. 5. iv. 12. v. 2.
c *See on*, 3
d Mal. ii 3. Rom i. 23. 1 Cor. xv. 53, 54.
e 1 John iii. 9. v. 18.
f 25. Jer xxiii. 28, 29. Matt. xxiv 35. John vi. 68. Heb. iv. 12. Jam. i 18.

Father in him: they ought to remember, that "without "respect of persons, he judged according to every man's "work." (*Notes, Acts* x. 34, 35. *Rom.* ii. 11.) They should not therefore suppose, that any name or form would avail them; or that he would approve of any man, because he had been a Jew, or was now called a Christian; for he would certainly judge of every man's profession and character by his works, appoint hypocrites their portion with unbelievers, and finally condemn every worker of iniquity. (*Notes, James* ii. 14—26.) Nay, if believers did any evil thing, God would not connive at it because of their relation to him; but he would surely visit them with sharp rebukes and corrections, and refuse them his consolations, till they had deeply repented of it. It therefore behooved them to pass the whole time of their pilgrimage in this evil world, in fear, as well as in hope: not doubting of God's faithfulness to his promises, or giving way to discouraging enslaving dread of his wrath; but being humbly jealous of themselves, and watchful over their own hearts; fearing lest they should be deceived and come short, lest they should dishonour God, or incur his awful rebukes, and lest they should fall into temptation; and uniting their confidence in the Lord's mercy with reverence of his majesty, holiness, and authority. For the Christian's best state of mind is, a due proportion of humble fear and believing hope, at an equal distance from presumption and despondency: without hope, a man is like a ship which hath no anchor; without fear, he resembles one without ballast. The fearless professor is defenceless, and Satan takes him captive at his will; whilst he, who desponds, has no heart to avail himself of his advantages, and surrenders at discretion. They, to whom St. Peter wrote, were exhorted to fear always, as well as to hope to the end; especially as they knew at what a price they had been redeemed. Once they had lived in a vain unprofitable manner, ordering their whole conversation according to traditions received from their fathers. The Jews rested in their legal ceremonies, and the traditions of the elders; and the Gentiles in the absurd fables and idolatrous worship, which had been transmitted to them from their ancestors: and both were at an immense distance from spiritual religion. But they were redeemed from this state of slavery and wretched imprisonment, into which they had been sold for their crimes; not only by power exerted, but by a price paid for them as a satisfaction to the justice of God, that he might be honourable in delivering them. This price had not consisted of corruptible things, such as silver and gold, the treasures which men generally most value; but it had been paid with the blood of Christ, the Son of the living God, which was indeed most precious, by reason of his divine nature and excellency: so that it was sufficient to render it glorious to the justice and law of God, for the sake of it to show mercy and give grace to sinners of every nation and description. (*Note, John* i. 29.) For this was the Lamb of God, without the least spot or blemish of sin, of whose purity and excellency, as well as his sufferings unto death, the innumerable multitude of paschal lambs, and daily burnt-offerings, under the law, had been no more than shadows. He had indeed been fore-ordained to this work, (which none else could have performed,) "from before the foundation of the world," in the eternal counsels of God; and he had been promised as soon as sin had entered: but he had not been personally manifested, "to take away sin by the sacrifice of him-"self," till these last times; in consequence of which he was now openly proclaimed by the preaching of the Gospel, as the Saviour of all men, Jews or Gentiles, who came to him. For the whole benefit was intended for those, who, by his grace and through his intercession and atonement, relied on the mercy, truth, and power of God for salvation: being assured, that he had raised the crucified Jesus from the dead, and conferred on him the predicted glory, (11;) for this very purpose, that sinners, when made sensible of their guilt, and their entire inability to justify, sanctify, and save themselves, or to appear before their just and holy Judge, might fix their faith and hope on God, as reconciled to all believers in his Son, and for his sake engaged to fulfil all his promises to them. *Fear*, &c. (17.) 'Why should he, that hath assurance 'of salvation, fear? If there is truth in his assurance, 'nothing can disappoint him, not sin itself, it is true: 'but it is no less true, that if he do not fear to sin there is 'no truth in his assurance. It is not the assurance of faith; 'but the mispersuasion of a secure and profane mind.' (*Arch. Leighton.*)

V. 22, 23. The souls of those whom the apostle addressed, like those of all other men, had been polluted with ungodliness, pride, malice, selfishness, and worldly lusts: but they had "purified them" from the prevailing influence of these pollutions, as well as from the guilt of their actual sins, in the method which God had appointed for that purpose. They had been shown by the word of truth their need of this purification, and taught in what way it might be effected: and "in obeying the truth," by repentance, faith in Christ, and the use of the means of grace; they were thus cleansed from their filthiness and idols, and the several faculties of their souls were purified and sanctified to serve God in righteousness and true holiness. This purification had been effected, "through the "Spirit," who first quickened, convinced, and humbled them, and so led them to repent, believe, and obey; and afterwards they had sought further degrees of holiness, in dependence on his gracious and powerful influences, and in compliance with them: so that *they* indeed were active in this matter, but *He* had given them both the will and the power. One peculiar effect and evidence of this purity of heart consisted in "unfeigned love of the brethren." They had thus been led to love the image of Christ in his

24 * For [g] all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:

* Or, *For that.*
g 2 Kings xix. 26. Ps. xxxvii. 2 xc. 5 xcii. 7. cii 4. ciii 15. cxxix. 6 Is. xl. 6, 7. li 12. Jam i. 10, 11. iv. 14. 1 John ii. 17.

25 But [h] the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And [i] this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you.

h *See on.* 23. Ps. cii. 12. 26. cxix. 89 Is xl 8. Matt. v. 18 Luke xvi. 17.
i 12. ii. 2. 1 Cor. i. 21—24. ii. 2. xv. 1—4. Eph. ii. 17. iii. 8. Tit. i. 3.

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people, and to esteem them highly, though once they would have despised and hated them: they had learned to love their company, to sympathize in their sorrows, to rejoice in their comforts, to do them good, and to live at peace with them. This they did *unfeignedly*, by choice and in uprightness, and they evinced it by giving up their own interest or indulgence for their benefit. Their love of each other was in this respect far different from that hollow show of friendship and affection which prevails in the world, and which is chiefly expressed by insincere professions and unmeaning compliments. (*Notes, Rom.* xii. 9. 1 *John* iii. 18.) As they had then attained to a measure of this disinterested love, let them see to it, as of the greatest importance, that they loved one another more and more; in the use of the same means, and in dependence on the same Spirit, let them seek more entire purity from every selfish, envious, or malevolent affection, that no anger, bitterness, prejudice, or carnal passions, might warp, debase, or interrupt their mutual love, and that it might grow more fervent and intense, and be manifested in more self-denying endeavours to promote each other's temporal comfort and spiritual advantage.

V. 24, 25. This brotherly love was indeed in some sense natural to them, not as men, but as Christians, as they were all children of one family, and nearer related than any earthly brethren could be. For they were born again, not of corruptible seed, as all the human race are born of Adam's fallen nature, to sicken and die, and so to return to corruption and dust in respect of their bodies; whilst the soul, unless regenerate, must sink into misery; nor yet were they merely distinguished from others as the natural posterity of Abraham, which was only a corruptible seed; but they were born again by means of an incorruptible seed, even by the word of God implanted in their hearts by the Holy Spirit. This, being immutable and eternal truth in itself, lived and would abide for ever, in the effects produced by it on their hearts, according to the promises of God, being the seed of a divine life, and powerfully operating a total change in the judgment, dispositions, and affections of the soul. So that all, who were born again, (however before separated and distinguished,) were thenceforth brethren by an enduring and eternal relation, which will flourish, when all other relations shall be dissolved, or lost in total enmity. For "all "flesh," all that is born of Adam's fallen nature, is as grass; "and all the glory of man." whatever any of the human race ever boasted of, or rejoiced in, was but as the gaudy flower of the grass; whether it were royal or noble birth, genius, wisdom, learning, accomplishments, wealth, magnificence, or splendid actions, or even the glorying of the Jews in being the children of Abraham; for the whole must soon wither and be cut down, and end in the grave and in hell. But the word of God abideth for ever; its truths, promises and threatenings, will be accomplished to eternity, and its effects in the souls of the regenerate will be eternal also; and, as this word had been by the Gospel preached to them, they ought to bless God for their privileges; to seek an increasing experience of its efficacy; to value this distinction above all others; and "to love "one another with a pure heart fervently," without respect to their Jewish or Gentile extraction, or any external distinctions, of whatever kind. 'It is grossly contrary to 'the truth of the Scriptures, to imagine that they, who are 'thus renewed, can be unborn again.' (*Arbp. Leighton.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—5.

As we, if true Christians, are strangers on earth, we should expect contempt and unkindness for the men of this world, and continually prepare for our removal to our eternal home; and we should remember that we are scattered into different countries, cities, and families, as witnesses for God and his truth to those among whom we live. All the redeemed were "elected according to the "foreknowledge of God the Father;" but this cannot be known by them, except "through the sanctification of "the Spirit unto obedience;" and when a simple dependence on the atoning blood of Christ unites with a holy hatred of all sin, and a disposition to obey all the commandments of God, and to delight in them, we may be sure that we are the objects of his everlasting love, and that grace and peace will be multiplied unto us, till they be perfected in the felicity of heaven. "The lively hope "of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and unfa"ding," which springs from regeneration, is inseparably connected with faith in a crucified and risen Saviour: it ascribes all salvation to the abundant mercy of God, and excites the possessor to love and practise holiness; it is peculiar to the real Christian, and it totally differs from the vain confidence of formalists, Pharisees, Antinomians, and enthusiasts, of every description. If we thus hope for an undefiled felicity, and habitually prepare for it, we may well rejoice, that it is "reserved for us in heaven," and that we are kept, as in a castle, by the power of God through faith, unto salvation, which is made ready, and will be openly revealed, when the mystery of God shall be finished.

V. 6—9.

The lively and assured hope of an inheritance in heaven gives substantial joy to the soul, and must be had recourse to in all our troubles for support and animation; yet we cannot but be sometimes in heaviness, when we are called to struggle with manifold temptations, to conflict with inward enemies, to walk in darkness without sensible comfort, or to endure afflictions in body, mind, or circumstances. Even they, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, do on such occasions "groan, being burdened;" and though "the Lord does not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men," yet his wise love often appoints sharp trials for his people, because he knows them to be

CHAP. II.

Christians are exhorted to lay aside selfish and angry passions; that they may desire the sincere milk of the word, of which they had tasted, and grow by it, 1—3. *The preciousness of Christ, the chief Corner-stone; to believers as one with him, by faith, and thus made a holy temple and a spiritual priesthood, according to the scriptures; while unbelievers stumble and perish,* 4—8. *The sacred character and invaluable privileges of believers, as called out of darkness into light, to show forth the praises of God,* 9, 10. *The apostle beseeches them to abstain from fleshly lusts, and by their good conversation to glorify God among the Gentiles,* 11, 12. *He enforces obedience to magistrates,* 13—17, *and that of servants to their masters; exhorting them to suffer patiently for well-doing after the example of Christ, and from love to him,* 18—25.

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necessary, in order to humble and prove them, to show them what is in their hearts, and to do them good at the latter end. When this is the case, or his glory in any way requires it, they will be in heaviness for a short season; but neither their trials, nor the peculiar distressing circumstances connected with them, will be sharper, more numerous, or of longer continuance, than it is needful they should be, in order to try their precious faith, that it may "be found unto praise and honour and glory, at "the coming of the Lord Jesus." In the intervals of their temptations and conflicts, when they are composed enough to make observations on their experiences, they can find that they really do believe in and love an unseen Saviour, and show that faith and love by cleaving to him, and aiming to obey him, in the midst of their troubles; and this causes them to rejoice in his all-sufficiency and grace, in his glory and blessedness, and in admiring his infinite loveliness, and loving kindness, with a joy which is unspeakable, and which forms a sweet antepast of the heavenly felicity; tuning their hearts to the songs of the redeemed, and preparing them for their holy employments. Thus, by the way, they receive in part "the end of their "faith, even the salvation of their souls."

V. 10—16.

While we discourse freely on evangelical and experimental subjects, numbers, either ignorantly or maliciously, charge us with holding novel doctrines, and introducing a new religion; but in fact these principles were first published, as soon as sin entered into the world, though they have passed, so to speak, through several enlarged editions. Concerning these things the ancient prophets inquired and searched with great diligence, that they might know something of the grace preparing for later ages; and for four thousand years, "the sufferings of "Christ, and the glory that should follow," formed the great subject of revelation, in multiplied types, promises, and predictions At length the desire of nations appeared, finished his sufferings, and entered into his glory: then apostles bore testimony to the same important truths, and the Holy Spirit was sent down from heaven to authenticate their testimony, whilst angels desired to look down into these things, as eclipsing all former displays of the harmonious perfections of their God! And shall not we then search diligently those Scriptures, which contain the joyful and interesting doctrines of Salvation? Or shall we neglect the means of appropriating to ourselves its everlasting benefits? Far be this from us! Rather let us throw aside all carnal encumbrances, and use every method of bringing our minds into a proper frame for attending to this grand concern, and of doing the work of our great Master with alacrity and industry. Let us study to be sober in the midst of a giddy, sensual, and intoxicated world: let us hold fast the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end, and show ourselves the "obedient children" of God, by avoiding conformity to the world, and by taking care not to "fashion ourselves according to the former lusts "in our ignorance," but especially watching and praying against those sins, to which we were then most prone or accustomed; and thus let us aim to become holy in all manner of conversation, even as God, who hath called us, is holy; for he sanctifies all whom he saves, and "with-"out holiness no man can see the Lord."

V. 17—21.

The God whom we worship is no respecter of persons, but doth now, and will at last, "judge according to every man's work." He will detect many hypocrites, whom his servants never suspected, and some who never suspected themselves; and he will condemn many, as workers of iniquity, who called Him their Father, and Jesus their Lord and Master. Knowing these things, and aware of the deceitfulness of our hearts, the subtlety of our enemies, and the manifold delusions which are propagated on every side, we should pass the time of our sojourning in this perilous world in humble, watchful, and jealous fear, which will best secure us against fatal deceptions, and preserve us from dishonouring God, and exposing ourselves to his fatherly corrections. It behooves us also frequently to remember, that all the riches of the world could never have saved one soul from eternal destruction. Why then should we covet such perishing treasures? But how vast are our obligations to the Lord Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God, whose precious blood was freely shed to ransom our souls, and to obtain eternal salvation for us! May we by him believe in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, that our faith and hope might rest on the infinite perfection and love of God, for all things pertaining to our salvation. In this view, how absurd does the conduct of all those appear, who cleave to "the vain "conversation delivered to them by tradition from their "fathers," and avow a determination never to change the

[a] WHEREFORE, [b] laying aside all [c] malice, and all [d] guile, and [e] hypocrisies, and [f] envies, and [g] all evil speakings,

2 As [h] new-born babes, desire [i] the sincere milk of the word, that ye may [k] grow thereby;

3 If so be ye have [l] tasted that the Lord *is* gracious:

4 [m] To whom coming, *as unto* [n] a living [o] Stone, [p] disallowed indeed of men, but [q] chosen of God, *and* [r] precious,

5 Ye [s] also, as lively stones, * are built up a spiritual house, [t] an holy priesthood, to offer up [u] spiritual sacrifices, [x] acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

6 Wherefore also [y] it is contained in the scripture, [z] Behold, I lay in Sion a chief Corner-stone, [a] elect, precious; and he that believeth on him [b] shall not be confounded.

a i. [illegible]—25. b Is. [illegible] 20. xxx. 22. Ez. xviii. 31, 32. Rom. xiii. 12. Eph iv. 22—25. Col. iii 5—8. Heb. xii. 1. Jam. i 21 c 16. 1 Cor. v. 8 xiv. 20 Eph. iv. 31. Tit. iii 3—5. d 22. iii 10. Ps xxxii. 2. xxxiv. 13 John i. 47. 1 Thes. ii. 3 Rev. xiv. 5. e Job xxxvi 13 Matt vii 5. xv. 7. xxiii 28. xxiv. 51. Mark xii 15. Luke vi. 42 xi 44. xii. 1, 2. Jam. iii. 17.——f 1 Sam. xviii. 8, 9 Ps. xxxvii. 1. lxxiii 3. Prov. iii 31 xiv. 30. xxiv. 1. 19. Rom. i. 29. xiii 13. 1 Cor iii 2, 3. 2 Cor xii 20 Gal. v. 21—26 Jam. iii. 14. 16 iv. 7 ——g iv. 4 Eph. iv. 31. Col. iii 8 1 Tim. iii. 11. Tit. ii. 3 Jam. iv. 11.——h i 23. Matt. xviii. 3. Mark x. 15 Rom. vi 4. 1 Cor. iii 1. xiv 20 ——i Ps. xix 7—10. 1 Cor. iii. 2. Heb. v. 12. 13.——k 2 Sam. xxiii 5. Job xvii 9. Prov. iv 18 Hos vi. 3. xiv. 5. 7 Mal. iv. 2. Eph ii. 21. iv. 15 2 Thes i. 3 2 Pet iii. 18.——l Ps. ix. 10. xxxiv 8 lxiii. 5. Cant ii 3. Zech ix. 17. Heb. vi 5, 6. m Is lv 3. Jer. iii. 22. Matt. xi. 28. John v. 40. vi. 37.——n John v. 26. vi. 57. xi. 25, 26 xiv. 6 19. Rom. v. 10. Col. iii. 4.

o Is xxviii. 16 Dan ii. 34. 45. Zech. iii 9 iv 7. p Ps cxviii. 22, 23. Is viii. 14, 15 Matt. xxi. 42 Mark xii. 10, 11. Luke xx 17, 18, Acts iv. 11, 12. q Is. xlii 1. Matt. xii. 18 r 7 i. 7. 19 2 Pet. i. 1. 4 s 1 Cor iii. 16. vi. 19 2 Cor vi. 16. Eph ii. 20—22. Heb. iii. 6. Rev. iii 12. * Or, *be ye built* t 9. Is. lxi. 6. lxvi. 21 Rev. i. 6. v. 10. xx. 6. u Ps. l 14. 23. cxli. 2 Hos xiv. 2 Mal. i. 11. John iv 22—24 Rom. xii 1. Phil. ii. 17. iv 18. Heb. xiii. 15, 16 ——x iv. 11 Phil i 11. iv 18 Col iii. 17.——y Dan x 21 Mark xii. 10 John vii. 38. Acts i 16. 2 Tim iii. 16. 2 Pet. i. 20. iii 16 ——z Is xxviii. 16. Zech x 4 Rom. ix. 32, 33. Eph ii. 20 ——a Ps. lxxxix. 19. Is xlii 1 Matt xii 18. Luke xxiii. 35. Eph. i. 4.——b Ps xl 14. Is. xli. 11. xlv. 16, 17. l. 7. liv. 4.

religion which they have inherited from them! If this principle had been adhered to, Christ must have died in vain; for Jews and Gentiles must have agreed in rejecting the Gospel, to cleave to the traditions, superstitions, or idolatry, of their elders and ancestors.

V. 22—25.

It is highly important that men should seriously consider, and be deeply convinced, that their souls must be purified from pollution, or they will inevitably perish; that there is a work and duty for them to attend on in this matter; that they can do nothing in it, except by "obey-"ing the truth;" that they cannot obey the truth but by the Holy Spirit, whom God hath promised to give to those that ask him; and that unfeigned love of true Christians is the proper test and standard of evangelical purity of heart. If we have attained to this infallible evidence that the good work is begun within us, let us see to it, that we love one another with a pure heart fervently; thus it will be more and more evident that we are "born again "of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth "and abideth for ever." As this needful and most blessed change is wrought by the sacred word of divine life, it is of far greater importance to us to search the scriptures daily, to use every means to become acquainted with them, and to bring others in our families or congregations acquainted with them, than to speculate about the *manner* in which they are rendered effectual to this end. All other distinctions will soon be lost in the difference between the regenerate and the unregenerate; all other glory will wither, and terminate in everlasting shame and disgrace; all other unions will be dissolved and perish. But they, who are one in Christ Jesus, and are beautified with his salvation, will be united in perfect love, glory, and felicity, for ever. As this word of the Gospel, which is the seed of eternal life, is preached to us also, let us see to it, that it dwells in our hearts, and brings forth holy fruit in our lives, and then we shall "not be ashamed or confounded, world without end."

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1—3. From the truths stated in the preceding chapter, the apostle took occasion to exhort his brethren to "lay aside," as a cast-off garment, which they had worn too long, all kinds of malice, guile, hypocrisies, insincerity in their profession, or flattery and compliment in conversation, with all envyings and slanders; that, with the simplicity of new-born infants, they might desire and relish the uncorrupted doctrines and precepts of God's word, as the new-born babe craves the nutrimental milk of the breast, and wants no other sustenance; that thus they might grow, by this wholesome food for their souls, in knowledge, faith, hope, love, and every holy affection, and not always be as children, or become dwarfs, who are seldom healthy, comfortable, comely, or useful. This might be expected from them, and even from those that had lately been converted; "if so be," or since, "they had "tasted that the Lord was gracious." The apostle here applied to Christ, as the context proves, what the Psalmist had spoken of JEHOVAH. (*Note, Ps.* xxxiv. 8.) The Lord is merciful and kind, whether men believe it or not; many have inefficacious notions of his mercy, without any experience or taste of it, and these notions commonly embolden them in rebellion; but regenerate persons believe that he is gracious; they apply to him in that behalf, and thus they taste and relish his grace, and have an earnest of their future felicity, even "the "witness in themselves" of his mercy and truth.—*Malice*, &c. (1.) 'The apostles sometimes name some 'of these evils, and sometimes others of them; but they 'are all inseparable as one garment, and all comprehend'ed under that one word, "the old man," which the 'apostle there exhorts to put off. (*Eph.* iv. 22.) "The "word," is both the incorruptible *seed*, and the incor'ruptible *food* of that new life of grace, which must 'therefore be an incorruptible life. Though it seem a 'poor despicable business, that a frail sinful man, like 'yourselves, speak a few words in your hearing; yet, look 'upon it as the means wherein God communicates hap'piness to them that believe, and works that believing 'unto happiness: consider this, which is a true notion, 'and then what can be so precious? (*Arbp. Leighton.*) The word *sincere*, shows with what diligent care the true doctrines and principles of the sacred word should be distinguished from all corrupted and mutilated systems, even as a parent would guard his beloved child from infectious or poisoned nutriment, though it assumed the name, form, and colour of milk.

7 Unto [c] you therefore which believe *he is* [*] precious: but unto them [d] which be disobedient, [e] the Stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made [f] the Head of the corner,

8 And [g] a Stone of stumbling, and a Rock of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, [h] being disobedient; [i] whereunto also they were appointed.

9 But ye *are* [k] a chosen generation, [l] a royal priesthood, [m] an holy nation, [n] a † peculiar people; that ye should [o] shew forth the ‡ praises of him [p] who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

10 Which in time past [q] *were* not a people, but *are* now the people of God: which had not [r] obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

: 8. Cant. v. 9—16. Hag. ii 7 Matt xiii 44—46 John iv 42 vi. 63, 69. Phil. iii. 7—10

[*] Or, *an honour*.

Is. xxviii. 5. Luke ii. 32.

[d] 8. Acts xxvi. 19. Rom x. 21. xv 31. *Marg.* Tit iii. 3 Heb iv. 6. xi. 31. *Marg.*

[e] Ps. cxviii. 22, 23. Matt. xxi 42. Mark xii 10, 11. Luke xx. 17. Acts iv. 11, 12.——[f] Zech. iv. 7 Col. ii. 10 ——[g] Is. viii 14 lvii. 14. Luke ii. 34 Rom. ix. 32, 33 1 Cor. i. 23. 2 Cor ii. 16.——[h] *See on*, 7.——[i] Ex. ix. 16. Rom. ix 22. 1 Thes. v. 9. 2 Pet. ii 3. Jude 4.

[k] i. 2 Deut x. 15 Ps. xxii. 30. xxxiii. 12. lxxiii. 15. Is. xli. 8. xliv. 1.

[l] Ex xix. 6 Is lxi. 6. lxvi. 21. Rev. i 6 v. 10. xx. 6.

[m] Ps cvi 5. Is. xxvi 2. John xvii 19. 1 Cor. iii 17. 2 Tim. i. 9.

[n] Deut. iv. 20. vii. 6 xiv. 2. xxvi. 18, 19. Tit ii. 14.

† Or, *purchased people.* Acts xx. 28 Eph. i 14.

[o] iv. 11. Is. xliii. 21. lx 1—3 Matt. v. 16 Eph. i 6 iii. 21 Phil. ii 15, 16 ——‡ Or, *virtues.*——[p] Is ix. 2. ix. 1, 2. Matt. iv 16. Luke i. 79 Acts xxvi. 18 Rom. ix. 24 Eph. v 8—11. Phil iii. 14 Col i. 13. 1 Thes. v 4—8.——[q] Hos i. 9, 10. Rom. ix. 25, 26.——[r] Hos ii. 23. Rom. xi 6, 7 30. 1 Cor. vii. 25. 1 Tim. i. 13. Heb iv. 16.

V. 4—6. The apostle, having been educated a Jew, and writing to Jewish converts as well as to others, retained the typical language of the Old Testament, concerning a temple, a priesthood, and sacrifices. The temple had been the centre of JEHOVAH's worship; there he displayed his glory from the mercy-seat, and dwelt among his people; there he received their worship, and communicated his benefits; there alone God met sinners and blessed them, and penitent believing sinners approached God, to glorify him; for every accepted service had reference to the worship at the temple. Thus Christ and believers, as one with him, form a spiritual temple, in which God dwells with them and blesses them, and sinners come to God and glorify him. In allusion to this type, Christ is called "a "living Stone," (as elsewhere "living Bread.") This metaphor showed his power, stability, and permanent sufficiency in his Person and mediation, to sustain the whole weight of the glory of God, and the salvation of his people, which was to be builded upon him; and the epithet "living," whilst it showed that the expression was figurative, pointed out the quickening efficacy of his grace on the souls of those who had been dead in sin, and intimated that he ever liveth to make intercession for his people, and to maintain their cause. This Stone was disallowed of men, both Jews and Gentiles, so long as they continued unregenerate, because men are naturally ignorant, self-wise, self-righteous, carnal, and at enmity with God, so that they cannot receive his humbling, holy doctrines and salvation; but it was chosen of God, to be the Support, Cement, and Ornament of the whole spiritual building, and was most precious in itself, and perfectly fitted for that purpose. (*Note, Matt.* xvi. 18.) All therefore, who were born again, and thus enlightened, humbled, made in a measure spiritual, and taught to seek reconciliation unto God, came to Christ, to build their hopes and souls on him whom men despised, that they might be made a part of this holy and living Temple, continually applying to Christ, and to the Father through him, for his salvation, and the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. Thus they, as "*living* stones," by life derived from Christ, became meet to be built up as a part of this spiritual house, consecrated to God, and his holy habitation. (*Notes*, 2 *Cor.* vi. 16. *Eph.* ii. 20—22.) But, to show more fully the import of this figurative language, it was proper that the subject should be illustrated by another metaphor; for, by thus coming to Christ, they were washed, anointed, arrayed, and consecrated, as a "holy priest-"hood," to draw near and minister unto God at his temple; they did not indeed presume to offer atoning sacrifices, but they were consecrated to offer *spiritual* sacrifices, even prayers, supplications, praises, thanksgivings, good works, and liberal contributions to the poor, especially their indigent brethren, and even their very bodies, as devoted to the service of God. (*Notes, Rom.* xii. 1. *Phil.* iv. 18. *Heb.* xiii. 15, 16.) These sacrifices, though defective and defiled, and offered by sinners, would yet be acceptable to God, because honourable to him, when presented through Jesus Christ, and by faith in his atoning sacrifice, and his intercession as their High Priest within the heavenly sanctuary. This accorded to a remarkable prophecy, the explanation of which has already been given. (*Notes, Is.* xxviii. 16. *Rom.* ix. 33.)

V. 7, 8. Unto those who believed, Christ was precious, as the Foundation of all their hopes, their chief Glory, and most valuable Treasure, for they saw such excellency in him, experienced such comfort from him, and so entirely depended on him for salvation, that they were prepared to renounce every thing, even life itself, rather than come short of an interest in him. But, on the other hand, they who continued disobedient, (among whom were the Jewish rulers, scribes, and priests, the supposed builders of the temple,) constituted an awful accomplishment of another scripture. (*Notes, Ps.* cxviii. 19—24. *Matt.* xxi. 40—44.) Notwithstanding their proud and obstinate rejection of Christ, and opposition to him, he was made the Head and Chief Corner-stone; and they could only stumble and be broken on *him*, as a Rock of offence, who was to believers a Refuge and a Rock of salvation. This was the effect of their unbelieving prejudices against the word of the Gospel, and their rebellious disobedience to the commands of their promised Messiah, to which they had been appointed in the righteous judgment of God, who purposed to leave them to their pride and enmity, and to glorify himself in their destruction, as it was evident by the prophecies fulfilled in that event. (*Notes, Is.* viii. 12—15. *Rom.* xi.)

V. 9, 10. "A chosen generation," referring to the covenant with Abraham and his posterity; "a royal "priesthood," referring to the covenants with Aaron, as to the priesthood, and with David, as to the kingdom; and "a holy nation, a peculiar people," referring to the national covenant with Israel, at the giving of the law.—To explain all this, as some do, with great labour and learning, to mean, that nominal Christians are, exactly in

11 Dearly beloved, [s] I beseech *you* [t] as strangers and pilgrims, [u] abstain from fleshly lusts, which [x] war against the soul;

12 Having [y] your conversation [z] honest [a] among the Gentiles; [b] that, * whereas they speak against you as evil-doers, [c] they may, by *your* good works, which they shall behold, [d] glorify God in [e] the day of visitation.

13 [f] Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake:

s Rom. xii. 1. 2 Cor. v 20. vi. 1. Eph. iv. 1 Philem. 9, 10 t i. 1 17. Gen. xxiii 4. xlvii. 9. Lev. xxv 23. 1 Chr. xxix. 15. Ps xxxix 12. cxix. 19. 54. Heb. xi 13.——u iv 2. Luke xxi. 21 Acts xv 20 29. Rom viii 13 xiii. 13, 14 2 Cor. vii. 1. Gal. v. 16. 19–21. 2 Tim. ii. 22 1 John ii. 15–17.——x Rom. vii 23. Gal v. 17 24. 1 Tim vi. 9, 10. Jam. iv. 1.——y iii. 2 Ps xxxvii. 14. 1. 23 2 Cor. i 12 Eph ii. 3. iv 22 Phil i. 27 1 Tim. iv. 12. Heb. xiii. 5. Jam iii. 13 2 Pet. iii. 11. z Rom xii. 17 xiii. 13. 2 Cor. viii. 21. xiii 7. Phil iv. 8. 1 Thes. iv 12. 1 Tim ii. 2 Heb. xiii. 18.

a Gen. xiii. 7, 8. Phil ii 15, 16. b iii. 1. 16 iv. 14–16. Matt v 11 x 25. Luke vi 22 Acts xxiv. 5 6 13. xxv. 7. * Or, *wherein.* c Matt v. 16. Tit ii. 7, 8 d iv. 11 Ps. l. 23. Rom. xv 9. 1 Cor xiv 25 e Luke i 68 xix. 44 Acts xv. 14——f Prov. xvii. 11. xxiv 21. Jer. xxix 7. Matt. xxii. 21. Mark xii. 17. Luke xx. 25. Rom. xiii. 1–7. Eph v. 21. 1 Tim ii. 1, 2. Tit iii. 1. 2 Pet. ii. 10. Jude 9, 10.

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the same sense, "a chosen generation," &c. as Israel was of old, is such a confusion of the typical prophecies contained in the Old Testament, with the accomplishment of them in the true Israel, or the whole body of true believers, as addressed in the New Testament, that to admit it would subvert the whole system of interpretation adopted throughout this work, and which, on mature reflection, even on the objections of opponents, the author is daily more and more assured is the true one. He would not notice these interpretations, but from a fear, lest it should be thought that he had not duly considered what men, eminent for learning, had said against that exposition which he decidedly adheres to. Israel, as a typically chosen generation, was cast off from being the peculiar people of God; but Christians, as the spiritual seed of Abraham, and as born again in consequence of their election in Christ, were *indeed* "a holy generation," nay, "a royal priesthood." A small company of Israel, compared with the whole nation, officiated as priests, and they were not of the same tribe to which the kingdom was allotted; but in Christ the kingly and priestly offices were united, and through him believers became both kings and priests, being every way dignified and made honourable, called to exercise a spiritual dominion over those passions to which others are enslaved, and to obtain victories over Satan, the world, and sin, and appointed heirs of the kingdom of heaven. They also constituted "a holy nation," incorporated under the government of Christ; subject to his holy laws, sanctified by his Spirit, conformed to his image, and safe under his protection; and they were "a peculiar people," purchased with the blood of Christ, redeemed from worse than Egyptian bondage, favoured with peculiar privileges, and formed to a peculiar character and conduct. (*Note, Tit.* ii. 14.) In all these respects they were appointed to show forth the praises of the Lord, by their spiritual worship, their profession of his truth, their holy conversation, and exemplary conduct. To this the apostle exhorted his brethren; the Lord had called many of them out of the total darkness of Pagan idolatry, and the rest from the comparative darkness of the Mosaic dispensation and Jewish formality, into the clear light of the Gospel, to behold the marvellous displays thus given of the divine glory, and to partake of his astonishing love to sinners. This he had done, in order that they might be his witnesses and worshippers, to render him the glory due to his name; and to declare his *virtues* or *energies*, even the efficacy of his grace, in their holy tempers and actions. They had formerly been a people of no name or excellency, but they were now become the people of God, and had obtained that mercy for the pardon of their sins, and the salvation of their souls, to which they once were strangers. The prophecy, thus applied, being elsewhere referred to the calling of the Gentiles, shows that the Jewish converts were not exclusively addressed. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11. The apostle exhorted his dearly beloved fellow-Christians, who were so highly honoured and peculiarly favoured, to consider themselves "as strangers and pilgrims," who were journeying through a distant land to their heavenly inheritance, (*Notes*, &c. i. 1. *Heb.* xi. 13—16,) and to abstain from "fleshly" or *carnal* "lusts," and not allow themselves to hanker after any unlawful, inexpedient, or inordinate animal pleasures, much less to indulge in them, but to keep at a distance from sensuality, and to bridle and restrain all their appetites, and inure them to subjection, as well as to avoid all other carnal desires after things forbidden, or any earthly object. For such lusts warred against men's souls, to the destruction of immense multitudes; nay, they warred against the souls of Christians; and by their strivings against the spirit, or the regenerate part, and their temporary prevalence in their affections and conduct, often wounded and weakened them. Covetousness, pride, envy, and other aspiring and malignant passions, as much militate against the salvation of men's souls, and oppose the believer's growth in grace, as sensual propensities can do; "they war against "the soul," and are numbered by the apostle Paul among "the works of the flesh," (*Notes, Gal.* v. 16—21.) it cannot therefore be proper to explain the words of St. Peter restrictively of the animal appetites, as warring against the rational powers of the soul. The whole natural man is depraved; and in the regenerate, the conflict is not between the body and the soul, but between the new and the old nature, called "the flesh and the spirit;" and the warring against the soul relates to the destructive tendency of fleshly lusts, the indulgence of which, in any way, is hostile to the soul, and wars against its salvation, or its peace, purity, and vigour.

V. 12. It was incumbent on Christians to maintain an honourable and becoming conversation, in all respects, among their Gentile neighbours; that whereas, through their carnal enmity and ignorant prejudices, they were led to invent and propagate slanders concerning them, as if they were evil-doers, or malefactors guilty of crimes injurious to society, because they would not join in the established idolatry among them, they might silence their calumnies, and soften their prejudices, by their evident and abundant good works. Thus their example, in the presence of their enemies, would concur with the preaching of the Gospel, in promoting the conversion of the Gentiles; and "in the day of their visitation," when the Lord should please to call them also by his grace to glorify his name, the holy lives of his people would be owned as the means of that happy change. (*Notes, Matt.* v. 13—16. *Acts* xv. 14.) *Day of visitation.* (*Notes, Gen.* xxi. 1, 2. *Luke* xix. 41—44. *Marg. Ref.*)

whether it be to the king, as supreme;

14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him [g] for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well.

15 For [h] so is the will of God, that [i] with well-doing ye may put to silence [k] the ignorance of [l] foolish men:

16 As [m] free, [n] and not * using *your* liberty for [o] a cloak of maliciousness, [p] but as the servants of God.

17 † Honour all *men.* [q] Love the brotherhood. [r] Fear God. [s] Honour the king.

18 Servants, [t] *be* subject to *your* masters with all fear; not only to [u] the good and gentle, [x] but also to the froward.

19 For [y] this *is* ‡ thank-worthy, if a man [z] for conscience towards God endure grief, [a] suffering wrongfully.

20 For [b] what glory *is it*, if, when ye be [c] buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, [d] when ye do well, and suffer *for it*, ye take it patiently, [e] this *is* § acceptable with God.

g Rom. xiii. 3, 4
h iv 2. Eph vi. 6, 7 1 Thes. iv. 3 v. 18
i *See on.* 12 Job v. 16. Ps. cvii. 42
k 1 Tim. i. 13 2 Pet ii. 12. Jude 10.
l Deut. xxxii. 6 Job ii. 10. Ps. v. 5. Prov. ix. 6. Jer. iv 22. Matt. vii. 26 xxv. 2 Rom i 21 Gal iii. 1 Tit. iii. 3.
m John viii. 32—36. Rom. vi 18 22 1 Cor vii 22. Gal. v. 1. 13. Jam. i. 25 ii 12. 2 Pet. ii. 19.
n Jude 4
* Gr *having*
o Matt. xxiii. 14. John xv. 22. 1 Thes. ii. 5
p Eph. vi 6 Col iii. 24.
† Or, *Esteem.* v. 5. Ex xx. 12 Lev xix. 32. 1 Sam xv. 30. Rom xii 10 xiii. 7. Phil. ii. 3. 1 Tim vi. 1.
q *See on,* i. 22. Heb. xiii. 1 Zech. xi 14
r *See on,* Gen xx 11. xxii. 12 xlii 18. Ps. cxi. 10. Prov. i. 7 xxiii. 17. xxiv 21 Ec. viii. 2. 2 Cor. vii. 1. Eph. v. 21.
s 1 Sam xv. 30. 1 Chr. xxix. 20.——t Eph. vi. 5—7. Col iii. 22—25 1 Tim vi. 1—3 Tit. ii 9, 10.——u 2 Cor x. 1 Gal. v 22. Tit. iii 2. Jam iii 17.——x Ps. ci 4 Prov. iii. 32. viii 13 x. 32. xi. 20 ——y 20. Luke vi. 32.——‡ Or, *thank.* Acts xi. 23 1 Cor. xv. 10. 2 Cor i. 12. viii. 1. *Gr.*——z iii. 14—17. Matt v. 10—12 John xv 21. Rom xiii. 5 2 Tim. i. 12.——a Job xxi. 27. Ps. xxxv. 19. xxxviii. 19. lxix. 4. cxix 86.——b iii 14 iv. 14—16. Matt. v. 47.——c Matt. xxvi. 67. Mark xiv. 65. 1 Cor. iv. 11.——d *See on,* 19.

21 For [f] even hereunto were ye called: [g] because Christ also suffered ‖ for us, [h] leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

22 Who [i] did no sin, neither was [k] guile found in his mouth:

23 Who, [l] when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he [m] threatened not; [n] but committed * *himself* to him that [o] judgeth righteously:

24 Who [p] his own self bare our sins in his own body † on [q] the tree; that we, [r] being dead to sins, should [s] live unto righteousness: [t] by whose stripes ye were [u] healed.

25 For [x] ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto [y] the Shepherd and [z] Bishop of your souls.

e Rom. xii 1, 2. Eph. v. 10. Phil. iv 18.
§ Or, *thank.* *See on,* 19.
f Matt. x. 38. xvi. 24. Mark viii. 34, 35 Luke ix. 23—25 xiv. 26. 27 John xvi. 33. Acts ix. 16. 1 Thes. iii. 3. 2 Tim. iii. 12.
g 24 iii. 18. iv. 1. Luke xxiv. 26. Acts xvii. 3. Heb ii 10.
‖ Some read, *for you.* i 20 21.
h Ps lxxxv. 13. John xiii 15. Rom. viii. 29. 1 Cor. xi. 1. Eph. v. 2 Phil. ii 5. 1 John ii 6.
i Is. liii. 9. Matt. xxvii 4 19 23, 24. Luke xxiii. 31. 47 John viii. 46 2 Cor. v 21. Heb. iv. 15 vii. 26, 27. ix. 28. 1 John ii. 1. iii. 5.
k John i. 47. Rev. xiv. 5.
l Ps. xxxviii 12—14 Is. liii. 7. Mat. xxvii. 39—41. Mark xiv. 60. 61. xv. 29—32. Luke xxii. 64, 65 xxiii. 9 34—39. John xix. 9—11. Acts viii 32—35. Heb xii. 3.——m Acts iv 29. ix 1. Eph. vi 9.——n iv. 19. Ps. x. 14. xxxi 5 xxxvii. 5 Luke xxiii. 46. Acts vii. 59. 2 Tim i. 12——* Or, his cause.——o Gen xviii. 25 Ps. vii 11. xcvi 13 Acts xvii 31. Rom. ii. 5. 2 Thes. i. 5. 2 Tim. iv. 8. Rev. xix. 11.——p Ex. xxviii. 38. Lev. xvi. 22. xxii. 9 Num xviii. 22 Ps. xxxviii. 4. Is liii. 4—6 11. Matt viii. 17 John i. 29 Heb. ix 28. † Or, *to.*——q Deut xxi. 22, 23. Acts v. 30 x 39. xiii. 29 Gal. iii. 13 ——r iv. 1, 2 Rom. vi 2. 7 11 vii 6 *Marg.* Col. ii. 20 iii. 3. *Gr* 2 Cor. vi. 17 Heb. vii. 26.——s Matt. v. 20. Luke i. 74, 75 Acts x. 35 Rom. vi. 16 22 Eph v 9. Phil i. 11. 1 John ii. 29. iii 7. t Is. liii. 5. Matt. xxvii. 26. Mark xv. 15. John xix. 1.——u Ps. cxlvii. 3. Mal. iv. 2. Luke iv. 18. Rev. xxii 2——x Ps cxix. 176. Is. liii. 6. Jer. xxiii. 2. Ez. xxxiv. 6. Matt. ix. 36. xviii. 12. Luke xv 4—6.——y v. 4. Ps xxiii. 1—3. lxxx. 1. Cant i. 7, 8 Is. xl. 11. Ez xxxiv. 11—16 23, 24 xxxvii. 24 Zech. xiii 7. John x. 11. 14. 16 Heb. xiii 20. z Heb. iii 1. Acts xx. 28 *Gr.*

V. 13—17. (*Notes, Rom.* xiii. 1—8. *Tit.* iii. 1.) The words rendered "every ordinance of man," may signify *every human constitution.* God has appointed magistracy as his ordinance, for the peace and good order of society; but the peculiar form of it is left to human prudence, under the direction of Providence. So that Christians are required to submit to that government which is established in the countries where they reside, without attempting any alteration, except in a peaceable and legal manner, according to their rank in the community. The apostle wrote when Nero was the Roman emperor; but he was led to use the more general name of *king*, as his epistle was intended for the use of all future ages. This savage tyrant, who was at length put to death as the enemy of mankind, but not till he had slain multitudes of Christians by his persecuting cruelty, and among the rest the apostles Peter and Paul, (as it is generally supposed,) was the "supreme," whom Christians must submit to and honour! And the governors of provinces, deputed by him and the Roman senate, together with other subordinate magistrates, must also be obeyed. The intention of civil government was to "punish evil-doers," and to protect and honour those who did well; and, in general, the administration even at that time would be productive of much good, though in many things the end of government was doubtless counteracted, for which the rulers would be accountable to God. But in respect of Christians, it was his will that by their good behaviour, in all godliness and honesty, as peaceable subjects, notwithstanding the oppressions which they suffered, they might put to silence the ignorant slanders of foolish and wicked men, who reviled them as seditious persons and enemies to the state, because they would worship God, and would not join in idolatry. They ought indeed to consider themselves "as free" from the ceremonial law, from condemnation, from Satan's yoke, and from human impositions, in respect of God's worship: but they must by no means use their liberty to veil maliciousness, to cover over any sinister and selfish designs, or to find a pretence for gratifying revenge on those who had injured them; but in all things to act as the servants of God, in willing obedience to his commandments, which formed the most perfect liberty that could be enjoyed. Let them, therefore, in obedience to him, show a proper respect and honour to all men, according to their rank and authority in society, and not scruple the customary tokens of subjection in all things lawful; let them at the same time reserve their especial love for the brotherhood, or their fellow-Christians; and, whilst they feared, worshipped, and reverenced God supremely, let them honour the king, as far as consisted with their other duty. (*Note, Matt.* xxii. 15—22.) It is almost impossible that there can be a worse supreme Governor, than he who ruled the vast Roman empire when this was written by divine inspiration. The comprehensive brevity of the closing verse has been greatly and justly admired by competent judges.

V. 18—25. (*Notes, Eph.* vi. 5—9. *Col.* iii. 22—25. 1 *Tim.* vi. 1, 2. *Tit.* ii. 9, 10.) Peter exhorted servants to obedience, even in stronger language than his beloved brother Paul had done. These were generally slaves, and

CHAP. III.

Exhortations to wives and husbands, concerning their respective duties, 1—7; and to all Christians to live in amity, to forgive injuries, to be constant under persecutions; to profess and defend the truth, with meekness; and to maintain a good conscience: enforced, by the nature of their calling, their privileges,

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many of them to heathen masters, who used them very cruelly. The word signifies *domestics*, who, being more constantly under the eye of their masters than other slaves, are supposed to have suffered more from their violent passions. Yet the apostle directed them to be subject to their masters with all *fear*, with a due respect to them, as placed over them by Providence, and with a fear of offending or dishonouring God. This conduct should be observed, not only to such masters as were kind and humane, and who would be pleased on reasonable terms, and be gentle even when offended, but also to the froward and morose, who would be angry without cause, and use severity when displeased. For it would be *grace*, or the effect and evidence of grace, acceptable to God and worthy of man's commendation, if, from a conscientious regard to the authority and will of God, they patiently and meekly endured such treatment as was grievous to be borne, when, not having been faulty, they were unjustly punished. Indeed, what glory or honourable distinction could it be, for professed Christians to be patient, when they were beaten or scourged for their faults, seeing many of the Gentile slaves submitted quietly in this case? But if they behaved well, and were beaten by their proud and passionate *heathen* masters, and yet bore it without peevish complaints or purposes of revenge, still persevering in meek endeavours to do their duty, this indeed would be acceptable with God, and be rewarded by him as a distinguishing effect of his grace. For Christians were called thus to do good to all men, and to endure ill usage from them, and still to proceed with alacrity in doing well, amidst ingratitude, revilings, and injuries, without being wearied out by any kind or degree of evil done to them: because Christ, when he suffered in their stead, left them, in this, and in all other respects, an example, that they should follow his steps, that in the same Object, to which they looked for pardon and righteousness, they might learn how to act in the most trying circumstances. He indeed had done no kind of sin, and perfect wisdom, love, and holiness, were displayed in all his works, nor was there any guile in his words: so that the contempt, malice, and cruelty, with which he met, were the base returns for the greatest kindnesses, and the unworthy treatment of consummate excellency. Yet when he was reviled as if guilty of the most atrocious crimes, he did not retort the reproachful language, though most justly deserved by his enemies: and even when he suffered all kinds of indignities and tortures, till they terminated in his death on the cross, he did not so much as menace his crucifiers, though all power was vested in him. On the contrary, he prayed for them, saying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what "they do," and thus he "committed himself to him who "judged righteously," and left him to justify his character, plead his cause, and punish his enemies. This example Christians were peculiarly bound to consider and imitate, because the Lord Jesus, when he thus suffered, acted as their holy and divine Surety; and pitying their misery when they deserved, and were exposed to, the wrath of God, he voluntarily bore the guilt and punishment of their sins as imputed to him, and expiated them by his death on the accursed tree; in order that through his grace, and the encouragements of his Gospel, they might become dead to, and separate from sin, and live unto righteousness, as the obedient servants of God. Thus, through the ignominious stripes which he, (holy and glorious as he was,) willingly endured for them, and by the scars of those wounds which he received for their sakes, the diseases of their souls were healed, which were far worse than the livid marks left on their bodie from the cruel scourgings inflicted on them, in which they were conformed to their divine Lord: and the consideration of his scourgings and livid scars was suited, in the most affecting manner, to reconcile the poor slaves, while suffering under the cruel usage of their masters, to their hard lot, when their Redeemer, the Holy Jesus, the Lord of glory, had thus suffered for their salvation. These things indeed related to all Christians, though especially addressed to slaves; for they had, without exception, been as sheep going astray, and must have fallen a prey to the roaring lion that sought to devour their souls; but they had been sought out by, and *brought back* to, the good Shepherd, who laid down his life for the sheep; and thus they were safely lodged in his fold under his care, and become partakers of his love, who, as the Bishop, or Overseer of their souls, watched over them, and was become their omniscient, omnipotent, and most holy Protector. (*Notes, &c. Is.* liii. *Ps.* cxix. 176. *Luke* xv. 1—6.) Some expositors call the things, which the apostle here speaks concerning Christ, a digression from his subject, and the effect of the fulness of his heart: but I apprehend, that the Holy Spirit led him thus to write, that ministers might learn, from his example, to inculcate *practical* matters from *evangelical* principles.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—3

The apostles with one consent declare the necessity of "laying aside all malice, guile, hypocrisies, envies, and "slanders," in order to receive with meekness the instructions of Christ. We need not then wonder, that there are so many unfruitful hearers of the word, and that others are so little edified, when we observe how much these apostolical injunctions are neglected. But let those, who are as new-born infants in the family of God, and who have "tasted that the Lord is gracious," avoid all those who would mislead them into controversies, which are commonly conducted with malice, envy, deceit and detraction, and let them beware of all hypocrisy: that so their spiritual health may be preserved, a vitiated appetite prevented, and a desire after and relish of the holy word *and the example of Christ, 8—18. The case of those to whom Christ, by his spirit in Noah, had preached, who yet perished in the deluge; and that of Noah and his family saved in the ark; an emblem of the destruction of the wicked, and the salvation of those, who had not only the sign of baptism, but the thing signified by it, through a risen and glorified Redeemer, 18—22.*

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of God increased. They ought also to attend primarily to the more simple and easy parts of divine truth, which is the proper milk for young converts; that so, growing by it to maturity of judgment, experience, and grace, they may at length be able to digest the more difficult doctrines, which are suitable food for those who are of full age, and which will never be given to new-born babes, by those who know how rightly to divide the word of truth. But let no man rest in unexperienced notions: for even babes in Christ *taste* that he is gracious, and their experience of his love and mercy draws them to seek to him in all their further distresses, fears, wants, and temptations, and to rest on him as the Foundation of all their hopes. Thus they are coming daily to him, and are builded on him, as living stones, to be a spiritual house, and consecrated by him as a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through him: for true religion consists of *doctrine*, *experience*, and *practice;* and he who separates these destroys the whole. As the Lord hath laid this Chief Corner-stone, elect, precious, to be the Foundation of his living temple, they, who are taught to come to him, and rest their hopes on him, will surely be safe and happy: for the whole scripture declares, that "he who believeth "on him shall never be ashamed." But whilst our Emmanuel and his salvation are glorious in the eyes and precious to the hearts of all the regenerate, who deem it their chief honour to belong to him and serve him, men in general, continuing proud, carnal, and alienated from God, can see no comeliness or glory in them. Though he is made "the Head-Stone of the corner," yet modern builders in general make no account of him, but carry on their work, either in open opposition to him, or in manifest neglect of him. Thus they stumble at the word, being disobedient, and will perish more dreadfully than if he had never come to be the Saviour of sinners: "whereunto also they "were appointed." But let us inquire, whether we have the obedient faith of those to whom "Christ is precious:" for many profess his truths, who stumble at his precepts, and so in another way he becomes to them "a Rock of of-"fence," and an occasion of deeper condemnation.

V. 9—17.

Happy are they, of whom it may truly be said, "Ye "are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy na-"tion, a peculiar people!" If we aspire to these distinctions, let us be followers of God as dear children, let us abound in our spiritual sacrifices, and be careful to act up to the dignity and sanctity of our royal and priestly character, in all the concerns of life: let us obey the holy laws of Christ our King, and seek his honour, in connexion with the peace and prosperity of our fellow-subjects: and let us be careful to appear as "a peculiar people, zealous "of good works," whose great business it is, "to show "forth the praises of God, who hath called us out of dark-"ness into his marvellous light." Thus we shall best evince, that these blessings belong to us, and shall make the most suitable returns for them. Most of us well know, that once we were not a people devoted to the Lord, nor had we sought or obtained mercy from him: how vast then are our obligations to him, who hath made us his people, and shown mercy to us! It becomes us, therefore, as strangers and pilgrims, to abstain from all kinds of fleshly lusts, which continually war against the souls of men: nor can a believer, in any instance or degree, indulge them, without being wounded, weakened, defiled, and injured. But we should not only consider our own comfort and advantages: the honour of the Gospel, and the conversion of our neighbours, likewise demand our attention. Let us then study to have our conversation honest and honourable, amidst our enemies and slanderers; that, whereas they revile us as evil doers, our evident good works may refute their slanders, and be the means, if the Lord please, of bringing them also to believe in him, and to glorify his name: for if we, who had not obtained mercy, have at length obtained mercy, why may not they, who still remain ignorant and prejudiced, be made partakers of the same salvation? With this intent, and from other evangelical motives, we should submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, obeying the king, and all placed in authority under him, praying for them, that they may have wisdom and grace to be faithful to their important trust, and for the preservation of our most excellent constitution; and endeavouring, as "the quiet in the land," by "well-doing to put to silence the ignorance of foolish "men, as free," with that liberty which the Son of God bestows through the Holy Spirit; but remembering that we are the servants of God, and must in no degree use our liberty to cloak any malicious or ambitious designs. By thus honouring all men, loving our brethren, fearing God, and honouring the king, we shall best adorn the Gospel, and most experience its comfort.

V. 18—25.

The view given by the apostle, of the behaviour of many masters to their unoffending slaves, may serve to convince us, how incompatible slavery is with the love of our neighbours, and animate us to protest in all proper ways against so grievous an oppression of our fellow-creatures: yet Christianity, among its other unparalleled excellencies, teaches men to behave honourably, and live comfortably, even in these circumstances of degradation and suffering. But if *slaves*, when thus unjustly and cruelly used, were directed to submit to their masters, and respect them, how inexcusable are those *hired servants*, who, professing the Gospel, do not obey good and gentle masters; who can endure no degree of frowardness in others, through the indulgence of it in themselves; and who will not bear a reproof, when they are most evidently

LIKEWISE, [a] ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any [b] obey not the word, [c] they also may, without the word, be [d] won by the conversation of the wives;

2 While they [e] behold your chaste conversation *coupled* [f] with fear:

3 Whose [g] adorning, let it not be [h] that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

4 But *let it be* [i] the hidden man of the heart, in that [j] which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of [k] a meek and [l] quiet spirit, [m] which is in the sight of God of great price.

5 For after this manner, in the old time, [n] the holy women also, [o] who trusted in God, [p] adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:

6 Even [q] as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose * daughters ye

a Gen. iii. 16. Esth. i. 16—20. Rom. vii 2. *Gr.* 1 Cor. xi. 3. xiv. 34 Eph v 22—24. 33 Col. iii. 18. 1 Tim ii 11, 12. Tit. ii. 3—5.
b i. 22. iv. 17. Rom. vi 17 x. 16. 2 Thes i 8. Heb v. 9. xi 8.
c 1 Cor vii. 16. Col. iv. 5
d Prov. xi. 30 xviii 19 Matt. xviii. 15 1 Cor ix 19—22 Jam. v. 19, 20
e 16. i. 15 ii. 12 Phil i. 27. iii. 20. 1 Tim iv 12. 2 Pet iii. 11.——f 5, 6. 15. Eph. v 33. vi. 5. Col. iii 22 ——g 1 Tim ii. 9 Rev xxi 2 ——h Gen. xxiv 22 47. 53 Ex. iii. 22. xxxii 2. xxxiii. 4. xxxv. 22 xxxviii. 8. 2 Kings ix. 30. Esth v. 1: Ps. xlv. 9. Is. iii. 18—24 lii 1. lxi. 10. Jer. ii. 32. iv. 30. Ez. xvi. 7—13 xxiii. 40.

i Ps. xlv. 13. li. 6. Matt. xxiii. 26. Luke xi. 40. Rom. ii 29 vi 6 vii 22 2 Cor. iv. 16. Eph. iv 22—24. Col iii 3. 9, 10.
j i 23.
k 15. Ps. xxv. 9. cxlvii 6. Is. xi 4 xxix. 19. lvii 15. lxi. 1. Matt. v. 5. xi. 29 xxi 5
l 2 Cor x. 1. Gal. v. 23. Eph. iv. 2. Col. iii. 12. 2 Tim. ii 25. Tit iii. 2. Jam. i. 21. iii 13—17.
m Ps. cxxxi. 2. Jer. li 9 1 Thes. iv. 11 2 Thes. iii. 12. 1 Tim. ii. 2.——m 1 Sam. xvi 7. Ps. cxlvii. 12, 13. cxlix. 4. Luke xvi. 15.——n Prov. xxxi. 10 30. Luke viii. 2, 3 Acts i 14. ix 36 1 Tim. ii. 10 v. 10. Tit ii. 3, 4.——o 1 Sam. ii. 1. Jer. xlix. 11. Luke ii 37 1 Tim ii. 15. v. 5. Heb xi. 11. p 2—4.——q Gen. xviii. 12 ——* Gr. *children*. Rom. ix. 7—9. Gal. iv. 22—26.

culpable! Indeed, this would be no evidence of grace or acceptable obedience, though it would be better than answering again; but when, in any situation, we do well, and then suffer rebuke or ill usage, patiently, from conscience towards God, we manifest the reality of our grace, ensure a bounteous recompense, and have the honour of resembling our blessed Lord; and servants to *unconverted* masters, who without cause abuse and revile them, should rejoice in showing whose followers they are. Indeed, we cannot go through with our duty as Christians in any station, if we do not persevere in endeavouring to "overcome evil with good," copying the conduct of him who "suffered for us, and left us an example that we should "follow his steps." Our sufferings and reproaches can neither be so unmerited, or so great, as *his* were, who "when he was reviled, reviled not again;" who suffered without threatening, and "committed himself to him that "judgeth righteously." As therefore "he, his own self, "bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being "dead to sin, might live unto righteousness," and that by his stripes our souls might be healed; and as we all were as sheep going astray, till divine grace brought us back to "the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls;" let us learn to copy his example when we are reviled and abused, as well as to rely on his merits, and keep close under his gracious protection and guidance.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1—4. (*Notes, Eph.* v. 22—33.) The apostle next gave directions concerning the duties of wives and husbands, as a matter of great importance to the credit and success of the Gospel. In general, wives were commanded to be subject to their own husbands; and even they who were married to Gentiles, or other unbelievers, whether they had been converted since their marriage, or had *sinfully* brought themselves into so trying a situation, ought to obey this commandment in *all things* lawful. (*Notes, Gen.* iii. 16. 1 *Cor.* vii. 10—16. xi. 3—16.) This must be attended to in a conscientious manner, not only in order to lighten their own trial, and to "adorn "the Gospel," but with an especial aim at the conversion of their husbands, which was not so much to be expected from a disputatious attempt to teach them the Gospel, as from the silent, persuasive eloquence of a becoming deportment. Thus they might hope to win upon those who did not obey the word, but treated it with contempt and neglect; as the constant, obliging, amiable conduct and prudent discourse of their wives would tend to soften their prejudices, and conciliate their affections, and so induce them to pay more attention to the preached Gospel. For it would have a considerable tendency to their conviction, habitually to witness the excellent effects of Christianity, in the chaste, modest, and faithful conduct of their wives, as united with respectful fear of disobliging or grieving them, and reverential regard to the authority and commands of God. In this endeavour to promote the Gospel, they must not deem outward things, such as plaiting the hair, wearing golden rings and bracelets, or putting on elegant or becoming garments, to be "their adorning," in any degree; but they must value and seek for an inward beauty, residing in the heart as a hidden man, visible in its essence only unto God, and consisting of a renewal and sanctification of the whole soul into the divine image, through the incorruptible seed of the word, made effectual by the power of the Holy Spirit; for this alone would continue for ever, without decay, or being tarnished. This inward beauty and ornament of a sanctified heart, would especially be manifested by "a meek and quiet "spirit," which was in the sight of God very valuable; and he would certainly honour it, though men might undervalue it: indeed, it would be their best ornament in the sight of their husbands, and do far more to fix their affections and excite their esteem, than the studied decorations of becoming or fashionable apparel, attended by a froward and contentious temper. (*Notes,* 1 *Tim.* ii. 9, 10.) Outward ornaments, according to every one's rank in life, are not absolutely prohibited by such scriptures, as has been generally observed; but the frivolous affectation and vanity, which constitute the love of finery; the time, attention, and expense, wasted by those who are attached to such decorations, and the proportionable neglect of the inward adorning which uniformly connects with it, sufficiently prove that the more moderate and indifferent about such embellishments Christians are, from proper principles, and without preciseness and censoriousness, the more respectable and amiable they must appear in the eyes of all competent judges. 'The works of charity performed to 'the distressed, with the money necessary for purchasing 'ornaments of gold and costly attire, will render women 'much more beautiful in the eyes of God and man, than 'if they were decked with all the vain ornaments in 'which the lighter part of the sex delight.' (*Macknight.*)

are, as long as ye do well, [r] and are not afraid with any amazement.

7 Likewise, [s] ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, [t] giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being [u] heirs together of the grace of life; [x] that your prayers be not hindered.

8 ¶ Finally, [y] *be ye* all of one mind, [z] having compassion one of another; * love as brethren, *be* [a] pitiful, [b] *be* courteous:

9 Not [c] rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise, blessing;

r 14, 15. Gen xviii 15 Is. lvii. 11. Dan. iii. 16—18. Matt. xxvi. 69—75. Acts iv. 8—13 19.
s Gen. ii. 23. 24. Prov. v. 15—19 Mal ii 14—16. Matt. xix 3—9 1 Cor vii. 3. Eph. v 25—28. 33.
t 1 Cor. xii. 22—24 1 Thes. iv 4
u Eph iii 6 Tit. iii. 7 Heb i 14.
x Job xlii 8. Matt xviii. 19. Rom. viii. 26, 27 Eph. iv. 30. vi 18.
y *See on,* Acts ii. 1 iv. 32 Rom. xii 16. xv. 5. 1Cor. i. 10. Phil. iii. 16
z Zech vii. 9. Matt. xviii 33. Luke x 33. Rom. xii. 15. 1 Cor. xii 26 Jam. ii. 13. iii. 17.——* Or, *loving to the brethren. See on,* i 22 2 Pet. i. 7. 1 John iii. 14 18, 19.——a Ps. ciii 13 Prov. xxviii. 8. Matt. xviii 33 Jam v. 11 —b Acts xxvii. 3. xxviii. 7 Eph. iv. 31, 32 v. 1, 2. Phil. iv 8, 9 Col iii. 12.——c ii. 20—23. Prov. xx. 22 Matt. v. 39. 44. Luke vi 27—29. Rom. xii. 14. 17. 19—21. 1 Cor. iv. 12, 13 1 Thes. v. 15.

knowing that ye are thereunto [d] called, [e] that ye should inherit a blessing.

10 For [f] he that will [g] love life, and [h] see good days, let him [i] refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they [k] speak no guile:

11 Let him [l] eschew evil, and [m] do good; let him [n] seek peace, and ensue it.

12 For [o] the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous, and [p] his ears *are open* unto their prayers: [q] but the face of the Lord *is* † against them that do evil.

d ii. 21. v 10. *See on,* Rom. viii. 28. 30
e Matt. xix. 29. xxv. 34 Mark x 17. Luke x. 25. xviii. 18.
f *See on,* Ps xxxiv. 12—16.
g Deut. xxxii. 47. Job ii 4. Prov. iii. 2. 18. iv. 22. viii. 35. Matt. xix 17. Mark viii 35. John xii. 25.
h Job vii. 7, 8. ix 25 xxxiii 26 Ps xxvii. 13. xlix. 19 cvi. 5. Ec. ii 3. Matt. xiii, 16, 17.
i *See on,* Jam. i. 26. iii 1—10.
k ii. 1 22. John i. 47. Rev. xiv. 5.
l Job i 1. ii 3 xxviii. 28. Ps. xxxiv. 14. xxxvii. 27. Prov. iii. 7. xvi. 6. 17. Is. i. 16. 17. Matt. vi. 13. John xvii. 15 ——m Ps cxxv. 4 Matt v. 45 Mark xiv 7 Luke vi 9. 35. Rom. vii 19. 21. Gal. i. 10 1 Tim. vi. 18. Heb. xiii. 16. Jam. iv. 17 3 John 11.——n Ps cxx. 6, 7. Matt v 9 Luke i. 79 Rom. v. 1. viii 6 xii. 18 xiv. 17. 19 Gal. v. 22 Col iii. 15. Heb xii. 14 Jam. iii 17, 18 ——o Deut xi. 12. 2 Chr xvi. 9 Ps xi 4. Prov xv. 3. Zech. iv. 10.——p 2 Chr. vii. 15. Ps lxv. 2. Prov xv 8. 29. John ix 31 Jam. v. 16. q Lev. xvii. 10. xx 3 6. xxvi 17. Ps. lxxx. 16. Jer. xxi. 10 Ez. xv. 7.——† Gr. *upon.*

V. 5, 6. The inward ornaments, which the apostle recommended, had been of repute in the church from the most remote antiquity; for thus holy women of old time, who trusted in the promises of God, and were interested in his salvation, had adorned themselves; not counting either their personal beauty, or their costly garments, *their adorning;* but in the meekness of wisdom they willingly obeyed God, by being in subjection to their own husbands. Thus Sarah, the honoured mother of the nation of Israel, had obeyed Abraham; and in token of her respect for his person, and the authority which God had vested in him, she was used to call him lord. It is remarkable, that in the instance where this is recorded, Sarah expressed such unbelief respecting the promise of God, that she was sharply rebuked for it; yet that is here passed over, and the only good word which she spoke on this occasion is mentioned to her commendation. This shows how readily the Lord pardons the sins, and how graciously he accepts the poor services of the upright. Many of the Christian women whom Peter addressed were descended from Abraham and Sarah, and the others would be accounted as her daughters, heirs of her faith, and imitators of her example, so long as they behaved well in their relative duties, and as professed disciples, and were not so afraid of the anger of their husbands, or others, as to deny Christ, or act contrary to his commandments, through unbelief and consternation of spirit; for this would be rather an imitation of Sarah, when through surprise she denied that she laughed, than of her faith and holiness, or her becoming subjection to her husband.

V. 7. On the other hand, the apostle exhorted husbands, professing the Gospel, to dwell with their wives in a rational and intelligent manner, which might evince the propriety of the authority being conferred on them. They ought to behave towards them, as became those who had the knowledge of God, and of true religion; who understood the ends for which marriage was appointed, and the manner in which pious persons ought to behave in that holy estate; and this would keep them from every thing unbecoming, unkind, unfaithful, or injurious to their temporal comfort, or spiritual improvement. As their wives were of the same nature, and conjoined in the most endeared and indissoluble union, which blended all their interests with those of their husbands, so the consideration of their inferiority in this relation, and the comparative weakness of their sex, which rendered them incapable of so great hardship and fatigue as men could endure, together with their manifold infirmities, as connected with child-bearing, should induce their husbands to treat them with the greater respect and tender regard, instead of exciting them to tyrannize over them. They ought therefore to show a peculiar esteem and affection for them, to take much satisfaction in their company, to honour them before servants and strangers, to support their credit in the family, to make a becoming provision for their wants, to lay no unreasonable injunctions upon them, and to show a great concern in every thing relative to their health, comfort, and reputation. And if they would be thought superior in knowledge or wisdom, they ought to show it, by not taking offence at trifles, and by giving up their own humours and inclinations to oblige their wives, and for their welfare. These things should be attended to, from the consideration that they were fellow-heirs of the free favour and gift of God, which is eternal life; and therefore, as companions in their pilgrimage, they ought to do all that they possibly could to solace, counsel, and assist each other by the way; and they should more attentively guard against all disagreements and domestic uneasiness, that nothing might occur to indispose them for prayer, in secret, with each other, and in the family. This being essential to the Christian's prosperity, was a matter of so great importance, that all things in their whole conduct ought to be regulated with reference to it. Perhaps it might also be intimated, that in case a Christian had an unconverted wife, he ought to study by kind behaviour to conciliate her mind, that so she might do nothing to interrupt the social worship of the family, but might be induced amicably to join in it.

V. 8—12. (*Notes,* ii. 23. *Rom.* xii. 10—20. 1 *Cor.* xiii. *Eph.* iv. 1—3. *Phil.* ii. 1—4.) These exhortations entirely coincide with those which have been considered in St. Paul's epistles. As the conclusion and substance of all his admonitions, the apostle exhorted them to be of one mind and judgment, as far as possible, in the great

13 And [r] who *is* he that will harm you, if ye be [s] followers of that which is good?

14 But and [t] if ye suffer for righteousness sake, happy *are ye*: [u] and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

15 But [x] sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: [y] and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you [z] a reason of [a] the hope that is in you, [b] with meekness and * fear:

r Prov. xvi. 7. Rom. xiii 3.
s Ps. xxxviii. 20. Prov xv 9 1 Cor. xiv. 1. Eph. v. 1. 1 Thes v. 15. 1 Tim. v. 10. 3 John 11.
t ii. 19, 20. iv. 13—16. Jer. xv 15. Matt. v. 10—12. x. 18—22. 39. xvi 25 xix. 29. Mark viii. 35. x. 29 Luke vi. 22, 23. Acts ix 16. 2 Cor xii. 10. Phil. i. 29 Jam. i. 12.
u Is. viii. 12, 13. xli. 10—14. Jer. i. 8 Ez. iii 9. Matt x. 28. 31. Luke xii. 4, 5. John xiv. 1. 27. Acts xviii. 9, 10.——x Num. xx. 12 xxvii. 14. Is. v. 16 xxix. 23 ——y Ps. cxix. 46. Jer. xxvi. 12—16. Dan. iii 16—18. Am. vii. 14—17. Matt. x. 18—20. Luke xxi. 14, 15. Acts iv. 8—12. v. 29—31. xxi. 39, 40. xxii. 1, 2, &c. Col. iv. 6.——z 1 Sam xii. 7. Is. i. 18. xli. 21. Acts xxiv. 25.——a *See on*, i. 3, 4 Col. i. 5. 23 27. Tit i. 2. Heb. iii. 6. vi. 11. 18, 19.——b *See on*, 2. 4. 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26.——* Or, *reverence*.

16 Having [c] a good conscience; that, [d] whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil-doers, they may be ashamed that [e] falsely accuse your [f] good conversation in Christ.

17 For *it is* better, [g] if the will of God be so, that ye [h] suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing.

18 For [i] Christ also hath once suffered for sins, [k] the just for the unjust, [l] that he might bring us to God, [m] being put to death in the flesh, [n] but quickened by the Spirit:

c 21. ii. 19. Acts xxiv. 16. Rom. ix. 1 2 Cor i. 12 iv. 2 1 Tim. i. 5. 19. 2 Tim. i. 3. Heb ix. 14. xiii. 18.
d *See on*, ii. 12 Tit ii 8
e Matt. v. 11.
f *See on*, i, 2.
g iv. 19 Matt. xxvi. 39. 42. Acts xxi. 14.
h *See on*, 14.
i ii. 21—24 Is. liii. 4—6. Rom. v. 6—8. viii. 3. 2 Cor. v. 21. Gal i. 4. iii. 13. Tit. ii 14 Heb. ix. 26 28.
k Zech. ix. 9. Matt. xxvii. 19. 24. Acts iii. 14. xxii. 14. Jam. v. 6. 1 John i. 9.——l Eph. ii. 16—18.——m iv 1. Dan ix. 26. 2 Cor. xiii. 4. Col. i. 22. n Rom viii. 11.

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concerns of religion; to sympathize with each other in their personal trials and sorrows; to bear a brotherly affection to all their fellow Christians; to compassionate the miseries, and relieve the wants, of their unbelieving neighbours; to be friendly, obliging, affable, accessible, and condescending to inferiors, in their whole conduct; endeavouring to conciliate the affections of all men, by every kind of civility and concession, as far as could consist with their other duties; and by no means retaliating injuries or retorting revilings, but, on the contrary, blessing, and praying for, their contumelious and malicious enemies, and speaking kindly to them. In doing this, they might be encouraged and influenced by the consideration, that God had graciously called them, from being his enemies, and exposed to the awful curse of his law, by the grace of his Gospel, to inherit a blessing in time and to eternity; and therefore they ought to copy his love, who had "over-"come evil with good" in his dealings with them; and to pity the misery and blindness, rather than resent the injuries, of their enemies, who could not possibly deprive them of their felicity. (*Marg. Ref.*) This accorded to the advice given to young persons by the Psalmist: (*Notes, Ps.* xxxiv. 11—16.) For if any man desired to prolong his days, and live comfortably on earth, or to possess the hope of eternal life in heaven, he must learn to bridle his tongue from all wicked, abusive, or deceitful words, (*Notes, James* i. iii. 26;) to forsake and depart far from all evil actions; to do all the good he could; to seek peace with all men, and pursue it, though it fled from him. For the omniscient and omnipresent God watched over the righteous, and would take care of them; (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xvi. 9. *Ps.* ciii. 17.) and he was ever ready to hear and answer their prayers: but he set himself, as a frowning Judge and an omnipotent Adversary, against all impenitent sinners.

V. 13—18. The apostle, with great animation, next inquired, who could or would harm them, if they copied the example of him, who is essential and perfect goodness; and were *imitators* of every one, who did good to others, as followers of Christ. In this case none could do them real harm; and this inoffensive, upright, and benevolent conduct would generally, in time, disarm the enmity of their neighbours. But if this should not be the case, (as Satan would attempt to instigate the natural enmity of men's hearts against the Gospel, and, by connecting it with the ambition, jealousy, resentment, political interest, or bigotry of rulers, to persecute the church,) and they should be called to "suffer for righteousness' sake," they ought to deem this a peculiar honour and happiness, (*Note, Matt.* v. 10—12.) Nor ought they to be dismayed at the rage, menaces, decrees, and power of their persecutors, which were "their terror," but which could only kill the body at most, and could not so much as touch that without the permission of God; and, therefore, they should not be so troubled about these matters, as by confusion of mind to be unfit for their duty, or in danger of listening to temptations, and denying Christ, as the apostle himself had done on a former occasion. To avoid this, they ought to sanctify the Lord God in their hearts, maintaining honourable thoughts of his perfections, fearing nothing so much as his displeasure, and trusting their souls, lives, liberty, possessions, reputations, and families, in his hands, as in a Sanctuary and a strong Tower, (*Note, Is.* viii. 13—15.) Instead, therefore of renouncing or concealing their religion, they were exhorted to be at all times ready and prepared to plead the cause of truth, and to show its excellency and authority to "every man, who asked a reason "of the hope that was in them," whether he were a magistrate, or a private person, and whatever motives induced him to the inquiry. They hoped in God through Christ for eternal life, and in this confidence they renounced present advantages, and exposed themselves to most grievous sufferings; what therefore was the ground and reason of their hope? This question they should be prepared to answer, by showing the evidences and design of Christianity, the need men have of forgiveness and sanctification, the nature of redemption by the blood of Christ, and of the new-creation of the Spirit unto obedience, and the promises, security, and seal of the new covenant. *Thus* they might evince, from the authenticated word of God, and their own experience of its effects, that they hoped for happiness on reasonable grounds, and acted wisely in renouncing, venturing, and suffering all things, for the sake of it. But cogent arguments alone would not suffice in this testimony; they must also speak *with meekness*, or modesty, humility, calmness, and love, and *with fear*, or a reverence for God and heavenly things, and a cautious guard over their own spirits, lest their mismanagement should disgrace the cause of the truth. And they must also "have a good conscience," purged

19 By [o] which also he went and preached unto the spirits [p] in prison;

20 Which [q] sometime were disobedient, when once [r] the long-suffering of God waited in [s] the days of Noah, [t] while the ark was a preparing, [u] wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved [x] by water.

21 The [y] like figure whereunto, *even* [z] baptism, doth also now save us, (not [a] the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but [b] the answer of a good conscience towards God,) [c] by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

22 Who [d] is gone into heaven, and [e] is on the right hand of God; [f] angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject unto him.

o i. 11. iv. 6. Neh. ix. 30. Rev. xix. 10.
p Rev. xx. 7.
q Gen. vi. 3. 5. 13.
r Is. xxx. 18. Rom. ii. 4, 5. ix. 22. 2 Pet. iii. 15.
s Matt. xxiv. 37—39. Luke xvii. 26—30.
t Gen. vi. 14—22. Heb. xi. 7.
u Gen. vii. 1—7. 13. 23. viii. 1. 18. Matt. vii. 14. Luke xii. 32. xiii. 24, 25. 2 Pet. ii. 5.
x Gen. vii. 17—23. 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16. Eph. v. 26.
y Rom. v. 14. 1 Cor. iv. 6. Heb. ix. 24. *Gr.* xi. 19.
z Matt. xxviii. 19. Mark xvi. 16. Acts ii. 38. xxii. 16. Rom. vi. 3—6. 1 Cor. xii. 13. Gal. iii. 27. Eph. v. 26. Col. ii. 12. Tit. iii. 5—7.
a Ez. xxxvi. 25, 26. Zech. xiii. 1. 2 Cor. vii. 1.
b Acts viii. 37. Rom. x. 9, 10. 2 Cor. i. 12. 1 Tim. vi. 12.
c *See on*, i. 3.
d Mark xvi. 19. Acts i. 11. ii. 34—36. iii. 21. Heb. vi. 20. viii. 1. ix. 24.
e Ps. cx. 1. Matt. xxii. 44. Mark xii. 36. Luke xx. 42. Rom. viii. 34. Col. iii. 1. Heb. i. 3. 13. viii. 1. x. 12. xii. 2.
f Rom. viii. 38. 1 Cor. xv. 24. Eph. i. 21.

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from the defilement of guilt by the blood of Christ, that they might be satisfied as to the event, and as an enlightened monitor directing them in all holy conduct; that so their persecutors, who treated them as malefactors, might be ashamed of thus falsely accusing and violently opposing men, whose habitual deportment, as the disciples of Christ, was undeniably excellent. And though nature would be most ready to repine or rage at undeserved sufferings, yet, in fact, if God were pleased so to appoint, it was far more desirable, honourable, comfortable, and profitable, to "suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing," as the guilt would in this case belong to their persecutors, and the advantage would be wholly their own. For thus they would be conformed to Christ, who once suffered, being falsely accused of men as an evil doer, and treated by them with all possible cruelty and insult; but, in fact, he, being perfectly righteous, was made a sacrifice "for "sin, instead of the unrighteous;" for, having no sin of his own, and yet suffering *for sin*, it was evident he suffered for the sins of others. This he submitted to, from pure and unspeakable love, that he might bring rebels, enemies, and condemned sinners, unto God, as pardoned, reconciled, sanctified, and made friends and children; that they might be happy for ever in his favour, and he be glorified in their salvation, and by their worship and services. For, being thus put to death in the flesh in respect of his human nature, on the charge of blasphemy, he was speedily quickened, or raised from the dead, by the power of the Holy Spirit, and thus declared to be the Son of God, as he had avowed that he was. The resurrection of Christ, (and indeed many other things,) is sometimes ascribed to God absolutely, sometimes to Christ himself, and sometimes to the Holy Spirit. This is very easy and natural, if these three persons are one God; but how can it be explained on any other principle? (*Marg, Ref.*)

V. 19, 20. It need not be thought wonderful, that so many refused to believe in the risen and glorified Saviour, through the preaching of his apostles by the Holy Spirit, as the case had been the same of old. For Christ, as God, and with reference to his future incarnation, had gone, by his Spirit, (i. 11.) inspiring his servant Noah, to denounce the approaching deluge, and preach repentance to that incorrigible generation, who perished in their sins, and were in the prison of hell, (that is, the adults among them,) when the apostle wrote, being confined there till the judgment of the great day. For they had "some-"time been disobedient" and unbelieving, (ii. 7, 8.) even during the hundred and twenty years of God's long suffering, after the deluge was threatened, before it was sent. At that time Noah was occupied in preparing the ark, showing his faith by his works, and calling on them to repent and seek mercy from God. But they unanimously and obstinately rejected his message; and thus they were destroyed by the flood; whilst only eight persons had their lives preserved in the ark, being delivered from the waters, and carried above them: so that the floods, which drowned others, concurred in their deliverance. Various other interpretations have been given of this passage, but none, this excepted, in the least degree satisfactory.

V. 21, 22. The like figure, or *the antitype* of Noah and his family's preservation in the ark and by the water, at that time saved Christians, even baptism. Christ and his church are the true Ark; all within are safe; all without will be swept by the deluge of divine vengeance into destruction. Into this ark men enter by true faith; this faith Jews and Gentiles professed, when by baptism they entered the Christian church; and thus the baptismal water formed as it were the sign of their safety. Yet it was not "the washing away the filth of the flesh," or the mere outward ordinance of baptism, which could effect this; but it was "the answer of a good conscience towards "God;" when a man, by the regeneration of the Spirit, was able to profess repentance, faith, and purpose of a new life, uprightly, and as in the presence of God, and to answer such questions as were put to persons on those occasions. When Jews and Gentiles professed Christianity, they were thus received into the church, even as Gentiles had been into the Jewish church by circumcision; but the argument, concerning the baptism of infants born of Christian parents, is not at all affected by it. The apostle spake of baptism as the initiatory ordinance of Christianity; but he took care to remind men, that the inward grace of baptism, even regeneration, from which all holy affections and actions spring, alone could introduce them into the true church, the Ark of real security; and that no outward administration of the outward sign could effect this blessed translation into the kingdom of the Son of God. This salvation of believers was the effect of the resurrection of Christ, which evidenced the acceptance of his sacrifice, and made way for his exaltation, that he might confer as a Sovereign, by his power and through his intercession, the blessings which he had purchased by the shedding of his blood. (*Notes, &c. Eph.* i. 20—23. iv. 8—12. *Phil.* ii. 9—11.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

The truths, precepts, and grace of the Gospel teach, and

CHAP. IV.

Exhortations, to cease from sin, for which Christ had suffered; and to live holy lives, though reproached for it; in expectation of a future judgment, 1—6; to sobriety, watchfulness, and prayer; because the end of all things is at hand, 7; and to love, hospitality, and a due improvement of talents, as the stewards of God, and in order to glorify him, 8—11. Encouragements to patience, and confidence in God, amidst persecutions; with cautions and instructions, 12—19.

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form real Christians to, a becoming and beneficial behaviour in all the relations of life; by a happy union of piety, purity, meekness, fidelity, and holy love. Every person ought to use proper means for the conversion of such as obey not the word, especially among their relations, and to aim habitually at gaining others to Christ, by every part of their conduct; but an obliging conscientious performance of their respective duties, by inferiors, will go furthest with superiors, and win most upon them. For when they see that religion teaches their wives, children, and servants, to behave better towards them than formerly, it interests their feelings, and shows them that there is an excellency in what produces such happy effects; and it is greatly to be wished, that there were more, who thus preached in every station, employment, and relation of life. In like manner, the inward and incorruptible adorning of wisdom and grace, shining forth "in a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price," constitutes the most durable beauty and amiableness, and will ensure esteem and affection, when all outward ornaments, (the memorial of our sins and shame,) with all that beauty which they are vainly meant to embellish, will not secure any one from contempt and aversion, whose conduct in life is disgraceful; and they will soon leave the poor body to the confinement and corruption of the tomb, and the soul, which is without holiness, to be for ever loathsome and abhorred of God. Let then all, who would be the followers and daughters of the holy women, who of old trusted in God, copy *their* fashion, seek *their* ornaments, attend to relative duties, do good, fear nothing but sin, and beware of every thing that might betray them into it; and let husbands, professing the Gospel, act towards their wives with that prudent and tender regard, which becomes those who know the word of God; which may ensure them respect from all around them, and tend to render them comfortable under their various infirmities. Thus they will be enabled to live together, "as fellow-heirs of the grace of life," and nothing will hinder their united prayers for a blessing upon each other, their family, and all who are connected with them.

V. 8—18.

As peace and love are necessary to domestic comfort, so are they to the prosperity of the Church. Christians should therefore study and pray to be "all of one mind, to have compassion one of another, to love as brethren, to be pitiful and courteous: and, instead of rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing," they should bless their enemies, after his example, who hath called them from their state of enmity to inherit a blessing. But 'how astonishing and lamentable is it, that when the way to happiness is so plainly delineated, so few should find it! What man is there, who does not desire life, and to live many days, that he may see good? Yet how few tongues are kept from evil! How few lips from speaking guile! How few decline from evil, and do good! How few seek peace, and pursue it! On the contrary, how much low cunning and artifice, and what discords and contentions reign among mankind! And how detestable and miserable do these perverse and ungovernable passions render us!' (***Doddridge.***) But happy are the remnant of the righteous! The eyes of the Lord watch over them, his ears are open and attentive to their prayers, and he delights in doing them good, whilst he sets his face against the workers of iniquity. Who then can harm those that are followers of God as dear children, and walk in his most holy ways? Their sufferings for righteousness' sake will prove an addition to their felicity; so that, fearing God, making him their Sanctuary, and abiding safe and comfortable under his protection, they need not be afraid of the terror of the wicked, nor be troubled by reason of their rage and malice. They should therefore always be ready to give a reason of their hope, to inquirers of every description; for it is founded on the most irrefragable argument; and indeed the true Christian alone can reasonably hope to obtain eternal happiness or escape eternal misery. Yet in pleading the cause of truth, in public or in private, we should be prepared not only with conclusive arguments, but with meekness and fear; that a humble, benevolent, peaceable conduct towards men, may evidently unite with a reverential awe of the majesty of God: for wrath, pride, bitterness, and irreverence, will prejudice men's minds against the truth, whatever ability is shown in defending it. Nor can this service be successfully performed, except by those who "exercise themselves to have a conscience void of offence towards God and man;" for nothing can be so well opposed to the enmity of the human heart against the truth, as the holy lives of its professors, which tend to make those ashamed, who falsely accuse their good conversation in Christ. If this, however, cannot be done, it is better to suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing, whatever our natural impatience may suggest; for "Christ once suffered "*for sins*, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God."

V. 19—25.

Whilst we recollect the end proposed in the sufferings of the divine Saviour, let us inquire whether we are really brought unto God, as his worshippers, and in the temper of our hearts and conduct of our lives. For though his resurrection was attested by the same Spirit, whose divine power effected it, yet few even to this day receive him as their Saviour, and flee to him for refuge from the wrath to come. Nor need we wonder at this, if we consider

FORASMUCH then as [a] Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, [b] arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: [c] for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath [d] ceased from sin;

2 That he [e] no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to [f] the lusts of men, but to [g] the will of God.

3 For [h] the time past of *our* life may suffice us [i] to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in [k] lasciviousness, lusts, [l] excess of wine, [m] revellings, banquetings, [n] and abominable idolatries:

4 Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with *them* to the same [o] excess of riot, [p] speaking evil of *you*:

5 Who [q] shall give account to him [r] that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

a *See on* iii. 18.
b Rom. xiii. 12—14. Phil. ii. 5. Heb xii. 3.
c Rom. vi 2. 7. 11. Gal. ii. 20. v 24. Col. iii. 3–5
d Is. i 16. Ez. xvi. 41. Heb. iv 10.
e i. 1 Rom. vii. 4. Eph. iv. 17. 22–24. v. 7, 8. Col. iii. 7, 8. Tit. iii. 3–8
f Hos. vi. 7 *Marg.* Mark vii. 21. Eph. ii 3.
g ii. 15. Ps cxliii. 10. Matt. vii 21. xii 50 xxi. 31. Mark iii. 35. John vii. 17. Rom xii 2. Gal. ii. 19, 20. Eph v. 17 vi. 6. Col i 9. iv. 12 1 Thes. v. 18 Heb xiii. 21 1 John ii. 17.——h Ex. xliv. 6. xlv 9 Acts xvii 30. Rom. viii 12, 13.——i i. 14. Deut. xii. 30, 31. Rom. i. 20–32. Eph. ii. 2, 3. iv. 17. 1 Thes. iv. 5 Tit. iii. 3.

k Mark vii. 22. 2 Cor. xii. 21. Gal. v. 19. Eph. iv 19. Jude 4.
l 2 Sam. xiii. 28. Prov. xxiii. 29—32 Is. v. 11. xxviii. 7. Eph. v 18.
m Gal. v 21.
n 1 Kings xxi. 26. 2 Chr. xv. 8. Is. lxv. 4. Jer xvi. 18. Rev xvii. 4, 5.
o Matt. xxiii. 25. Luke xv. 13. Rom. xiii. 13. 2 Pet. ii. 13.
p *See on* ii 12. iii. 16. Acts xiii. 45. xviii. 6 2 Pet. ii. 12. Jude 10.——q Mal. iii. 13–15. Matt xii. 36. Luke xvi 2. Rom. xiv. 12. Jude 14, 15 ——r Ps. l 6. Ec xii 14. Ez. xviii. 30. Matt xxv. 31, &c. John v 22, 23 28, 29. Acts x. 42. xvii. 31. Rom. xiv. 10–12. 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. 2 Tim. iv. 1. Jam. v. 9.

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what a vast majority were disobedient, when Christ, by the same Spirit in believing Noah, preached to the old world, while the ark was preparing, during the long-suffering of God; and how few were preserved from the flood: though it may well make us tremble to learn, that the obstinate rebels were cast into prison, never more to be released, as utterly unable "to pay the very last mite." Let us then enter the Ark which God hath provided, as the only security from the deluge of impending vengeance that will destroy a guilty world: let us beware that we rest not in outward forms; as if that baptism could save us, which only washes away the filth of the flesh, or any thing "but "the answer of a good conscience towards God." While we profess ourselves the disciples of Christ, and partakers of his grace, let us seek the true baptism of the regenerating and sanctifying Spirit of God, in behalf of our children and friends; and thus let us trust in *his* merits, power, love, and truth, who died for our sins and rose again for our justification; and "who is gone into heaven, and is "on the right hand of God; angels, principalities, and pow-"ers, being made subject to him."

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1, 2. Seeing that Christ, in human nature, and in the likeness of sinful flesh, had suffered with such constancy and patience for the sins of his people, (iii. 18,) his disciples were called on to arm themselves with the same mind; that a resigned, self-denying, meek, and steadfast frame of spirit, resulting from confidence in God, and love to him, hatred of sin, and realizing views of eternal things, might fortify their minds against despondency, terror, and weariness, and prepare them to resist temptation, and maintain the conflict against the world, the flesh, and the devil, with resolution and vigour, even unto death, and as resolved to suffer for the sake of Christ, if called to it; whereas, without this internal armour, they would surely faint in such a time of trial. As therefore Christ had "suffered in the flesh," when crucified once for their sins, but had risen from the dead to die no more, and had thus done with sin as imputed to him, so Christians, having "suffered in the flesh," in conformity to Christ, by the mortification of their carnal nature, through his grace and motives derived from his cross, had ceased from the practice of sin, expected no satisfaction from any forbidden indulgence, and were continually employed in resisting the influence of sin in their hearts, and endeavouring to prevent its breaking forth in their lives. (*Notes*, ii. 24. *Rom.* vi. *Gal.* ii. 20. v. 24.) The end or intention of this renewed judgment and conduct, and of the grace by which the change had been wrought, was, that the Christian "should no longer live the remnant of his time "in the flesh," or in the body, "to the lusts of men," or in order to gratify any of those inordinate desires of worldly things, by which men are naturally actuated, but that he should thenceforth live to the will of God, seeking his favour and glory, and doing his commandments. The word *flesh* is here used in different senses; it means, 1st, *the holy human nature of Christ;* 2dly, *the depraved nature of man, the body of sin and death;* and 3dly, *the mortal body*, in which the soul tabernacles during its continuance in this world.

V. 3—5. When the ends, for which men were sent into the world, were duly considered by Christians, it would appear that the time past of their lives might suffice to have "wrought the will of the Gentiles;" or to have wasted it in committing those sins, and pursuing those objects, to which the ignorant heathens were addicted. Some of those whom the apostle addressed had been Gentiles, and the rest had acted according to the manners of the nations, rather than as became the peculiar people of God: for they had habitually allowed themselves in various lascivious imaginations, dalliances, or secret practices, or in more gross lewdness: or they had been guilty of drunkenness and excess; and had frequented those riotous, luxurious, and dissipated revellings and banquetings, where intemperance was practised; and many of them had joined in those idolatries which were most detestable in themselves, and by the shameful and enormous licentiousness connected with them. The Jews, at that time, were exceedingly exact and scrupulous in avoiding all approaches to gross idolatry: it is not therefore at all probable, that the apostle meant this of converts from among them. Some had lived in one, some in another, and several of them in many, of these enormities: thus a great part of their lives had been misspent; and this reflection ought to render them the more diligent in serving God for the residue of their days. But their unconverted neighbours, especially the Gentiles, finding them separated from, and set against, their old pursuits, and that they would no longer join with them in their revels and "profusion of riot," were estranged from them, and looked on them as a precise unaccountable set of people: as therefore the conduct of Christians was a silent reproof of *their* excesses, they spake evil of them, 6 For, for this cause was the Gospel preached also [s] to them that are dead, [t] that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, [u] but live according to God in the Spirit.

7 But [x] the end of all things is at hand: [y] be ye therefore sober, [z] and watch unto prayer.

8 And [a] above all things have [b] fervent charity among yourselves: [c] for charity * shall cover the multitude of sins.

s iii. 19. John v. 25, 26. t 1, 2. Rom. viii. 9—11. 1 Cor. xi 31. 32. u Rom. viii. 2. Gal. ii. 19. v. 25. Eph ii. 3—5. Tit iii. 3—7 x Ec. vii. 2. Jer. v. 31. Ez. vii. 2, 3. 6. Matt. xxiv. 13, 14. Rom. xiii. 12. 1 Cor. vii. 29. xv. 24. Phil iv. 5 Heb. x. 25. Jam. v. 8. 2 Pet. iii. 9—11. 1 John ii. 18.

y *See on*, i. 13. v. 8. 1 Thes. v. 6—8. Tit ii 12 z iii. 7. Matt xxiv. 42. xxv. 13. xxvi. 38. —41. Mark xiii, 33—37 xiv. 37, 38. Luke xxi 36. xxii 46. Rom. xii. 12. Eph. vi. 18 Col iv 2. 2 Tim. iv. 5. Rev. xvi. 15——a Col iii. 14. Jam v. 12 3 John 2.——b i 22. 1 Cor. xiii. 1—13. xiv. 1. 1 Thes. iii 12. iv. 9, 10 2 Thes 1. 3. 1 Tim i. 5 Heb. xiii. 1. 2 Pet i. 6, 7. c Prov. x, 12. xii. 16 xvii 9. xxviii.13 1 Cor xiii. 7 Jam. v 20.——* Or *will.*

(or "blasphemed *their religion*," *Gr.*) and charged them with various crimes, of which they were not guilty. But whilst they thus unjustly judged and condemned Christians, they must speedily render an account of themselves to him, who was "ready to judge both the living and the dead," being even then possessed of all power and authority for that purpose. (*Marg. Ref.*) The apostle uses the first person, thus joining himself with his Christian brethren, probably as a less offensive manner of stating the subject, and as conscious, that, though free from many of the gross crimes here mentioned, he had yet spent too many years of his past life "according to the course of "the world," and "the lusts of men," and not "according to the will of God." Some indeed venture to change the text, without authority, and to read "may suffice *you*;" but the same principle might lead us to explain the words as addressed exclusively to the Gentile converts, because the Jews had never lived in "abominable idolatries." *Think it strange.* (4.) 'The Greeks used the word ξενιζεσθαι, to express that wonder, with which a stranger is struck, who beholds any thing uncommon or new.' (*Macknight.*)

V. 6. The Gospel had before this been preached to those who were since dead, (either being martyrs for the truth or dying in the course of providence,) for this very reason, viz. "that they might be judged according to "men in the flesh," and by the proud and carnal judgment of wicked men be condemned as evil-doers, and some of them even suffer death at their hands; but that at the same time, being quickened to a divine life by the Holy Spirit, they might live to God as his devoted servants, and his witnesses among their persecutors, and so be prepared for living with him for ever in heaven. Thus their transient afflictions, disgrace, and sufferings, soon terminated in perfect felicity; in the mean time, they glorified God in life and death, and were supported and comforted by him; and the Gospel had been the means of preparing them for these things, as it still continued to prepare others to glorify God, serve their generation, and then, after some fleeting sorrows, to be admitted to everlasting, uninterrupted joy, and unalloyed felicity. This seems the meaning of the verse, which is generally thought very obscure. Some explain it of those who were *dead in sin*, to whom the Gospel was preached; that, being quickened and converted, their old nature might be judged, condemned, and crucified, that so they might no longer live to the lusts of men in the flesh, but to the glory of God by the Spirit. Several other interpretations are given, but that above stated seems the most satisfactory, and it best connects the verse with the words which immediately precede. "The dead," there means such as had already died; "the quick," or living, those, who were then alive on earth; both of these Christ will judge. (*Marg. Ref.*) The Gospel was preached, in order to the salvation of the hearers; they who embraced it were condemned according to men, or by man's judgment, but they were accepted by God. The same had been the case with those to whom the Gospel had been preached, who were since dead, even those from the beginning who had been favoured with the word of God. The believers had been persecuted and condemned by men, but "they "lived according to God in the Spirit," or by the Spirit, while their persecutors, if impenitent, would be judged and condemned by the Lord.

V. 7. Christians must expect tribulations in the world, but they would soon be over, for the "end of all things "was at hand," and death was about to close their course of trials, or services; nay, judgment would not be so long delayed, as that the intervening space should, in the estimation of faith, be at all compared with eternity. It was therefore incumbent on them to be sober, considerate, temperate, in all kinds of animal indulgence, and moderate in all their worldly pursuits. They ought also to be vigilant, and to guard against the various assaults of their spiritual foes, and especially to be watchful, that nothing might unfit them for prayer, or lead them to neglect it, or to grow remiss in that duty and means of grace, on which the safety and prosperity of their souls so greatly depended. (*Notes, Jam.* v. 16.) Many expositors explain "the end "of all things," to signify the approaching destruction of Jerusalem, and the whole constitution of the Jewish nation in Church and state; but the Christians in Asia were far distant from Jerusalem, and were not so immediately concerned in those events, as in the speedy approach of death and judgment, to which the words most naturally lead our minds. (*Notes, Matt.* xxiv. 29—50.)

V. 8. (*Notes,* i. 22. *Prov.* x. 12. 1 *Cor.* xiii. *Jam.* v. 20.) The apostle here again enforced the exhortation to charity, or *love* of each other; and in doing this he referred to the proverb, that "love covereth all sins," or "the multitude of sins." As the love of God in Christ covereth the multitude of the sins of believers from his sight, so they ought to cast the mantle of love over the number of faults into which their brethren would fall, in their conduct towards them; and thus hide them from their eyes, by forbearing and forgiving one another, as Christ had forgiven them. (*Eph.* iv. 31, 32. *Col.* iii. 13, 14.) Thus the peace of the Church and the communion of the saints might be preserved, which otherwise must be interrupted; for there were so many things amiss in all, that unless love covered, excused, and forgave, in others, such mistakes and faults, as every one would need to be borne with in himself, Satan would prevail to excite perpetual divisions and discords among them. To suppose that charity or love will so cover, or make amends for, the multitude of the man's sins who exercises it, as to induce

9 Use [d] hospitality one to another [e] without grudging.

10 As [f] every man hath received the gift, *even so* [g] minister the same one to another, as [h] good stewards of [i] the manifold grace of God.

11 If [k] any man speak, *let him speak* [l] as the oracles of God; [m] if any man minister, *let him do it* as of [n] the ability which God giveth; [o] that God in all things may be glorified [p] through Jesus Christ: [q] to whom be praise [r] and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

12 ¶ Beloved, [s] think it not strange concerning [t] the fiery trial which is to try you, [u] as though some strange thing happened unto you:

d Rom. xii. 13. xvi. 23. 1 Tim. iii. 2. Tit. i. 8. Heb. xiii. 2 e 2 Cor. ix. 7. Phil. ii, 14. Philem. 14. Jam v. 9. f Matt. xxv. 14, 15 Luke xix. 13 Rom. xii 6–8. 1 Cor. iv. 7. xii. 4–11 g Matt. xx. 28 xxv. 44. Mark x. 45. Luke viii. 3 Rom. xv. 25. 27. 2. Cor. ix. 1 2 Tim. i. 18. Heb. vi. 10. h Luke xii. 42 xvi. 1–8. 1 Cor iv. 1, 2. Tit. i. 7 i 1 Cor. iii. 10. xv. 10 2 Cor. vi 1 Eph. iii. 8. iv. 11 k Is viii. 20. Jer xxiii 22 Eph. iv. 29 Col iv. 6. Jam. i. 19. 26 iii. 1–6. l Acts vii. 38. Rom. iii. 2. Heb. v. 12. m *See on*, 10 n 1 Chr. xxix. 11–16. Rom. xii 6–8. 1 Cor. xii. 4 ——o ii. 5. 1 Cor. vi 20. x. 31. 2 Cor. ix. 13. Eph. iii 20, 21. v. 20 ——p ii. 5 Phil. i. 11. ii. 11.——q v 11. Rom. xvi. 27. Eph. iii. 21. 1 Tim i. 17. vi 16. Jude 25. Rev. i. 5 6.——r Ps. cxlv. 13. Dan. iv 3 34 vii. 14 Matt. vi. 13 Rev. v. 12–14.——s 4 Is xxviii 21.——t *See on*, i 7. Dan. xi. 35. 1 Cor. iii. 13.——u v. 9. 1 Cor x. 13 1 Thes iii. 2–4 2 Tim. iii. 12.

13 But [x] rejoice, inasmuch as [y] ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, [z] when his glory shall be revealed, [a] ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

14 If [b] ye be [c] reproached for the name of Christ, [d] happy *are ye*; [e] for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: [f] on their part he is evil spoken of, [g] but on your part he is glorified.

15 But let none of you [h] suffer as a murderer, or *as* a thief, or *as* an evil-doer, [i] or as a busy-body in other men's matters

16 Yet if *any man suffer* [k] as a Christian, [l] let him not be ashamed; [m] but let him glorify God on this behalf.

x i. 6. Matt. v. 12. Luke vi. 22, 23. Acts v. 41 xvi. 25. Rom. v 3. 2 Cor. iv. 17 xii. 9. 10. Jam. i 2, 3. y v. 1. 10 Rom. viii. 17. 2 Cor. i. 7. iv. 10. Phil iii. 10 Col i 24. Tim. ii. 12. Rev. i 9. z i. 5, 6. 13. Matt. xvi. 27. xxv. 31. Mark viii 38. Luke xvii. 30. 2 Thes i. 7–10. Rev. i. 7. a i. 8 Is. xxv. 9. xxxv 10. li. 11. Matt. xxv. 21. 23. 34. b ii. 19, 20. iii. 14. 16. c 4, 5. Ps. lxix. 9. lxxxix 51. Is. li. 7 Matt. v. 11. Luke vi. 22 John vii. 47–52 viii. 48. ix. 28. 34. d 1 Kings x. 8. Ps. xxii. 1, 2. cxlvi. 5 Jam i 12. v 11.——e Num. xi. 25, 26. 2 Kings ii. 15. Is. xi 2 —f Acts xiii. 45. xviii. 6 2 Pet. ii. 2.——g ii. 12. iii. 16. Matt. v. 16. Gal. i 24. 2 Thes. i. 10–12. h ii. 20. Matt. v. 11. 2 Tim ii 9.——i 1 Thes iv 11. 2 Thes iii 11. 1 Tim. v. 15. k 19 iii. 17, 18. Acts xi. 20 xxvi 28. Eph iii. 13–15 ——l Is l. 7 liv. 4. Phil. i. 20. 2 Tim. i 12. Heb. xii. 2, 3.——m Is. xxiv. 15. Acts v. 41. Rom. v. 2–5. Phil. i. 29. Jam i. 2–4.

God to forgive them, is subversive of the whole Gospel; for "if righteousness come by the law, then Christ died "in vain;" and the abuse of these words, which are very obvious and important in their true meaning, hath encouraged such numbers to neglect Christ, and continue impenitent in their sins, from a vain hope of being pardoned for the sake of a proud benevolence, or some selfish alms-deeds, that a particular and repeated protestation against it seems absolutely necessary. 'He commends 'mutual love, because it, as it were, buries innumerable 'trespasses, and so is a favourer and preserver of peace. 'For they who love one another, easily forgive each other's 'offences.' (*Beza.*)

V. 9—11. (*Notes, Rom.* xii. 6—13. *Heb.* xiii. 2.) In general, Christians were exhorted to show their love, by hospitality to strangers, without grudging, or inwardly repining at the expense to which it put them; and, more particularly, whatever gift any man had received of the Lord's free bounty, whether natural abilities, learning, influence, wealth, or spiritual endowments, he was required to employ and improve it for the advantage of his brethren, that so they might all reciprocally be useful to, and derive benefit from, one another, both in their temporal and spiritual concerns. Thus they would act as good, faithful, wise, and active stewards of those manifold talents, which God, of his abundant mercy and grace, had intrusted to them, for their own and each other's advantage. (*Notes, Luke* xvi. 1—12. 1 *Cor.* iv. 1, 2.) This especially, though not exclusively, concerned ministers, and those employed in managing the affairs of the Church. If any one therefore spake, either as a public teacher, or in private conversation, let him discourse in consistency with the oracles of God, which infallibly declare his truth and will to mankind; and if any man acted as a deacon, or in any other way ministered to the support and comfort of believers, or of the poor, let him do it to the best of his ability, as given to him of God for that purpose, and let him communicate to the relief of others, not as if he gave them any thing which was properly his own, but as imparting a portion of what God had, for this end, committed to his stewardship; that so God might be glorified, by their conscientious, cheerful, and becoming performance of their several duties, and improvement of their talents, from faith, and in a disposition to give the glory to him of all they had and did, and to ascribe to him, through Jesus Christ, all the honour of his parfections and wonderful works for evermore.— To restrict this merely to spiritual gifts, because the original word generally is used when these are spoken, (though there is no reason to suppose that it means them exclusively,) may be considered as one of the various ways, by which learned commentators endeavour to convince us, that a vast proportion of the Scriptures was written, not for our instruction, but for that of others, and that we need concern ourselves but little about it, Now this is precisely what a vast majority of professed Christians wish to believe. *Hospitality.* (9.) 'The primitive Christians were hospitable to all strangers; but 'chiefly to those who were of the same faith and com'munion. Believers scarce ever went without letters of 'recommendation, which testified the purity of their 'faith. This was sufficient to procure them reception in 'all those places where the name of Jesus Christ was 'known.' (*Cruden.*)

V. 12—13. The apostle here again exhorted his brethren to patience, fortitude, and cheerfulness, under their sufferings for the sake of Christ. He had before spoken of these, as intended to prove their faith, and purify their souls, even as the furnace tries and refines the gold. (*Note*, i. 7.) They ought not, therefore, to be surprised, or made desponding, or alarmed, by the fiery trial which God had appointed to try them, and which they must needs pass through, as if some strange thing had happened to them, which was not experienced by others of the Lord's people. On the contrary, they ought rather to rejoice at being conformed to Christ, by suffering from the same description of men, and for the same cause, in which he suffered; for their trials should

17 For the time *is come* that [n] judgment must begin at the house of God: [o] and if *it* first *begin* at us, [p] what shall the end *be* of them that [q] obey not the Gospel of God?

18 And [r] if the righteous scarcely be saved, [s] where shall the ungodly and [t] the sinner appear?

19 Wherefore, [u] let them that suffer according to the will of God, [x] commit the keeping of their souls *to him*, [y] in well doing, as unto [z] a faithful Creator.

n Is. x. 12. Jer. xxv. 29. xlix 12. Ez. ix. 6 Mal iii 5. Matt. iii. 9, 10. Luke xii. 48.
o Luke xxiii. 31.
p Matt xi 20—24 Luke x. 12—14 Heb. ii 2, 3. xii. 24, 25
q ii. 8. Gal. iii. 1. v. 7. 2 Thes. i. 8. Heb. v. 9. xi. 8.——r v. 8. Ez xviii. 24 Zech. xiii. 9 Matt. xxiv. 22—24. Mark xiii 20—22. Acts xiv. 22. xxvii. 24. 31. 42—44. 1 Cor. x. 12. Heb. iv. 1. x 38, 39.
s Ps i 4, 5. Rom. i. 18. v. 6 2 Pet. ii 5, 6. iii. 7. Jude 15.
t Gen. xiii. 13. 1 Sam. xv 18 Luke xv. 1. Rom v. 8.
u *See on*, 12—16. iii 17 Acts xxi. 11—14.
x Ps xxxi 5. Luke xxiii. 46. Acts vii. 59. 2 Tim. i. 12.——y ii 15 Esth. iv. 16. Jer. xxvi. 11—15 Dan. iii. 16—18. vi, 10, 11 22 Rom. ii 7.——z Ps. cxxxviii. 8 cxlvi 5, 6 Is. xl 27, 28 xliii 7 21. li. 12, 13. liv. 16, 17. Col i. 16—20. Heb. i. 2, 3. Rev. iv. 10, 11. v. 9—14

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be considered as pledges of love, and introductory to the participation of his glory, when that should be revealed at his coming, and they admitted to partake of it with exceeding joy. (*Notes, Rom.* viii. 17, 18. 2 *Cor.* iv. 8—18. 2 *Tim.* ii. 10—13.) If they were reproached, because they bore the name, professed the truth, and obeyed the commands of Christ, they were happy and favoured persons; (iii. 14.) as this evinced that the Holy Spirit, who is glorious in his eternal Deity, and the Author of all that is truly glorious or excellent in men, even of the divine image, the beginning of heavenly glory, rested upon them. (*Marg. Ref.*) Thus the glory of God was seen in their conduct and dispositions, and this excited the enmity of the carnally-minded; so that, on the part of their revilers and persecutors, the Holy Spirit and his operations, as well as Christ, and the Father who sent him, were evil-spoken of, and blasphemed; but on their part the Lord was glorified, as they patiently suffered for his sake the effects of that enmity which their holy profession and conduct had excited. The case, however, would be evidently different, if they exposed themselves to sufferings by their crimes, for this would be most dishonourable to God, and injurious to themselves. It behooved them, therefore, to be careful that none of them were brought before the magistrates, cast into prison, or condemned, for committing murder, or theft, or any other violation of wholesome laws; nay, that they did not incur reproach by intermeddling in the affairs of other men, whether they were of a private or public nature; or by passing their judgment and censures, or intruding into the management of those concerns which did not belong to them, as if they had been appointed, or were authorized and qualified to oversee and give orders to those employed. These were common reasons for men's suffering public punishment, or private reproach, and professors of Christianity might be drawn into such misconduct, and yet fancy they were persecuted for their religion! But if they avoided such imputations, and suffered as Christians for acting consistently with that honourable character, they ought by no means to be ashamed of the reproach or ignominy connected with their punishment, though it were imprisonment, scourging, or even a violent death; nay, they ought rather to praise and glorify God, for counting them worthy to suffer shame for his sake. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 17—19. It was indeed to be expected that Christians would thus be called to suffer for Christ's sake; for the time predicted by him, when he would first begin his judgments, by sharply trying his professed disciples, or the family of God, was then arrived; and if such fiery trials must prove and purify the church, and purge out hypocrites from among them, before judgments were executed on the Jewish nation, and other open enemies, what would be the end of those who did not obey the Gospel? The persecutions, by which the church was tried, were introductory to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the tremendous ruin of the Jews, and preparatory to the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. (*Notes*, &c. *Ez.* ix. 6. *Matt.* xxiv. 9—13. *John* xvi. 1—3.) If then the righteous were saved *with difficulty*; if, notwithstanding their interest in Christ, and their conscientious, self-denying obedience, so many trials, dangers, conflicts, and sufferings were deemed needful for them; and if, according to their own feelings and apprehensions, they were often but just saved, and got to heaven at last through many narrow escapes, as a ship-wrecked mariner scarcely gains the shore on a plank, where would the impenitent sinner, and the ungodly despiser or opposer of Christianity appear at the day of judgment? What refuge from the wrath of God could he expect to find? Or how could he hope to escape the everlasting punishment with which he was threatened in the holy Scriptures? As therefore the trials of Christians were so trivial, compared either with the perdition of ungodly men, or the felicity prepared for the righteous, they ought, when suffering in the cause, and according to the will of God, to commit the keeping of their souls, (as well as the protection of their lives, and all their other concerns,) to his almighty care; who, being their Creator, had a propriety in them as his rational creatures, and who regarded them as his redeemed servants, new-created unto holiness, and interested in all the blessings of his covenant, and in his faithfulness to perform it to them. Taking care, therefore, to persevere in well-doing, and to suffer with meekness, patience, and constancy, without turning aside from their duty, either through fear, resentment, or worldly motives, let them trust themselves to his faithful care, who, being the Creator of the world, could not want power to support, comfort, deliver, and eternally save them, and who would certainly overrule every thing to their final advantage. 'The apostle cannot intend deliverance from the Roman invasion, in which so 'few of these Christians were concerned; nor merely deliverance from any of their persecutors, because he takes 'it for granted that the righteous would be saved, though 'with difficulty; whereas multitudes fell by persecution, 'even of these Christians in Bithynia, as appears by Pliny's letter. It is necessary therefore to understand it 'more generally, of the difficulty with which good men 'get to heaven, through this dangerous and ensnaring 'world.' (*Doddridge.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

The Christian soldier, in preparing for the battle, must

CHAP. V.

The apostle exhorts the elders to feed the flock of God, willingly, cheerfully, disinterestedly, and humbly; and to be examples to it; expecting from the chief Shepherd, at his appearance, an unfading crown of glory, 1—4: He requires the younger to submit to the elder; and all of them to be clothed with humility, casting all their care on God, 5—7; and to be sober and vigilant; and steadfastly by faith, to resist the devil, and bear tribulation, 8, 9. He concludes by prayers, salutations, and benedictions, 10—14.

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peculiarly remember to arm himself with the same mind which was in Christ, the Captain of his salvation: that love, zeal, spirituality, hatred of sin, contempt of the world, fortitude, patience, meekness, and hope, may concur in determining him to venture and suffer all things for the glory of God, the good of men, and " the joy set be- " fore him." Thus, being crucified with Christ, by the virtue of his sufferings for us in the flesh, and deeming himself dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, he will be enabled to resist temptation, to " cease from sin, and no " longer to live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts " of men, but to the will of God." Indeed we may all say, (though some far more emphatically than others,) that " the time past of our lives should suffice us, to have " wrought the will" of those who know not God; and we cannot but regret, if brought to our right mind, that so large a proportion of our precious time has been wasted to no purpose, whether we have escaped the grosser pollutions of the world, or have walked in its lasciviousness, lusts, excess, and riot, or in those revellings and banquetings, where God is no more regarded than amidst the abominable idolatries of the Gentiles. Very few of us indeed have avoided the luxurious and dissipated feasts and banquetings, which professed Christians generally make, and that often under pretence of commemorating some of the events relating to redemption; but, when we separate from them, and refuse to " run with them to the " same excess of riot," they think it strange, and revile us, as by our conduct we condemn them. This we must not mind; but, having shown them our reasons as far as we have opportunity, we must leave them " to him, who " is ready to judge the quick and the dead," to whom, if they continue impenitent, they will have a dreadful account to give at the last day. Vast numbers, who are now dead, have suffered the same revilings before us: the Gospel called them to separate from the wickedness of their former companions in sin, and to bear testimony against it: they were therefore " judged according to men in the " flesh," and by their carnal rules, to deserve reproach and persecution; but they lived according to God in the Spirit, and when they were removed out of the world, they were found meet to be partakers of the heavenly inheritance. Ours is indeed a favoured day in this respect; yet if the Spirit of life dwell in us, the world will judge us deserving of scorn and reproach, whilst God will graciously account us worthy of that glorious kingdom for which we suffer. But as the end of all things is at hand; as all our worldly pursuits, possessions, distinctions, and enjoyments, all our temporal trials, sorrows, and conflicts, our season of probation and preparation, and our term of usefulness, will speedily be over, so it behooves us " to be sober, and to watch unto prayer." The more ungodly men hate and revile believers, the greater care should they use to have fervent love among themselves, that, by mutual candour, long-suffering, and forgiveness, the multitude of offences may be covered, and so nothing may interrupt their peace and harmony. This blessed grace of love dethrones our natural selfishness, and, in connexion with faith in the promises of God, it induces us to " use " hospitality one to another without grudging," and to consider every gift, possession, or situation, as a talent committed to our stewardship, according to the manifold grace of God, to be used for the benefit of the church and the community. It also dictates our words, whether in public or in private, that they may be true, pure, kind, and instructive, " according to the oracles of God;" and it will dispose every one in his proper calling to minister, or communicate to others, " as of the ability which God " giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through " Jesus Christ."

V. 12—19.

When we consider the upright, harmless, benevolent, and useful conduct of true Christians, we are apt to think it strange that they must pass through such fiery trials, from the enmity of wicked men, and that God should permit them to be so injured and afflicted. We must not, however, indulge such thoughts, but prepare for tribulation, as the excellent of the earth have always been thus treated, and God hath purified all his gold in this furnace. We ought therefore to rejoice in being made " partakers " of the sufferings of Christ, that when his glory shall be " revealed, we may be glad also with exceeding" and eternal " joy." We may indeed deem ourselves happy, when wicked men discern " the seal of God in our forehead," and reproach us for the name of Christ, because " the " Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon us," and so they revile us, because we bear his image, belong to him, and glorify him. But we cannot be too careful not to give the enemies of the Gospel any just cause to revile or hate us; and though it is not *common* for professors of evangelical truths to suffer as murderers, thieves, or malefactors, yet they often bring odium upon themselves by a conceited officiousness, and by intermeddling with such matters as do not at all belong to them, especially in political matters, as well as by various other evident and palpable faults; and then many of them charge the reproach cast on them to the persecuting malice of their enemies! This we should watch against, and carefully distinguish between those things, which we suffer for the sake of Christ and of righteousness, and those that we bring on ourselves by our

THE [a] elders which are among you I exhort, [b] who am also an elder, [c] and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also [d] a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

2 [e] Feed [f] the flock of God * which is among you, [g] taking the oversight *thereof*, [h] not by constraint, but willingly; [i] not for filthy lucre, but [k] of a ready mind;

3 Neither [l] as † being lords over *God's* [m] heritage, [n] but being ensamples to the flock.

4 And when [o] the chief Shepherd shall [p] appear, ye shall receive [q] a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

a Acts xi 30 xiv. 23. xv. 4. 6 22, 23. xx 17. 28 *Gr.* xxi. 18. 1 Tim. v. 1 19 Tit i 5
b 2 John 1. 3 John 1.
c i. 12. Luke xxiv 48 John xv. 26, 27. Acts i. 8 22 ii. 32. iii. 15. v 30—32. x 39–41.
d 4. i. 3–5. Ps lxxiii. 24, 25 Rom. viii 17, 18. 2 Cor. v. 1 8. Phil. i. 19. 21—23. Col. iii 3, 4. 2 Tim. iv. 8 1 John iii. 2. Rev. i 9.
e Cant. i. 8 Is xl. 11. Ez xxxiv. 2, 3 23. Mic v 4 vii. 14. John xxi. 15—17 Acts xx 28
f Is. lxiii 11. Jer xiii. 17. 20 Ez. xxxiv 31. Zech xi. 17 Luke xii. 32. 1 Cor. ix. 7
* Or, *as much as in you is.* Ps. lxxviii 71, 72. Acts xx. 26, 27.——g Heb. xii. 15 *Gr*
h Is. vi 8. 1 Cor. ix. 16, 17.
i Is. lvi. 11. Jer vi. 13. viii 10 Mic iii 11. Mal [illegible] 10 Acts xx. 33. 34. 2 Cor xii 14. 15 1 Tim. iii. 3 Tit. i. 7 11. 2 Pet. ii. 3 Rev. xviii. 12, 13
k Acts xxi 13. Rom i 15. Tit. ii 14 iii. 1
l Ez xxxiv. 4 Matt xx 25, 26. xxiii. 8—10. Mark x. 42–45 Luke xxii. 24—27 1 Cor iii. 5. 9 2 Cor i. 24 iv 5. 3 John 9. 10.——† Or, *over-ruling*
m ii. 9 Deut xxxii 9 Ps. xxxiii 12. lxxiv. 2. Mic vii. 14 Acts xx 28——n 1 Cor. x. 11. Phil iii. 17. iv 9. 1 Thes. i 5, 6. 2 Thes iii. 9 1 Tim. iv. 12 Tit. ii. 7——o 2. ii. 25. Ps xxiii. 1. Is. xl 11 Ez xxxiv. 23 xxxvii. 24 Zech. xiii. 7 John x. 11, Heb. xiii 20.
p Matt xxv. 31, &c. Col. iii. 3, 4 2 Thes. i. 7–10 1 John iii 2. Rev i. 7. xx. 11, 12.
q i. 4 Dan xii 3. 1 Cor ix. 25. 2 Tim. iv. 8. Jam. i 12. Rev. ii. 10. iii. 11.

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imprudence and misconduct. In the former case we suffer as Christians, and should glorify God in that behalf; in the latter we should be silent, or humbly confess our sin and folly as the cause of our sorrows. In vain do men expect to escape the trial of their professed faith; judgment will begin at the house of God; his people will be more severely chastised for their sins than other men are, and hypocrites will incur the deepest condemnation. They who would be saved, must strive, wrestle, labour, watch, pray, deny themselves, and take up their cross daily; and though all true believers will surely be saved, it will be with difficulty, and through many perils, conflicts, and tribulations. (*Acts* xxvii. 22. 31. 44.) What then will be the end of those, who obey not the Gospel of God? and where will the infidel, the profligate, the licentious, the oppressor, the persecutor, and the enemy of all goodness, appear, when Christ shall come to judge the world? If such sufferings are inflicted on the beloved children of God, what will be the doom of his implacable foes? And if such diligence and watchfulness only just suffice to ensure the believer's salvation, what will be the event of the slothful and heedless conduct of professed Christians in general? Let us then see to it, that we obey the Gospel, by a penitent faith working by love, and if called to suffer according to the will of God, "let us commit the "keeping of our souls to him, in well-doing, as unto a faith-"ful Creator."

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1—4. The Elders were, in general, the rulers and teachers of the churches, (*Marg. Ref.*) and St. Peter, waiving the mention of his apostolical office, addressed them as one of the company, and as acquainted with the nature and difficulties of the service assigned to them. He had also been a spectator of the sufferings of Christ, in the garden and on the cross, and was appointed to bear witness of those interesting events, and of his Lord's resurrection, ascension, and subsequent exaltation. Moreover, he was fully assured, that, as a pardoned and justified believer, and as sealed by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, he was called to inherit, and would at length partake of "the glory, which shall be revealed," and publicly bestowed on all true Christians, when the Lord Jesus shall come to judge the world. As he therefore was employed in preaching the Gospel of salvation, through the sufferings of the Redeemer, whose steps he endeavoured to follow, in patiently bearing afflictions for the truth's sake, and as he was supported by the joyful expectation of future felicity to disregard present things, whilst from love to Christ he fed his sheep and lambs;) (*Notes, John* xxi. 15—19.) so he exhorted all those, who were appointed to the same work, to apply themselves diligently to the performance of it, with the self-denying tenderness and patient care with which the shepherd feeds and tends his flock. (*Note, Acts* xx. 28.) They ought to consider the congregations over which they presided, and among whom they laboured, as a part of the purchased and beloved flock of God, and therefore it would become them to take the oversight of them, not merely because a necessity was laid upon them, and they could not safely do otherwise, but willingly, from zeal to the glory of God and love to the souls of his people, and as men that were ready to encounter difficulties, face dangers, and endure losses, reproaches, and persecutions, in so good a work. And when the counsel of inspired persons, or other pious ministers, concurring with the wants and desires of the people, called on any person to engage in the pastoral office, he ought not to be so reluctant to it as some were found to be, partly from modesty and diffidence, yet not without a measure of unbelief, and undue regard to the ease, quiet, and safety of a private situation, the want of zeal and love, or the preference of more profitable employments; whence it became necessary almost to constrain them to engage in this arduous, laborious, and perilous work. Yet, at the same time, some improper persons of inferior stations might be induced to undertake it, from the expectation and desire of a better maintenance than they could otherwise obtain; and such as had been ordained, might be tempted to go through with their services, rather to earn their wages, than from better motives, and to modify their instructions in subserviency to their own interests; but such things must scrupulously be avoided, as the lucre thus sought would be most filthy and base, and the wages of the vilest prostitution. (*Notes, John* x. 12, 13. 1 *Tim.* iii. 3—8. *Tit.* i. 7.) For all true ministers should enter into that office, and perform its duties, "of a ready "mind," delighting in the work, and desirous of glorifying God, and of being his instruments in doing good to the souls of men, considering their own temporal interests as a matter of a very inferior nature, and even their maintenance, merely as necessary in order to the due performance of their office, and not an object to be proposed by them, in undertaking it. Nor ought they to assume a lordly authority, or aspire at secular power and honour by means of their ministry, as if they had dominion over the faith or consciences of those who belonged to God, as "the lot of his inheritance," when they were appointed to show them his truth and will, and to engage their obedience to him, not to themselves. In-

5 Likewise, [r] ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder; yea, [s] all *of you* be subject one to another, and [t] be clothed with humility: for [u] God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

6 [x] Humble yourselves therefore under [y] the mighty hand of God, [z] that he may exalt you [a] in due time:

7 [b] Casting all your care upon him; [c] for he careth for you.

r Lev. xix 32. Heb xiii. 17. s iii. 1, 5. Rom. xii 10. Eph v. 21. Phil. ii 3. t iii. 3, 4. 2 Chr vi. 41. Job xxix 14. Ps. cxxxii. 9 16. Is. lxi. 10 Rom. xiii 14. Col iii 12. u *See on* Jam iv. 6 Job xxii. 29 x Ex. x 3 Lev. xxvi. 41. 1 Kings xxi 29 2 Kings xxii. 19. 2 Chr. xii. 6, 7. 12. xxx. 11. xxxii 26. xxxiii. 12. 19. 23. xxxvi. 12. Prov. xxix. 23. Is ii 11. Jer. xiii. 18. xliv. 10 Dan. v. 22. Mic. vi. 8. Luke xiv. 11; xviii. 14. Jam. iv 10.——y Ex. iii. 19 xxxii. 11. Ps. lxxxix. 13. 1 Cor. x. 22.——z Job xxxvi. 22. Ps. lxxv. 10 lxxxvi. 16, 17. Is. xl 4 Ez xvii 24. xxi. 16. Matt. xxiii. 12. Luke i. 52. Jam i. 9. 10 ——a Deut. xxxii. 35. Rom. v. 6. 1 Tim. ii. 8. Tit. i. 3.——b 1 Sam. i. 10—18. xxx. 6 Ps. xxvii. 13, 14. xxxvii. 5 lv. 22. lvi. 3, 4. Matt. vi. 25. 34. Luke xii. 11, 12 Phil. iv. 6. Heb. xiii. 5. 6.——c Ps xxxiv. 15. cxlii. 4, 5. Matt. vi. 22—33. Mark iv. 38. Luke xii. 30—32. John x. 13.

8 Be [d] sober, be vigilant; because [e] your adversary [f] the devil, [g] as a roaring lion, [h] walketh about, seeking whom he may [i] devour:

9 Whom [k] resist [l] steadfast in the faith, knowing that [m] the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

d i. 13. iv. 7. Matt. xii. 48—50. Luke xii. 45, 46. xxi. 34. 36. Rom. xiii. 11—13. 1 Thes. v. 6.-8. 1 Tim. ii. 9. 15. iii. 2. 11. Tit. i. 8. ii 2, 4. 6. 12. e Esth. vii. 6. Job i. 6. Ps. cix. 6. *Marg* Is. l. 8. Zech. iii. 1. Luke xxii. 31. f Matt. iv. 1. 11 xiii. 39. xxv. 41. John viii. 44. Eph. iv. 27. vi. 11. Jam. iv. 7. 1 John iii. 8—10. Rev. xii. 9. xx. 2. 10.————g Judg. xiv. 5. Ps. civ. 21. Prov. xix 12. xx. 2. Is. v. 29, 30. xlii. 13. Jer. ii. 15. li. 38. Ez. xix. 7. Hos. xi. 10. Joel iii. 16. Am. i. 2. iii. 4 Zech. xi. 3. 2 Tim. iv. 17.————h Job i. 7. ii. 2.———i Ez. xxii 25. Dan vi. 24. Hos. xiii. 8.————k Luke iv. 3—12. Eph. iv. 27. vi. 11—13. Jam. iv. 7.————l Luke xxii. 32. Eph. vi. 16. 1 Tim. vi. 12. 2 Tim. iv. 7. Heb xi. 33.————m i. 6. ii. 21. iii. 14. iv. 13. John xvi. 33. Acts xiv. 22. 1 Cor. x. 13. 1 Thes. ii. 15, 16. iii. 3. 2 Tim. iii. 12. Rev. i. 9. vi. 11. vii. 14.

stead, therefore, of usurping authority over their brethren, or endeavouring to convert their office into a lucrative trade, they ought to behave in such a manner, as to be "examples to the flock," and to elucidate, by their own piety, purity, humility, self-denial, and universal conscientiousness, the instructions which they gave to the people. This would not indeed tend to their worldly affluence or dignity, but it would ensure to them a most abundant future recompense. For when the Chief Shepherd, from whom their pastoral charge was derived, on whom they depended for all their sufficiency, to whom the flock belonged, and to whom they must finally give account, shall appear as the Judge of the world, then they, and all such faithful ministers, will receive a crown of unfading glory, infinitely better and more honourable than all the authority, reputation, wealth, and pleasure of the world could possibly be. (*Note, Heb.* xiii. 20, 21.)—The words rendered "taking the oversight," literally signify, *performing the episcopal office*, and they must be allowed to be a decisive evidence, that no *express* distinction was established between bishops and presbyters, when the apostle wrote this epistle. (*Notes, Acts* xx. 28. 1 *Tim.* v. 21—25. *Tit.* i. 5—9.)

V. 5—7. The word "younger," seems not to relate to any particular station in the church, but in general denotes *juniors*, whether in the pastoral office, or not, who were exhorted to submit themselves, and show a proper deference to their seniors. Yea, all Christians were directed to be subject to one another, according to their different relations in life; thus, the people were required to obey their pastors, children their parents, subjects their rulers, and servants their masters, according to the precepts of God's word. And as pride, in juniors and inferiors, militates against due subordination, even as in superiors it prompts to tyranny, so they all were admonished to be clothed with humility, as their chief ornament, that whatever abilities, endowments, or spiritual gifts they possessed, their modesty and humility might be conspicuous to all beholders, above every other distinction. Thus they would, without exception, be willingly subject to their seniors and superiors. This ought above all things to be sought for, seeing that God contended by his omnipotence against all proud persons, showing favour to none but those who were deeply sensible of their unworthiness, and conferring this special grace on all who were humbly desirous of it. It therefore behooved them to humble themselves, as guilty, polluted, and wretched sinners, under the powerful hand of God, which was sufficient to crush the stoutest of his enemies, and to uphold the feeblest of his friends, that so, submitting to his righteousness, they might be reconciled to him by faith in Christ, and in due time exalted to the glory, honour, and immortality prepared for his saints, after the trials here allotted them. (*Note, James* iv. 6—10.) In the mean while, indeed, they would meet with various trials and difficulties, and be assaulted by many solicitous cares about their temporal or spiritual concerns, and those of the church; but, being attentive to their present duties, they were encouraged and required to cast all their anxieties upon the Lord, by faith and prayer, assured that he would manage every thing for their advantage, according to his unerring wisdom and unfailing truth, seeing he cared for them, he pitied and loved all those who thus trusted in him. (*Notes Matt.* vi. 24—34. *Phil.* iv. 6, 7.)

V. 8, 9. The apostle here again renewed his exhortation to sobriety and vigilance, (*Note,* iv. 7.) that being free from the intoxication of sensual pleasures, or worldly interests, the Christians whom he addressed might not be lulled asleep, or found off their guard in the great concerns of eternity. (*Luke* xxi. 34—36.) To excite them to this watchfulness, they must be reminded, that the devil, the prince of the darkness of this world, and of the apostate angels, the accuser of the brethren, and the adversary of believers, who always seized on every opportunity of bringing some charge against them, or of obtaining leave to sift and harass them, was walking about, like a roaring lion, full of rage and fierceness, seeking whom he could find asleep, or unarmed, that he might at once devour him. (*Notes Job* i. 6—12. *Zeph.* iii. 5. *Luke* xxii. 31—44. *Rev.* xii. 10.) The terrible persecutions, that were instigated by this enemy of God and man, as "working in the "children of disobedience," seem to be peculiarly intended. Thus outward terrors and inward suggestions, drove numbers into apostacy, or a temporary denial of Christ; and many were finally ruined, from fear of man and love of life, and others narrowly escaped this downfall, being found careless and secure. They ought therefore to resist and repel his assaults, being steadfast in the profession of the faith, assuredly believing the truths of the gospel, and constantly depending on the power and love of Christ, to repel and drive away the hated tempter. And to excite them thus strenuously to resist temptation, 10 But [n] the God of all grace, [o] who hath called us unto his [p] eternal glory by Christ Jesus, [q] after that ye have suffered awhile, [r] make you perfect, [s] stablish, [t] strengthen, settle *you.*

11 To [u] him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

12 By [x] Silvanus, [y] a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, [z] I have written briefly, [a] exhorting and [b] testifying that this is [c] the true grace of God [d] wherein ye stand.

13 The *church that is* [e] at Babylon, [f] elected together with *you*, saluteth you; and *so doth* [g] Marcus, my son.

14 Greet ye one another [h] with a kiss of charity. [i] Peace *be* with you all that are [k] in Christ Jesus. Amen.

n Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Ps. lxxxvi. 5. 15. Mic. vii. 18, 19. Rom. v. 20, 21. xv. 5. 13. 2 Cor. xiii. 11. Heb. xiii. 20.
o i. 15. Rom. viii. 28—30. ix. 11. 24. 1 Cor. i. 9. 1 Thes. ii. 12. 2 Thes. ii. 14. 1 Tim. vi 12. 2 Tim. i. 9. 2 Pet. i, 3.
p 2 Cor. iv. 17. 2 Tim. ii. 10. Heb. ix. 15. 1 John ii. 25 ——q i. 6. 7. 2 Cor. iv. 17.——r 2 Cor. xiii 11. 2 Thes. ii. 17. Heb. xiii. 21. Jude 24 ——s Col ii. 7. 2 Thes. ii. 17 iii 3.——t Ps. cxxxviii. 7. Luke xxii. 32. Phil iv. 13. Col. i. 22, 23 ——u *See on,* iv 11. Rev. i. 6. v. 13 ——x 2 Cor. i. 19 1 Thes. i. 1. 2 Thes i. 1.——y Eph. vi. 21. Col. i. 7. iv. 7. 9 ——z Eph. iii. 3. Heb. xiii. 22.

a Heb. xiii. 22. Jude 3.
b John xxi. 24. Acts xx. 24. 1 John iii. 22. v. 9, 10.
c Acts xx. 24. 1 Cor. xv. 1. Gal i. 8, 9. 2 Pet. ii. 15.
d Rom. v. 2. 2 Cor. i. 24. 2 Pet. i. 12.
e Ps. lxxxvii. 4. Rev. xvii. 5. xviii. 2
f 2 John 1 13.
g *See on,* Acts xii. 12 25 ——h *See on.* Rom. xvi. 16. 1 Cor. xvi. 20. 2 Cor. xiii. 12. 1 Thes. v. 26.——i i. 2. John xiv. 27. xvi. 33 xx. 19. 26. *See on,* Rom. i. 7.——k *See on,* Rom. viii. 1. 1 Cor. i. 30. 2 Cor v. 17.

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and strive against sin, though it were unto imprisonment, scorning, stripes, or death, they should know assuredly, that their brethren, dispersed in other parts of the world, fully and constantly endured afflictions of the same kind, in the same cause, and from the same sort of persons.—These repeated exhortations to watchfulness, and the especial motive assigned for it, ought to have peculiar weight, as coming from that apostle, who, through self-confidence, carnal security, and unwatchfulness, when Satan desired to sift him and his brethren as wheat, was induced to deny his Lord with oaths and dire imprecations.

V. 10, 11. The apostle did not pray that his brethren might be exempted from such salutary and honourable trials; but he besought "the God of all grace," being plenteous in mercy, and the inexhaustible and holy Source of every kind and measure of grace, who, by his word and Spirit, had called them to the hope and sure earnests of eternal and most glorious felicity through Jesus Christ, that, "after they had suffered awhile," for the trial and increase of their faith, he would make them mature and complete in every Christian grace, establish them in the peace and hope of the Gospel, strengthen them to resist all kinds of temptations, to endure all sufferings, and to perform all duties, by invigorating their holy affections; and that he would settle them firm and immoveable, as a compact building on a good foundation, so that no storms, assaults, or stratagems of the enemy might overthrow them. This would redound to his praise, as the work of his power and sovereign authority, to whom all glory and dominion were universally and eternally to be ascribed.

V. 12. It is highly probable, that Silvanus was the same person who generally attended St. Paul, and who was frequently called Silas. St. Peter supposed and concluded, from all he saw and heard, that he was "a faithful brother," a true believer, and a zealous minister of Christ "unto them," among whom he had commonly laboured. He had therefore taken the opportunity of writing by him a brief epistle, exhorting them to be steadfast, and to act consistently with their Christian profession: he testified to the Gospel which they had received, to satisfy them that the doctrines of grace, which they had embraced, and in the faith and experience of which they stood accepted with God, were indeed the truths of Christ, and that the power of them upon their hearts, and the fruits of them in their lives, evinced them to be partakers of the grace of God, and fully established in his favour. This seems to determine that St. Peter wrote to confirm in the faith the churches which had been planted by St. Paul, and his companions, against all the insinuations of those who pretended that he preached a different conduct from the other apostles; and indeed the attentive reader will remark a great similarity in the sentiments of those two great apostles, especially in the manner in which they connect doctrine and practice together.

V. 13. There is no sufficient ground to suppose that, by Babylon, the apostle mystically meant Rome; for no reason can be assigned, why he should withhold the name of that city when he wrote this epistle. Yet, if any choose to avail themselves of this *only Scriptural proof* that Peter ever resided at this great antichristian metropolis, Protestants are not concerned to controvert it. It is, however, well ascertained that Peter went to Rome, and there suffered martyrdom. It is not certain whether Marcus is, or is not, the same with John Mark, mentioned frequently by St. Paul and in the Acts of the apostles.—(*Preface to the Gospel according to St. Mark.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

They who most know the nature, difficulties, snares, and temptations of the pastoral office, are best qualified to exhort their brethren, and will speak with the most genuine authority on such topics. An experimental acquaintance with the sufferings of Christ, gives the best grounded confidence of being "partakers of the glory "which shall be revealed," and they, who would counsel to the greatest effect, must not unnecessarily use the language of superiority or authority. Ministers should unite skill, vigilance, diligence, faithfulness, love, zeal, patience, disinterestedness, and self-abasement, in their characters and conduct, both in order "to feed the flock of God," and to be examples unto them: they ought to perform the most laborious services, and endure the greatest hardships, for the Lord's heritage, "not by constraint, but "willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind," and without assuming any dominion over their faith.—This is not, indeed, the road to high perferments in the outward church; but "when the chief Shepherd shall "appear," such pastors "shall receive of him a crown of "glory that will never fade away." And what, compared with this, are all those riches, eminent stations, or lordly dignities, which so many nominal pastors eagerly pursue? Or where will the avaricious, the slothful, the sensual, or the tyrannical men, who have borne the name of ministers, appear, when the great Judge shall come, and call them to give an account of their stewardship? The sentence to be then denounced against them, and executed on them, is already recorded; may they read it, and tremble, and flee from the wrath to come! (*Notes*, *Matt.* xxiv. 48—51.) But every station and age has its peculiar duties; subordination is the plan of God: the younger should submit themselves unto the elder, and all, in their several relations, should be subject to those placed over them.—This will be the case, as far as men "are clothed with "humility," and God never shows favour to a proud man, except when he brings him down into the dust of self-abasement; (*Note*, *Dan.* iv. 37.) nor will any humble soul come short of his grace, or of eternal life. Let us then "humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, for he is able to save and to destroy; then "he will exalt "us in due time," as much as is good for us in his church on earth, and among "his saints in glory everlasting."—When we become humbly subject to our reconciled God, and simply dependent on him, we are allowed and commanded to cast all our care on him, and assured "that he "careth for us," as a Father for his own children; and this will bring far sweeter peace and greater comfort into the soul, than could arise from the most complete gratification of pride and ambition. Thus also we shall be safe; for humility will induce us to be sober and vigilant, diligently attending to our duty. This is our part, and thus we may unreservedly and cheerfully leave the events to the Lord, to whom they belong.

V. 8—14.

When we consider the indefatigable malice, power and subtlety of our adversary, the devil, who "goeth about "seeking whom he may devour," and recollect what numbers he continually destroys, we cannot but perceive our need of vigilance, and confidence in God. Did a roaring lion at any time traverse our streets, devouring the careless and inattentive, we should proceed with vast caution and circumspection, if obliged to go out in such perilous circumstances; yet a far more formidable enemy continually watches his opportunity of destroying our souls, nor can we have any safety, except we watch and are sober. Thus we may hope to be kept from falling into temptation; but, if we must encounter this dreadful foe, we should resist him steadfast in the faith, and then the Lord will constrain him to flee from us. In whatever form he assaults us, or by whatever agents, we may know assuredly, that our brethren experience the same conflicts, temptations, and tribulations. We should therefore pray for them also, that after they have suffered awhile, the God of all grace would perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle them. This he will do for all, whom he hath "called to his eternal glory by Jesus Christ," that they may celebrate his praises, as his willing subjects, for ever and ever. All the apostles and evangelists exhort us to these things, and testify that this is the true grace of God: may we then steadfastly adhere to this primitive Christianity, and not listen to cunningly devised fables! Thus it will appear that we were elected together with those who are now in glory; that we are indeed faithful brethren with all the family of God; that we desire to live in love with them, and to share that peace which belongs to all that are in Christ Jesus, and to them exclusively.

THE

SECOND EPISTLE GENERAL OF

PETER.

The writer of this epistle calls himself " Simon Peter," (Acts xv. 14. Gr.) *" an apostle of Jesus Christ ;" he alludes to circumstances and facts, which agree to none but St. Peter ;* (i. 14—16. John xxi. 19 ;) *he calls it his " second epistle ;" and he speaks of his " beloved brother, Paul."* (iii. 1. 15.) *It must, therefore, either be the work of the apostle Peter, or of one who personated him : but ' it is a thing of the worst ' example, for any man to forge another's name, or pretend to be the person he is not.'* (Le Clerc.) *It may be added ; ' especially to forge the name of an apostle, and to personate him, in order to sanction a ' man's private opinions, by so high an authority.' Yet the epistle is remarkable for the energy with which the writer inculcates holiness ; and the solemn, yet affectionate manner, in which he testifies against the delusions of those who neglect it. It has indeed been urged, that the style remarkably differs from that of St. Peter's first epistle : but this is by no means true, except in respect to a part of the second chapter, which indeed seems to have been taken, in a measure at least, from some writing which described in very strong language the false prophets of that, or of earlier ages ; which was then extant, and well known, but is now lost. St. Jude seems also to have taken some things from it ; for part of his epistle remarkably coincides with the second chapter of this. In all other respects, the* internal *characters of authenticity are very strong. Some doubts, however, in this respect were entertained in the primitive church ; which Jerome ascribes to the supposed dissimilarity of style. But, it is probable, that it was written only a short time before the apostle's martyrdom ; and, not having been so publicly avowed by him, and clearly known to be his, during his lifetime, the scrupulous caution of the church hesitated about admitting it into the sacred canon ; till* internal evidence *fully convinced the most competent judges, that it was entitled to that high distinction. It is generally supposed to have been written, at least three or four years after the former epistle ; and it is evidently in the first instance intended for the same persons, though not expressly addressed to them. It appears, that the apostle, by this epistle, especially intended to put Christians upon their guard against the false apostles, who perverted the Gospel ; and the profane scoffers, who started objections to the truth of it : but it is replete with the most important instructions on a variety of subjects.*

CHAP. I.

The apostle salutes his brethren, 1, 2. *He shows the blessings to which God had called them ; and earnestly exhorts them to diligence in every good work, in order to make their calling and election sure ; intermixing suitable warnings and encouragements,* 3—11. *He states, that, aware of his approaching martyrdom, he is the more diligent, in thus admonishing them, that they might remember these things after his decease,* 12—15. *He urges the evidence of what he had seen and heard in the holy mount, in confirmation of his testimony, concerning the power and coming of Christ,* 16—18 ; *referring them to the more sure word of prophecy,* 19 ; *and instructing them, concerning the interpretation and source of it,* 20, 21.

*SIMON [a] Peter, [b] a servant and [c] an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that [d] have obtained like precious faith with us, [e] through the righteousness † of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ:

2 [f] Grace and peace be multiplied unto you, through [g] the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;

3 According as [h] his divine power hath given unto us [i] all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, [k] through the knowledge of him that hath [l] called us ‡ to glory and [m] virtue:

4 Whereby [n] are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these [o] ye might be partakers of the divine nature, [p] having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

* Or, *Simeon.* Acts xv. 14. a Matt. iv. 18. x. 2. Luke xxii. 31—34. John i. 42 xxi. 15—17. 1 Pet. i. 1. b John xii 26. *See on*, Rom. i. 1. c Luke xi. 49 John xx. 21 1 Cor. ix. 1, 2. xv 9. Gal. ii. 8. Eph. iii 5. iv. 11. 1 Pet. v 1. d 4. Acts xv 8, 9. Rom. i 12 2 Cor. iv. 13 Phil. i. 29 2 Tim. i. 5 Tit. i. 1. 4. 1 Pet i. 7. ii 7.——e Jer. xxxiii. 16. Rom i. 17. iii. 21—26. 1 Cor. i. 30. 2 Cor. v. 21. Phil iii. 9 ——† Gr. *of our God and Saviour.* Is. xii. 2. Luke i. 47. Tit. ii. 13 f Num. vi. 24—26. Dan. iv. 1. vi. 25. *See on*, Rom. i 7. 1 Pet. i. 2 Rev. i. 4.——g iii. 18. Is. liii. 11. Luke x. 22. John xvii 3. 2 Cor. iv. 6. 1 John v. 20, 21.——h Ps. cx. 3. Matt. xxviii. 18. John xvii. 2. 2 Cor. xii. 9. Eph. i. 19—21. Col. i. 16. Heb. i. 3.

i Ps. lxxxiv. 11. Rom viii. 32. 1 Cor. iii. 21—23 k *See on*, 2. l Rom. viii. 28—30 ix. 24. 1 Cor. i. 9. Eph. iv. 1. 4. 1 Thes. ii. 12. iv. 7. 2 Thes. ii. 14 2 Tim. i. 9. 1 Pet. i. 15. ii. 9. 21. iii. 9. v 10. ‡ Or, *by.* m 4. Ruth iii. 11. Prov. xii. 4. xxxi. 10. 29. Phil iv. 8. n 1 Ez. xxxvi. 25—27. Rom. ix. 4. 2 Cor. i. 20. vi. 17, 18. vii. 1. Gal. iii. 16. Heb viii. 6—12 ix. 15. 1 John ii. 25 ——o John i. 12, 13. 2 Cor. iii. 18. Eph. iv. 23, 24. Col. iii 10. Heb. xii. 10. 1 John iii 2 ——p ii 18—20. Gal. vi. 8. Jam. iv. 1—3. 1 Pet. iv 2, 3. 1 John ii. 15, 16.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. Perhaps Peter deemed it proper to style himself an apostle, as well as a servant, of Christ, because he meant in this epistle to oppose certain false teachers, who did great mischief in the church. He addressed himself to "them who had obtained like precious "faith" with him and his brethren. The nature and effects of true faith were precious, and it interested the possessor in the most valuable blessings; it was therefore equally *precious* in a private Christian as in an apostle. Thus he tacitly distinguished "the faith of God's elect" from that dead and worthless faith by which many were deluded, (*Notes, James* ii. 14—26.) This faith, which, as the original intimates, they received by the special favour and allotment of God, rested on the righteousness "of our God and our Saviour Jesus Christ," as the words may be literally rendered. Thus they were taught to believe and trust in the obedience unto death of the Lord Jesus, as their incarnate God and Saviour, for their justification, and for all the blessings connected with it, and resulting from it. This is the most obvious meaning of the words; but if any contend that the expression, "Our God," refers to the Father, they should also remember that the meritorious obedience of the incarnate Son is often called "the "righteousness of God:" nor can we form any idea, in what sense a Christian's faith could be said to be either *in*, or *through*, the righteousness, or *justice* of God, considered as a divine attribute, when it rests mainly on his mercy and truth, and only views his justice as satisfied, and, as it were, consenting to the sinner's salvation, through the meritorious work of Christ. Our translation, "*through* "the righteousness," though it seems not to be the exact sense of the passage, yet conveys a very important meaning, as the faith, by which we receive Christ for salvation, is given to us, "through the righteousness," which he finished as our Surety; for it springs from the regeneration of the Holy Spirit, as given to us through his mediation. In behalf of all such Christians the apostle prayed, that "Grace and peace might be multiplied to "them, through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our "Lord:" (*Notes, John* xvii. 3. 2 *Cor.* iv. 3—6:) for, in proportion to the degree of our believing, spiritual, and experimental knowledge of the perfections of God, in the harmony and glory of them, as displayed in the Person, character, and salvation of Jesus our Lord, all our gracious affections will be exercised, and our peace, hope, and consolation will abound, as that knowledge abounds in us.

V. 3, 4. It might be expected, that this progressive work of illumination, sanctification, and consolation, would be carried on in believers, according to what had already been conferred on them by the divine power of the Lord Jesus. In consequence of his exaltation and mediatorial authority, he had given to his people "all things "pertaining to life and godliness;" whatever was requisite for their spiritual and eternal life and final felicity, and for their acting suitably to their relations and obligations to God, during their passage through this evil world to heaven. Instructions, motives, encouragements, means, principles, and assistances, together with pardon, peace, and grace, had been given them, through the regeneration of the Holy Spirit, and all the fulness of Christ, and the engagements of the everlasting covenant had been set before them in the word of the Gospel: so that, notwithstanding their inward and outward impediments and conflicts, they might still be enabled to serve God acceptably in this world, and obtain everlasting life in the world to come. All these things had been freely bestowed on them, through the knowledge of God, who had called them by his glorious grace and mercy, and the powerful *virtue*, or *energy*, of his quickening Spirit; or he had called them to partake of his eternal glory, and to a constant and courageous profession of the Gospel, and obedience to Christ, amidst all the trials and sufferings of their present state. For the words *glory* and *virtue* may either refer to God who called them, or to what they were called to: the former seems the more literal construction; but the unusual use of the word rendered *virtue*, in applying it to God, hath induced many to adopt the latter interpretation. Yet the same word is used, in this application of it, by this apostle in another place. (1 *Pet.* ii. 9. *Gr.*) By this knowledge of God in Christ through the Gospel, and by their efficacious calling, exceedingly great and precious promises had been given them. The promises of scripture relate to things most needful to sinners, suitable to their case, answerable to all their wants, and abundantly sufficient to render them most blessed for evermore; whereas without them they must have been for ever miserable: the promises are therefore exceedingly great, and precious beyond expression. These are set before men by the Gospel, who are invited to come and partake of the promised blessings: but they are given to believers alone, who may consider them as so many valuable securities, or good bills, payable when their circumstances and best interests render it necessary: for, being united to Christ, and partakers of

5 And [q] beside this, [r] giving all diligence, add to your faith, [s] virtue; and to virtue, [t] knowledge;

6 And to knowledge, [u] temperance; and to temperance, [x] patience; and to patience, [y] godliness;

7 And to godliness, [z] brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, [a] charity.

8 For if these things be [b] in you, [c] and abound, [d] they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* * barren nor [e] unfruitful [f] in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 But he that [g] lacketh these things is [h] blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten [i] that he was purged from his old sins.

q Luke xvi. 26 xxiv. 21.
r 10. iii 14. Ps cxix. 4. Prov. iv 23 Is lv 2. Zech vi 15 John vi. 27. Phil ii. 12. Heb. vi 11. xi 6. xii 15
s *See on*, iii. 3
t 2. iii 18 1 Cor. xiv. 20. Eph. i. 17, 18. v. 17. Phil i. 9. Col i. 9. 1 Pet. iii. 7
u Acts xxiv 25 1 Cor. ix 25. Gal. v. 23. Tit. i. 8 ii 2.——x Ps xxxvii. 7. Luke viii 15. xxi. 19 Rom ii. 7 v. 3, 4. viii. 25. xv. 4. 2 Cor. vi. 4. Col. i. 11. 1 Thes. i 3. 2 Thes. i. 4. iii. 5 Heb vi. 12 15 x. 36. xii. 1. Jam i. 3, 4. v. 7–10 Rev. i 9. ii. 2, 3. xiii 10 xiv. 12 ——y 3. iii. 11 Gen. v. 24 Is. lvii 1. *Marg.* 1 Tim ii. 2 10. iii. 16. iv. 7, 8. vi. 3 6 11. 2 Tim. iii 5 Tit i 1 ——z John xiii. 34, 35 Rom. xii 10. 1 Thes. iii, 12. iv. 9, 10. Heb xiii. 1. 1 Pet. i. 22. ii. 17. 1 John iii 14 16.——a 1 Cor. xiii. 4–8. Gal. vi. 10. Col. iii. 14 1 Thes. v. 15. 1 Pet. iii. 8 1 John iv. 21.

b John v. 42. 2 Cor ix. 14. xiii. 5 Phil. ii. 5. Col iii. 16. Philem. 6.
c 1 Cor. xv. 58. 2 Cor. viii 2. 7. Phil i 9. Col. ii 7. iii. 16. 1 Thes. iii. 12. iv. 1. 2 Thes. i. 3.
d John xv. 7, 8 2 Cor. v. 13–17.
* Or, *idle*. Prov. xix. 15. Matt. xx 3 6 xxv. 26. Rom. xii. 11. Heb. vi. 12. 1 Tim v 13.——e Matt xiii. 22. John xv. 2 Tit. iii. 14. f *See on*, 2.————g 5–7 Mark x. 21 Luke xviii 22. Gal. v 6 13. Jam. ii. 14–26 h John ix. 40, 41. 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. 1 John ii 9–11. Rev. iii. 17.——i 4. ii 18–20. Rom vi. 1–4. 11. 1 Pet. iii. 21.

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him, all the promises belong to them through him and by his covenant. (2 *Cor.* i. 20.) They were moreover bestowed on them to the end, that they "might be partakers "of the divine nature," instead of that depraved and diabolical nature, which they had, as apostate sinners; that by their union with Christ, and the indwelling and new-creating power of the Holy Spirit, the divine image might be renewed upon their souls; that so a new nature might be formed within them, and a new direction given to their understandings, wills, and affections; conformable to the holy nature of God, and capable of loving and delighting in him, and finding happiness in his service. When this change of heart and nature was begun in regeneration, it influenced those who experienced it, to separate "and escape from the pollution that was in the "world through lust;" or from all those outward vices and enormities, into which men are drawn by their excessive and idolatrous cravings after the pleasures, possessions, or distinctions of the world. Such evil practices have always filled the earth, and they are *pollution* and *filthiness*, in the judgment of God. When sinners profess to repent, and to embrace the Gospel, they outwardly relinquish these iniquities, (ii. 20;) and all regenerate persons actually and finally escape them, that is, the allowed or habitual practice of any of them.

V. 5–7. The apostle here called on his Christian brethren, not to rest in their apparent conversion, or the reformation connected with it: but, in dependence on the promises of the Gospel, and in pursuance of the end for which they were given, to "cleanse themselves from all" remaining "filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holi-"ness in the fear of God." (*Note*, 2 *Cor.* vii. 1.) Besides that change which had taken place, they ought to give, or use, all diligence, in the use of every appointed means, from an earnest desire of increasing holiness; and thus "to add to their faith, virtue," that they might with fortitude and manly constancy profess their belief in Christ, and obey his will, in the midst of persecutors, and show a composure of mind, notwithstanding the difficulties and dangers to which they were exposed. They ought furthermore diligently "to add to their virtue, "knowledge;" that, by an increasing acquaintance with the whole truth and will of God, they might be enabled to regulate their zeal and courage with judgment and discretion; knowing how to behave in all circumstances and to all men, like well informed intelligent persons, who could not justly be charged with any thing rash, foolish, or contrary to the duty of their place, in the church or the community. (*Note*, *Phil.* i. 9—11.) To "knowledge," they must add "temperance," or an exact government of all the animal appetites, in subordination to the will of God, and the benefit of themselves and others; as well as great moderation in all worldly things, and indifference about them. To "temperance," they must unite "patience," or a cheerful submission to the will of God under afflictions, meekness amidst injuries and affronts, perseverance in well-doing notwithstanding severe trials, and a quiet waiting for the Lord to interpose for their comfort and deliverance. To this, "godliness" must be added; as consisting of all those holy affections and dispositions, which constitute the spiritual worshipper and truly devoted servant of God, in all his ordinances and commandments: and to this, "brotherly kindness," or an unfeigned fervent love of Christians, as brethren in the Lord; (*Note*, 1 *Pet.* i. 22;) and to all the rest they must join "charity," or benevolent and compassionate love to all men, according to the commandments of God, and in imitation of his kindness to the sinful children of men.—These holy dispositions, and the effects of them upon their conduct, must be diligently and carefully added together, as different voices in harmony form a chorus; that so the exercise of each other might connect with, regulate, and bound, that of the rest, and prevent their exceeding or degenerating. Thus the Christian character would appear well proportioned and beautiful: whereas, if any of these graces were remarkably defective, the others would *appear* to be redundant, being mixed with those natural dispositions that most resembled them; and the character would appear deformed and disproportioned; whilst one man would be bold without knowledge, or love; another gentle and kind without firmness or fortitude; and the same would appear in various particulars.

V. 8, 9. These things ought to be peculiarly attended to, as the usefulness and comfort of Christians depended greatly upon them; for if holy affections and dispositions were rooted in their hearts and abounded in their lives, they would effectually prevent them from being *slothful* or unfruitful, in their knowledge of Christ; as they would excite them to continual activity in his service and to that behaviour in all relative duties, and in the improvement of their talents, which would be very useful to mankind. But, on the other hand, the professed Christian, who was destitute of these gracious dispositions, or even remarkably defective in them, was to be considered as spiritually blind: for his most exact notions only showed, that he had *heard* that such things were; but his conduct proved that he had

10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, [k] give diligence [l] to make your calling and [m] election sure; for [n] if ye do these things ye shall [o] never fall:

11 For so [p] an entrance shall be ministered unto you [q] abundantly into the [r] everlasting kingdom of [s] our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

12 Wherefore [t] I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, [u] though ye know *them*, [x] and be established in the present truth.

13 Yea, I think it meet, [y] as long as I am in this tabernacle, [z] to stir you up, [a] by putting *you* in remembrance;

14 Knowing that [b] shortly I must put off *this* my tabernacle, [c] even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.

15 Moreover, [d] I will endeavour that ye may be able, after my decease, to have [e] these things always in remembrance.

16 For [f] we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you [g] the power and [h] coming

k *See on*, 5.
l 2 Tim. ii. 19 Heb. vi. 11. 19. 1 John iii 19—21.
m Rom. viii. 28—31. 1 Thes i. 3, 4. 2 Thes ii 13, 14 1 Pet i 2.
n Ps xv. 5. Is lvi 2 Matt. vii. 24, 25 Luke vi 47—49
o Ps xxxvii 24. lxii. 2 6. cxii. 6. cxxi. 31. Mic vii 8. Acts xx. 24, 25. 1 Pet. i. 5 Rev iii. 10, 11.
p Matt. xxv. 34 2 Cor v. 1 2 Tim iv 8. Rev. iii 21.
q Ps. xxxvi 8 Cant. v. 1. Is xxxv 2 John x 10. Eph. iii. 20. Heb vi. 17.——r Is. ix. 7. Dan. vii 14 27. Rev. v 8 ——s *See on*, 1 ——t 13. 15 iii. 1. Rom xv. 14, 15. 1 Tim. iv. 6. 2 Tim. i 6. Heb. x. 32. Jude 3. 17 ——u 1 John ii. 21 Jude 5 ——x iii. 17. Acts xvi. 5. Col. ii. 7. Heb xiii 9. 1 Pet. v. 10. 12.

y 14. 2 Cor v. 1—4 8. Heb. xiii 3.
z iii 1. Hag i. 14. 2 Tim i 6.
a *See on* 12.
b Deut. iv. 21, 22. xxxi. 14 Josh xxiii 14. 1 Kings ii 2, 3. Acts xx. 25. 2 Tim iv. 6.
c John xxi 18, 19
d Deut. xxxi. 19—29. Josh. xxiv 24—29. 1 Chr xxix. 1—20. Ps lxxi 18. 2 Tim. ii. 2. Heb. xi. 4
e *See on*, 4—7 12.
f iii 3, 4 1 Cor. i. 17 23. 2 Cor. ii. 17 xii 16, 17 Eph. iv 14. 2 Thes. ii. 9. 1 Tim. i. 4. iv. 7. Tit. i. 14.——g Matt. xxviii 18. Mark ix 1 John xvii 2. Rom. i. 4. 1 Cor. v. 4. Phil. iii. 21.——h Mal iii. 2. iv. 5. Matt xvi 28 xxiv 3 27. 1 Cor i. 7. Jude 14 Rev i. 7.

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never *seen* their real nature, use, glory, and excellency. At least he must be very short-sighted, and incapable of perceiving any thing of the genuine tendency of the Gospel! nay, he had forgotten the very meaning of his own profession, when he embraced Christianity, and was baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, as that symbolical ordinance represented the purging away of a man's old sins, in conformity to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, (*Notes*, *Rom.* vi. 1 *Pet*. iii. 21;) that, being dead unto sin, and risen to newness of life, he might thenceforth live unto God.

V. 10, 11. As no outward profession could profit men, without a renewal of their hearts to holiness, the apostle exhorted his brethren, "the rather to give diligence to make their calling and election sure;" that by earnestly and vigorously using every means of grace, applying themselves to the performance of all their various duties, mortifying every sinful propensity, and cultivating every holy affection, the evidence of their "calling," or regeneration, might become more complete, clear, and indisputable, to themselves, as well as to others. And by this, their election would also be ascertained; and they might assuredly infer, that God had from the beginning chosen them to salvation, and would preserve them to his eternal glory: (*Notes*, &c. *Rom.* viii. 29, 30. *Eph.* i. 1—12. 2 *Thes*. ii. 13. 1 *Pet*. i. 2.) For if they diligently practised those things which had been mentioned, they should never fall; it would thus be manifest that they were true believers, who would be preserved from total and final apostacy, into which many professed Christians were drawn; and, in proportion to their diligence, they would be kept from the snares of Satan, and from falling into such sins as would be a scandal to the Gospel, and very distressing to themselves. Thus they would be preserved in a comfortable and honourable walk with God, and from all those declensions and failures, into which others were betrayed: and when they left the world, an entrance would be afforded them into "the everlasting kingdom of Christ;" every thing would be so arranged as to conduce to their felicity; they would be favoured at the approach of death with satisfactory assurance that they were going to heaven; they would enter that blessed estate, as a ship comes into harbour, richly laden from a prosperous voyage, with a fair gale and a full tide, carrying it above all impediments, and terminating all its dangers; and they, who were left behind, would have no doubt of their being gone to be with Christ, in his glorious and eternal kingdom. Whereas inconsistent professors of the Gospel would, probably, have darkness and doubt for their companions in the hour of death; others would be disposed to hesitate in respect of the event; and in many ways they must suffer loss, even though they were saved as by fire.—(*Note*, 1 *Cor*. iii. 10—15.)

V. 12—15. Seeing things were as had been stated, the apostle assured his brethren that he would not be negligent in his duty; but would embrace every opportunity of putting them in remembrance of these important matters, even though they knew them, and were established especially in that truth which he then inculcated; namely, the necessity of holiness, in order to an abundant entrance into the eternal kingdom of Christ. This was the case with many of them, who would be glad to have their memories refreshed, and their holy affections invigorated, by his animated exhortations: but others might be in a declining or wavering frame of mind; especially as many teachers propagated opinions of a contrary tendency. The apostle, however, deemed it right, and a debt owing to his brethren, whilst he sojourned in the frail body, as in a tabernacle, to stir them up to increasing and persevering diligence in every good work, by putting them in remembrance of those truths which they had before learned, but were too apt to forget. To this he was excited by the assurance that his death approached, when his body would be taken down like a tent, or laid aside as a garment by one who was going to rest: not indeed by a natural dissolution, but by a violent death, as his beloved Lord had showed him long before. (*Note*, *John* xxi. 18, 19.) The composure with which Peter, on this occasion, spoke of the very painful death that awaited him, as if it had been no more than putting off his garment or removing his tent, may very properly be contrasted with his terror, and denial of his Lord, when he had been left to himself in order to his humiliation. Until the time of his death should arrive, his chief concern and endeavour would be to use every means, that every individual might, after his decease, have these practical instructions in remembrance: for, though he wrote to the churches in Asia, yet he evidently intended his exhortations for the benefit of Christians in other ages and nations. The insufficiency of *oral* tradition is clearly shown, by the apostle's earnestness to convey his admonitions in *writing*.

of our Lord Jesus Christ, but [i] were eye-witnesses of his majesty.

17 For he received from [k] God the Father, honour and glory, when [l] there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, [m] This is my beloved Son, [n] in whom I am well pleased.

18 And [o] this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in [p] the holy mount.

19 We have also [q] a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto [r] ye do well that ye take heed, as unto [s] a light that shineth in a dark place, until [t] the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts:

20 [u] Knowing this first, [x] that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

21 For the prophecy came not * in old time by the will of man; but [y] holy men of God [z] spake *as they were* moved [a] by the Holy Ghost.

i Matt xvii. 1—4. Mark ix 2. Luke ix 28—32. John i. 14. 1 John i. 1—3. iv. 14.
k Matt xi 25—27. xxviii. 19. Luke x. 22. John iii 35. v. 21—23 26 36, 37 vi. 27 37. 39. x. 15 36 xiii. 1—3. xiv. 6. 8, 9. 11. xvii. 21 xx 17 Rom. xv. 6. 2 Cor i. 3. xi. 31. 2 John 3. Jude 1.
l Matt. xvii. 5. Mark ix. 7. Luke ix 34, 35 John xii 28, 29.——m Matt iii. 17. Mark i. 11. Luke iii 22.——n Is. xlii 1. liii. 10. Matt xii. 18.——o Matt. xvii. 6.——p Gen. xxviii. 16, 17. Ex. iii 1. 5. Josh. v. 15. Is. xi. 9 lvi. 7. Zech viii. 3——q Ps. xix. 9. Is. viii. 20. xli. 21—23. 26. Luke xvi. 29—31. John v 39. Acts xvii. 11.

r Acts xv. 29. Jam. ii. 8. 3 John 6.
s Ps cxix. 105 Is. ix 2. lx 1, 2 Matt. iv. 16 Luke i. 78, 79 John i. 7—9. v. 35. viii. 12. Eph v 7, 8.
t 2 Cor iv 4—6 1 John v. 10 Rev. ii 29 xxii 16.
u iii. 3. Rom vi. 6. xiii 11. 1 Tim. i 9. Jam. i. 3.
x Rom xii. 6.
* Or, at any time.
y Deut xxxiii. 1. Josh xiv 6. 1 Kings xiii. 1. xvii 18 24. 2 Kings iv 7. 9. 22. vi. 10 15 1 Chr. xxiii. 14 2 Chr. viii. 14.
z Num. xvi. 28. 2 Sam xxiii. 2. Mic iii. 7 Luke i 70 2 Tim iii. 15—17. 1 Pet. i. 11. Rev. xix. 10.——a Mark xii. 36. Acts i. 16. xxviii 25. Heb iii. 7. ix. 8 x. 15.

V. 16—18. The apostle was ready to lay down his life in attestation of the gospel, and earnest to establish others in the faith; because he was conscious and confident, that he, and other ministers of Christ, had not followed artful and ingenious fables, devised for the purpose of soothing men's passions, and gratifying their depraved inclinations; and thus advancing the persons that propagated them, to wealth, authority, or reputation. This had been the nature, intention, and effect of many of the Pagan fictions, and the inventions of Jewish rabbies: and indeed is the object of all those, who invent and propagate false or perverted systems of religion: but there was nothing of the sort in the doctrine taught by the apostles, concerning the power and authority, to which Christ had been advanced in consequence of his crucifixion and resurrection, and the ends for which he reigned; or in what related to his second coming to judge the world, to perfect the salvation of his disciples, and to execute vengeance on his enemies. These doctrines were not suited to please carnal men, or to procure secular advantages to those that taught them; indeed they would certainly offend such, as were not brought by them to repentance, faith, and holiness; but they were authenticated in the most satisfactory manner. For Peter, with James and John, had been eye-witnesses of their Lord's majesty, even during the season appointed for his humiliation: his essential dignity, and his approaching mediatorial exaltation, were manifest, in the splendour of his countenance, and in the appearance of Moses and Elias to surrender up their honours to him, at his transfiguration. But, especially, he received the most distinguishing honour and glory from God the Father, when there was heard from the bright cloud, the symbol of the divine Presence in his transcendent glory, a voice, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in "whom I am well pleased:" and the apostle himself, together with his brethren, had heard this voice from heaven, when he accompanied the Lord Jesus to the mount of transfiguration, which was properly called "holy," from this signal display of the divine majesty upon it. (*Notes, &c. Matt.* xvii. 1—8.)

V. 19—21. The recollection of the transfiguration of Christ gave great confidence to the apostle, and his testimony concerning it might be a great confirmation of the faith of other Christians: yet they had also "a more sure "word of prophecy." The appearance and voice on the mount were transient, and only three persons witnessed the interesting scene, one of whom had long since been martyred. (*Acts* xii. 1, 2.) Whatever assurance therefore it might bring to the individuals concerned, it was not so well suited to satisfy the minds of men in general, as the prophecies of Scripture were. These, from the beginning, foretold and described one extraordinary Person, and gave intimations of his birth, character, miracles, doctrines, sufferings, death, resurrection, and exaltation; together with the establishment, extent, prosperity, and duration of his kingdom, and his final coming to judgment: when compared with their accomplishment in Jesus, they constituted a permanent and general proof, that he was the Messiah, the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world, and more powerfully corroborated the doctrine of the apostles, concerning his exaltation and second coming, than any thing which Peter had seen on the mount: and the more this word of prophecy should be considered, the fuller conviction would it communicate. To this, therefore, all, who read the epistle, would do well to give peculiar attention; for it was to be considered as a light shining in a dark place, not only in respect of the total ignorance of the Gentiles, and the comparative darkness of the Mosaic economy, but as the earth was, at all times a dark place, except where the word of God had diffused light in it, by leading men to Christ, the Light of the world. Christians ought therefore to attend to the prophecies of Scripture, for their direction and conviction concerning the truth of the Christian religion, till the Holy Spirit should discover to their souls the glory and excellency of the Gospel, and, by his sanctifying and comfortable influences, give them the dawning of heaven in their hearts; and till the knowledge of Christ, and the experience of his power, truth, and love, had formed within them an assurance and anticipation of the light, holiness, and felicity of the saints, in the presence of their glorified Saviour; even as the morning-star preceded and ushered in the rising sun and the perfect day. (*Notes, Prov.* iv. 18. *Hos.* vi. 3. 1 *John* v. 10.) This inward demonstration of the truth of Christianity would render the external evidences less necessary; as they could no longer doubt of it, when they saw the glory, and tasted the comfort of it, and experienced the truth and power of it in their hearts, and manifested it in their conduct. But, in taking heed to this light, they must first know, as a matter of the greatest importance, that "no prophecy of Scripture was of any "private interpretation." This clause has been variously

CHAP. II.

The apostle foretels the coming of certain false teachers; showing in general their corrupt principles and selfishness, and the fatal effects of their influence, 1—3. *He adduces the severity of God in punishing apostate angels, the inhabitants of the old world, and those of Sodom;*

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explained; some render it, ‘of any private impulse,’ as if it related rather to the *giving* than the *interpreting* of prophecy: but the word cannot properly be so rendered, as it implies the *loosing of a knot:* and it would also render the next verse a mere repetition of the same thought, and in the form of a reason assigned for what went before.—Many have opposed the text to the right of private judgment, in order to support a supposed authority inherent *some-where* in the Church and its ministers, and to make themselves the ultimate object of faith, by fixing the sense of the scriptures for the people: yet, at last, this is as much *private* interpretation as any other can be; for every Church puts its own meaning upon the word of God, and that often contrary to the truth. Some have referred the words to the general application of scriptural promises by believers to their own case, as being a common property of the Church, and not the appropriate exclusive right of the individuals to whom they were at first given. But the apostle was not discoursing of *promises*, as his argument related entirely to *predictions;* and this seems to me to point out the true meaning. The lively imaginations of men often lead them to *suppose* events to be accomplishments of scriptural prophecies, which in fact have no relation to them: and this way of misapplying them, as fancy, inclination, or passion dictates, has always tended to render them suspected, or disregarded. Instead then of employing a lively imagination, to discover some agreement between our own private concerns, or those of our party and the predictions of scripture, and so pretending to foretell future events from them, we should remember, and be assured, that every prophecy has its precise and determinate meaning, which no human ingenuity can alter. We should therefore exercise our judgment, with proper helps, and in dependence on divine teaching, to discover, as far as we can, the real meaning of the predictions, and the accomplishment of them in the public concerns of Christ and his Church, and in those of the world as connected with the Church: and to rest satisfied with understanding such as have evidently been fulfilled, without too curiously prying into those which appear to be hitherto unaccomplished. Thus the perversion of prophecy would be prevented, and the objections against the argument brought from it, in proof of the divine inspiration of the scriptures, would be answered. The prophecies, which have been already most evidently fulfilled in the Person and salvation of Christ, and in the grand concerns of the Church and of the world, form a most unanswerable demonstration of the truth of Christianity, and the accumulating evidence, arising from the fulfilment of further prophecies from age to age, must at last rouse the attention of the most heedless, and silence the cavils of the most skeptical. But the misapplication of prophecy, as if it were of private interpretation, and as if every man were at liberty to put his own fanciful meaning upon it, only serves to furnish objections, gives the whole an air of uncertainty, and so perplexes the subject. For the prophecy came not in ancient times, at the instance and according to the inclinations of men, nor can it be properly thus interpreted: but the events, to which it related, were fixed in the eternal counsels of God, to be accomplished in their appointed season; holy men of God, who served him and were specially favoured by him, spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit; and they were so far from modelling their predictions according to their inclinations, that they frequently could not discover the meaning of their own words, (*Note,* 1 *Pet.* i. 10—12.)—The apostle doubtless intended the prophecies of the Old Testament, but his arguments are equally conclusive respecting those of the New Testament also.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—4.

We should carefully examine, whether our faith be of a like precious nature and efficacy with that of the primitive servants of Jesus Christ: for if we have obtained this inestimable benefit, we are certainly interested in “the righteousness of our God and Saviour;” and grace and peace will be multiplied unto us, in proportion to “our knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord,” till they are perfected in the felicity of heaven. We can expect nothing too great and valuable from him, whose divine power hath already given us all things pertaining to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him, who hath called us by his new-creating Spirit, in order to bring us to his everlasting glory. “Exceedingly great and precious promises” are contained in his holy word; so that if we have that precious faith, which embraces and relies on the promises, and which renders Christ precious to the soul, we possess all that is essentially valuable, and need not desire those trifles which carnal men idolize, as if they comprised the substance of all happiness. But let us remember that these promises were given to us, in order to our being “partakers of a divine nature:” and this will induce us to inquire, whether we really flee from the pollutions which are in the world, through “the lust of the flesh, “the lust of the eye, and the pride of life,” and whether we be really “renewed in the spirit of our minds.” It will also teach us to convert all these promises into prayers for the purifying and transforming grace of the Holy Spirit, to make us indeed partakers more and more of the image of God, in righteousness, goodness, and truth.

V. 5—11.

It is incumbent on us to give all diligence, to add to our faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity, that it may appear that we are one with Christ, and with the Father through him. (*John* xvii. 20—23.) When these graces dwell in the heart, and abound in the conduct, they constitute a consistent, active, and fruitful Christian: and a degree of *with his kindness to Noah and Lot, in proof that he would certainly preserve his people, and execute vengeance on the wicked,* 4—9. *A more particular account of the seducers above-mentioned, of their vile character and practices, and of the hopeless condition of those that were deceived by them,* 10—22.

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zeal and diligence in good works, to which other men are strangers, will show the excellency of those doctrines which many ignorantly suppose to lead to licentiousness. But the light that is in numbers who profess the Gospel, is darkness; and, whilst they deem themselves more clear-sighted than practical Christians and teachers, their own deficiency, in the graces and good works of true religion, proves them to be blind, or at least very dim-sighted, men who can see nothing but a few things belonging to their own narrow system, without perceiving the enlarged nature and beneficent tendency of the Gospel, who have forgotten that even baptism signifies 'a death unto sin, 'and a new birth unto righteousness,' and that all Christians, by their very profession, are bound 'to mortify all 'evil and corrupt affections, and daily to proceed in all 'virtue and godliness of living.' As therefore so many "are pure in their own eyes, who are not washed from "their filthiness," (*Prov.* xxx. 12.) and as every one of Christ's apostles bears most decided testimony against such a worthless form of knowledge, such a dead and solitary faith, "we ought the rather to give diligence to make our "calling and election sure." Many indeed presume themselves to be elect, because they believe, *in their way*, the doctrine of election, though they have no evidence that God hath called them with a holy calling: but, if we would not be deceived, we must diligently make sure to our souls, by the indisputable fruits of the Spirit, that we are called by special grace; and we may thence safely infer our eternal election and our final preservation. It is not said, that if we hold certain doctrines we shall never fall, but, "if we do these things, we shall never fall;" and in the practice of every good work we should wait for, and expect, an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

V. 12—18.

It behooves all ministers, after the example of Peter, diligently, and at all times, to put their hearers in remembrance of the things above mentioned, in connexion with evangelical truth; otherwise they cannot "take them to record, that "they have declared unto them all the counsel of God," however exactly they have preached the doctrines of grace. This is not only necessary with such as are ignorant, or waver, in these matters, but even among those who know them, and are, as to their judgment, established in them; for allowed truths often lie dormant in the mind, except as they are rendered active by animated exhortations; and a carnal mind renders the memory treacherous in this respect, so that it soon loses sight of spiritual instructions. These practical subjects, however, do not generally prove most acceptable to the majority, in congregations where the doctrines of grace are preached: so that ministers will often be tempted to omit them, or to hurry them over in a general and superficial manner, which tends to deceive souls, and to diffuse a false and loose religion. We are therefore bound, in justice to men, as well as in duty to God, as long as we are in these tabernacles, to stir up our people, by putting them in remembrance of the various good works, by which they must glorify God and adorn the Gospel, and to consult what is profitable, rather than what is pleasant to them. For we shall shortly put off these our tabernacles, and nothing can tend so much to produce composure in the prospect, or in the pangs, of death, and in expectation of our great account, as consciousness that we have not sought to please men, or to obtain wealth, reputation, ease, or indulgence, to ourselves, but that we have faithfully and simply served the Lord Jesus Christ, and sought his glory and the salvation of souls, as the great aim of all our labours. Indeed, the speedy approach of death should excite us, not only to prepare to meet it with comfort, but to use every proper means that all around us may have the substance of our instructions in remembrance after our decease. We cannot indeed expect such extensive and permanent success to our feeble and defective endeavours, as attended the writings of inspired men of God; yet, when we are conscious that our testimony tends to lead men to the Scriptures, to Christ, and to holiness, we may hope that abiding good will spring from them; whilst many of the admired productions of ingenious infidels, heretics, and ungodly men, will continue to corrupt the principles, to deprave the morals, and to murder the souls of numbers, from age to age, to the accumulating guilt and condemnation of those who left so fatal a bequest to posterity. For, whatever clamours be made about bigotry and uncharitableness, it is most certain, that they only who preach salvation for sinners through Jesus Christ, and who make known his power and coming to judge the world, are free from the charge of following cunningly-devised fables, and therefore they ought to be the most earnest in their labours, without regarding what the consequence may be respecting their temporal interests. For even those things, of which the apostles, or some of them, were eye-witnesses, concerning the majesty and glory of Christ, and what they heard from the excellent glory, "This is my beloved Son, "in whom I am well pleased," are full of conviction, instruction, and encouragement to us, at this day, to direct and animate us in the work of the Lord.

V. 19—21.

We have not seen or heard such things as apostles did; but we have a more sure word of prophecy, which will satisfy the diligent investigator, even more than any transient miracle could do, as it lies open to every man's examination, and continually becomes more conclusive, by the further accomplishment of its predictions. To this grand evidence of the truth of Christianity, and its great doctrines, every serious inquirer will do well to take heed, especially in this skeptical age, when so many engines are at work, to draw the attention of the unstable

BUT [a] there were false prophets also among the people, [b] even as there shall be false teachers among you, who [c] privily shall bring in [d] damnable heresies, even [e] denying the Lord that [f] bought them, [g] and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

a Deut xiii 1–3. 1 Kings xviii. 19–22. xxii 6. Neh. vi 12–14. Is. ix. 15. lvi 10, 11. Jer. xiv. 13–15. xxiii 16, 17. 25 – 32. xxvii. 14, 15. xxviii. 15–17. xxix 8, 9. 31, 32. xxxvii. 19 Lam. ii. 14 Ez. xiii. 3–18 Hos. ix. 8. Mic. ii. 19. iii. 1–11. Zech. xiii 3, 4 Matt. vii 15. Luke vi. 26. Rom xiv. 20. b Matt. xxiv. 11. 24. Mark xiii 22. Luke xxi. 8. Acts xx. 29, 30. 1 Cor xi 19. 2 Cor xi. 15–17 Gal. iv. 17. Eph. iv 14. Col. ii. 8. 18. 2 Thes ii. 3 - 12. 1 Tim iv. —3. 2 Tim. iii. 1–9. iv. 3. Tit i. 11. 1 John ii. 18, 19. 26 iv. 1. Rev. ii. 9. xiii. 14 c 3. Gal. ii. 4.————d 3. Gal v 20. Tit. iii. 10————e Matt. x. 33. Luke xii 9. Acts iii. 13, 14. 2 Tim ii. 12, 13 Jude 4. Rev. ii. 13 iii. 8.———f Deut xxxii. 6. Acts xx 28 1 Cor vi 20 vii. 23. Gal. iii. 13 Eph i. 7. 1 Pet. i. 18. Rev. v. 9.—————g 3 Mal. iii. 5. Phil iii. 19.

2 And [h] many shall follow their * pernicious ways; [i] by reason of whom the [k] way of truth shall be [l] evil spoken of.

3 And [m] through covetousness shall they, [n] with feigned words, [o] make merchandize of you: [p] whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

h Matt. xxiv. 10–13. 24. Mark xiii. 22. 1 John ii. 18, 19. Rev. xii. 9. xiii 8. 14.

* Or, *lascivious*, as some copies read.

i Rom ii 24 1 Tim. v. 14 Tit ii. 5 8. k 15. 21 Ps xviii. 21 Is. xxxv. 8. Jer. vi. 16 Matt. vii. 14 xxii. 16. Mark xii. 14. John xiv 6. Acts xiii 10. xvi 17 xviii. 26. xix 9 xxiv. 14——l 12. Acts xiv. 2 1 Pet ii 12 Jude 10 13. m 14. 15. Is. lvi. 11. Jer vi. 13 viii 10. Ez. xiii. 19. Mic. iii 11. Mal. i 10. Rom. xvi. 18 2 Cor. xii. 17, 18. 1 Tim. iii. 3 8. Tit. i 7 11. 1 Pet. v. 2 Jude 11.———n i. 16. Ps. xviii. 44. lxvi. 3 lxxxi. 15 *Marg* Luke xx. 20. xxii. 47. 1 Thes. ii. 5.——o Deut. xxiv. 17 John ii 16. Rev. xviii. 11–13.————p 1. 9 Deut. xxxii 35. Is. v 19. xxx. 13, 14. lx. 22 Hab. ii. 3 Luke xviii. 8. 1 Thes. v. 3 1 Pet. ii. 8. Jude 4 15.

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from the Gospel, as if it were a cunningly devised fable. In this way, then, let such persons wait, and, taking heed to this light that shineth in a dark place, they will gradually be directed to Christ, and their experience of his power, truth, and love, will be the day-dawn, and "the "day-star arising in their hearts," and a sure earnest and foretaste of everlasting happiness. But in searching the Scriptures, and especially in considering the prophecies and their accomplishment, we should beware of self-confidence, an ungovernable fancy, and the influence of selfish passions. We have indeed a right to judge for ourselves, and to call no man master on earth; but it is requisite we should exercise our judgment with sobriety, modesty, and docility; nor is it generally safe to indulge a fondness for novelty, or to deviate from the approved judgment of eminent servants of God in other ages of the Church, without evident need. Above all, we should examine these subjects with earnest prayer for the teaching of the same Spirit, by whom holy men of God spake their prophecies, that we may be enabled to discover what was his meaning in them, as far as that is good for us. Under his guidance, we shall be kept from interpreting Scripture according to our private fancy, humour, or inclination; we shall discover the relation of all the prophecies to Christ and his Church; and that so many of them have already been fulfilled, that we are fully authorized to expect the accomplishment of all the rest, till his second coming to judge the world, to perfect his people's salvation, and to shut up the wicked in hell, shall fulfil the last of these predictions, to the glory of his truth, power, love, wisdom, and righteousness, and the joy and admiration of all his redeemed people.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1—3. As the false prophets opposed the holy men of God under the old dispensation, and, by flattering and deceitful words, obtained a pernicious ascendency over the minds of the people and the rulers of Israel, so there would be false teachers in the Christian Church, who would by similar methods draw off professed Christians from the holy doctrines of the apostles, and other faithful preachers. The deceivers would not at once openly and directly oppose the leading truths of Christianity: but they would work with unsuspected subtlety, and, by degrees, under specious pretences, clandestinely introduce such false doctrines, as tended to subvert the very design of the Gospel; so these would make grievous divisions in the Church, and end in the eternal destruction of those who were deceived by them. For they would deny the Lord that "bought them;" men, professing to believe that the Lord Jesus redeemed the Church with his own blood, and considering themselves as bought with that inestimable price, instead of glorifying him by devoted obedience, would cast off his yoke, renounce his authority, and refuse to have him to reign over them. It is not requisite to understand the apostle as declaring that the Lord Jesus had died, with an express *intention* of redeeming these very persons; it sufficed for his argument, that they denied *him* as their Lord, in whom they professed to hope as a Redeemer, as all avowed Antinomians do. Thus Christ sometimes addressed the Pharisees according to their own mistaken notions, and argued with them from their own principles, (*Notes*, *Luke* xv. 7. 31.) The inconsistency and baseness of the conduct of these false teachers was evident from their own profession, and it was not the manner of the sacred writers to express themselves with that systematic exactness, which many now affect. (*Notes*, *Rom.* xiv. 15—20. 1 *Cor.* viii. 11.) It appears to me at least very unnatural to explain the words, "the Lord "that bought them," of Israel's redemption from Egypt, which would scarcely have been thought of in this connexion, had not controversy led men to exercise their utmost ingenuity to evade the arguments, and answer the objections of their opponents. Thus, exact system leads men to do violence to the Scriptures, and this deeply injures the cause which they are so anxious to defend. Doubtless Christ *intended* to redeem those, and those only, whom he foresaw would *eventually* be saved by faith in him; yet his ransom was of infinite sufficiency, the proposal of it in Scripture is general, and men are continually addressed according to their profession, even when it is intimated that they are not upright in it. (i. 9.) The false teachers, by denying, or refusing to obey him as their *Master*, whom they pretended to trust in as their Redeemer, and by teaching others such abominable doctrines, were bringing on themselves swift destruction, which would come on them unawares and suddenly. But, in the mean time, many would follow their pernicious ways, or *destructions*, imbibing their poisonous principles, and copying their base examples; by reason of whom the way of truth would be blasphemed by ignorant persons, who would conclude that Christians in general held such licentious doctrines, and that they secretly indulged themselves in wickedness, though only some of them were detected, or were bold enough to avow it. In this manner, by flattery and false pretences to love, zeal, and attachment

4 For if God [q] spared not [r] the angels that sinned, [s] but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* [t] into chains of darkness, [u] to be reserved unto judgment;

5 And [x] spared not the old world, but saved Noah, [y] the eighth *person*, [z] a preacher of righteousness, [a] bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

6 And [b] turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned *them* with an overthrow, [c] making *them* an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

7 And [d] delivered just Lot, [e] vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

8 (For [f] that righteous man dwelling among them, [g] in seeing and hearing, vexed *his* righteous soul from day to day with *their* unlawful deeds:)

9 The Lord [h] knoweth how to deliver [i] the godly out of temptations, [k] and to reserve the unjust [l] unto the day of judgment to be punished.

q 5. Deut. xxix. 20. Ps. lxxviii. 50. Ez. v. 11. vii. 4 9. Rom viii. 32. xi. 21
r Luke x. 18. John viii 44 1 John iii. 8. Jude 6.
s Is xiv. 12. Matt. viii. 29. xxv. 41. Mark v. 7. Luke viii. 31. Rev. xii 7—9 xx 2 10.
t 17. Jude 6.
u 9. Job xxi 30. Jude 13.
x Gen vi—viii. Job xxii. 15. 16. Matt. xxiv 37—39 Luke xvii 26—28. Heb xi. 7.
y 1 Pet. iii. 20.
z 1 Pet iii. 19 Jude 14, 15
a iii. 6.
b Gen xix. 24 25 28. Deut. xxix 23 Is. xiii. 19 Jer. l. 40. Ez. xvi. 49—56. Hos. xi 8 Am. iv. 11. Zeph ii 9. Luke xvii 29—31. Jude 7.
c Num. xxvi. 10. 1 Cor. x. 11.
d Gen. xix. 16—22. 29. 1 Cor. x. 13.
e Gen. xiii. 13. xix. 7, 8. Ps. cxx. 5 Jer. ix. 1—6. xxiii. 9.
f Prov. xxv. 26. xxviii. 12. 1 Tim i 9. Jam. v. 16.
g Ps. cxix. 136. 139. 158 Ez ix. 4. 6 Mal. iii. 15—17.
h Job v. 19. Ps. xxxiv. 17 19. 1 Cor. x. 13.
i Ps iv 3. xii. 1. xxxii. 6. 2 Tim. iii. 12. Tit. ii. 14.
k 4 Job xxi. 30. Prov. xvi. 4
l iii 7 Rom. ii. 5. 2 Cor. v. 10, 11

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to evangelical doctrines, they would pay court to men's passions and carnal inclinations, in order to gratify their own avarice; and so they would carry on a base merchandise for the souls of the people, consigning them to destruction in order to enrich themselves. But, whilst they thus prospered by their damnable heresies, and hoped for impunity in their crimes, the punishment intended for them had long before been predicted, the place of torment had been of old prepared, the judgment by which they would be condemned did not linger, and the vengeance of God, which would certainly consign them to eternal destruction, did by no means slumber. Indeed, the Lord bore with them in his long-suffering, till his own holy purposes should be effected, and their measure of iniquity filled up: and they inferred, that the predicted judgment lingered, and the threatened damnation slumbered; but the event would soon awfully undeceive them. (iii. 4.) Learned men have maintained discordant opinions concerning the heretics, whom the apostle especially intended: but, probably, he used general language, designedly, that the description might suit various kinds of false teachers, in that and in future ages.

V. 4—9. The method, in which the Lord used to proceed in such cases, might evidently be collected from examples. When angels, who were created of a far superior order to men, sinned against God, he showed them no mercy, and exercised no compassion towards them; but, on the first instance of their rebellion, he cast them, as guilty and polluted, from his holy habitation in heaven, and allotted them their residence and portion in hell, even in that place of torment, which his righteous vengeance had prepared for them, and their great ringleader in rebellion. (*Matt.* xxv. 41.) Thus they were bound as criminals, and reserved to take their trial at the day of judgment, when sentence will be openly passed and finally executed upon them; in the mean time their incurable enmity and wickedness, and the omnipresent and omnipotent justice of God, hold them fast, as in chains of darkness, misery, and despair, from which there can be no possible escape. Their doom is therefore irreversible: though the Lord, for wise reasons, as it were, lengthens their chains, enlarges the bounds of their prison, and defers the extremity of their punishment; which respite and relaxation they employ in opposing to the uttermost his purposes of love to mankind, and in attempting their destruction. But this will all be overruled for the fuller display of God's glory, the accomplishment of his eternal counsels, and the more conspicuous exercise of his awful justice, in the everlasting misery of such implacable enemies. Thus he would also bear with the wicked seducers above mentioned, till their impiety and enmity were sufficiently evinced: and when his wise and holy purposes were accomplished, he would execute deserved vengeance upon them and their adherents, and so terminate the temptation to which his people were exposed through their artifices. The same instructions might be deduced from the Lord's dealings with the old world. He had indeed preserved Noah, the eighth person; (seven others having been saved with him, for his sake, in the ark which he had prepared;) and during the hundred and twenty years of his long-suffering, Noah had been a preacher of righteousness to that corrupt generation among whom he lived, which must have exposed him to manifold trials and temptations, as none, that we know of, were brought to repentance, faith in the promised Saviour, and obedience to God, by his long continued labours. So that, at length, the Lord executed the vengeance denounced, and spared none of all the millions who then lived on earth, but by bringing in the deluge he destroyed them all; "and Noah only re-"mained alive, and they that were with him in the ark." (*Notes*, &c. *Gen.* vi. vii. viii. *Heb.* xi. 7. 1 *Pet.* iii. 19, 20.) In like manner, the Lord, after having long borne with the extreme wickedness of Sodom, till their measure of sin was filled up, at length, when they did not at all expect it, sent fire from heaven to burn their cities and all the inhabitants of them; that the tremendous overthrow to which they were condemned, might be a solemn warning and an instructive example to all those in future ages, who should live in ungodliness and wickedness. (*Notes*, *Gen.* xix.) Yet at the same time the Lord delivered, in a most gracious and wonderful manner, "right-"eous Lot" from the destruction of his neighbours: for though he had been very faulty in many respects, and was severely corrected, yet, being a true believer and a justified servant of God, he was taken care of, and brought out of Sodom before it was destroyed. He had indeed, from carnal motives, gone to reside in that wicked place, and had very pertinaciously adhered to the foolish choice which he had made; (*Notes*, *Gen.* xiii. xiv.) but he was extremely uneasy there, being continually vexed and harassed by the filthy conduct and discourse of the abandoned Sodomites, and their clamorous and furious opposition to

10 But chiefly them [m] that walk after the flesh [n] in the lust of uncleanness, [o] and despise * government. [p] Presumptuous *are they*, [q] self-willed; they are not afraid [r] to speak evil of dignities.

11 Whereas [s] angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation † against them before the Lord.

12 But these, [t] as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not, and shall utterly [u] perish in their own corruption;

13 And shall receive [x] the reward of unrighteousness, *as* they that count it pleasure [y] to riot in the day time: [z] spots *they are* and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings [a] while they feast with you;

14 Having [b] eyes full of ‡ adultery, and [c] that cannot cease from sin; [d] beguiling unstable souls: [e] an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; [f] cursed children:

m Rom. viii. 1. 4. 5 12, 13. 2 Cor. x 3.
n Rom. i. 24–27. 1 Cor. vi. 9. Eph. iv. 19. v. 5. Col. iii 5. 1 Thes. iv. 7. Jude 4, 6–8.
o Num xvi. 12–15 Deut. xvii. 12, 13. xxi. 20, 21, 1 Sam. x. 27. 2 Sam. xx. 1. 1 Kings xii. 16. Ps. ii 1–5 xii. 4. Jer. ii. 31. Luke xix. 14 Rom. xiii 1–5 1 Pet ii 13, 14.
* Or, *dominion.*
p *See on,* Num xv. 30.
q Gen xlix. 6, Tit i. 7
r Ex xxii. 28 Ec. x. 6, 7. 20. Acts xxiii 5. Jude 8.——s Ps ciii. 20. civ 4 Dan vi 22. 2 Thes. i. 7. Jude 9.——† Some read, *against themselves.*——t Ps. xlix. 10. xcii. 6. xciv. 8. Jer. iv. 22. v. 4. x 8. 21. Ez. xxi. 31. Jude 10.

u 19. i. 4. Prov. xiv 32. John viii. 21. Gal. vi. 8.
x Is iii 11. Rom. ii. 8, 9. Phil iii. 19. 2 Tim. iv. 14. Heb. ii 2, 3. Rev xviii 6.
y Rom xiii. 13. 1 Thes. v. 7, 8. 1 Pet iv. 4.
z Cant iv. 7. Eph. v. 27. Jude 12
a 1 Cor xi. 20–22.
b 2 Sam. xi 2–4. Job xxxi. 1. 7. 9. Prov. vi 25. Matt. v. 28. 1 John ii. 16
‡ Gr *an adulteress.*
c Is. i 16. Jer. xiii. 23 Matt. xii 34 John v. 44.——d ii. 18. iii. 16. Mark xiii. 22. Rom xvi. 18 1 Cor. xi 19. Eph iv. 14 Col ii 18. Jam i. 8. Rev xii. 9.——e *See on,* 3. Jude 11.——f Is. xxxiv. 5, lxv. 20. Matt. xxv. 41 Eph ii. 3.

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his counsels and instructions. What he saw and heard of their unlawful and hateful crimes caused his righteous mind daily vexation and inquietude, seeing he could not prevail in any degree to stop the inundation of their wickedness. But this disposition to hate, avoid, and be troubled for the sins of his neighbours, joined to his general conduct, proved him to be a pious man; and therefore, whilst he was stripped of his possessions, as a correction for his sin, and his family was either destroyed or greatly corrupted and disgraced by means of it, the Lord mercifully snatched him, as a brand out of the burning, and saved him from so perilous and ensnaring a situation. These examples, therefore, sufficiently showed, that the Lord knew how, in the best time and manner, to deliver the godly out of temptation; to rescue them from the most formidable dangers in the critical moment; to distinguish the most feeble and defective of them from their ungodly neighbours; and to arrange all his dispensations in the best manner for their salvation. This he hath engaged to do, and his wisdom must be trusted to select the best time and manner of performing his faithful promises, which cannot fail, whatever appearances may be. But he also knows how "to reserve the unrighteous to the day of "judgment to be punished:" whilst he bears with them, and permits them to prosper in vice, they are bound, as it were, in the chains of their sins, and shut up in the dungeon of his immutable justice, till the day of his wrath; then will he bring them forth to judgment, and execute on them the most terrible punishment, because of his long patience with them, and their perverse abuse of it. The word rendered "cast them down to hell," (4,) is not used in any other part of the New Testament, or the Greek translation of the Old; yet the meaning of it must not be sought from the fables of heathen poets, but from the general tenour of the sacred scriptures.

V. 10, 11. The preceding observations were applicable to all wicked men, but especially to hypocritical professors and false teachers of Christianity: yet they were, and would be, peculiarly verified in the licentious seducers of whom the apostle discoursed, and in that of their abandoned followers. These persons habitually "walked after the flesh," and indulged their sensual appetites "in the lust of uncleanness;" as if they had proposed to themselves the inhabitants of Sodom for an example: and while they exercised no government over their own passions and inclinations, they despised the government of others. They denied Christ, in respect of his kingly office, and would not obey him as their Lord and Master, (1;) and we may suppose, that they contemptuously disregarded the spiritual authority of the apostles, and other pastors and rulers of the church: but they seem also to have treated civil government with scorn, as if they were determined, like genuine "sons of "Belial," to cast off every yoke, and to be wholly their own masters! For they were presumptuous, self-confident, destitute of any due regard to God, aspiring to pre-eminence, and supposing themselves authorized to do whatever they chose. They were also self-willed, determined to follow the impulse of their own mind; proudly set against counsel, not to be influenced by argument, disregarding all consequences, and bent upon their own rash and foolish purposes. They were, therefore, not afraid to revile dignities, in a slanderous manner; and, instead of honouring the persons and authority of those in exalted stations, according to the word of God, and as his ministers, and representatives; they calumniated and railed at them without fear of consequences: while, doing these things under the pretence of religion, they exposed Christianity to scandal, and gave plausibility to the accusations and persecutions of their enemies. (*Note, 1 Pet.* ii. 13—17.) But angels, who were far greater and more powerful than men, and perfect in holiness, did not act thus in respect of the governors of the earth: for, though, as ministers of Providence, they reported to the Lord the execution of their commission, with respect to kings and rulers; they did not bring any virulent or bitter accusations against them; but stated facts as they were, and respected them as God's vicegerents; though they could not but abhor the crimes, which they often witnessed, and sometimes were employed to punish. So that, the professors of Christianity, who slandered and reviled dignities, did not copy the example of holy angels; but rather that of Satan, the false accuser of men in the presence of God.

V. 12—14. The hypocrites, here described, were like natural brute beasts, which, being bent on the gratification of their appetites, rage against all who oppose them, and are ready to devour them: and as wild beasts seem made

15 Which have [g] forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of [h] Balaam, *the son* of Bosor, [i] who loved the [k] wages of unrighteousness;

16 But was rebuked for his iniquity: [l] the dumb ass speaking with man's voice, forbade [m] the madness of the prophet.

17 These [n] are wells without water, [o] clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of [p] darkness is reserved for ever.

18 For when [q] they speak great swelling *words* of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through *much* [r] wantonness, those [s] that were [*] clean escaped from them who live in error.

19 While [t] they promise them liberty, [u] they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is [x] overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

1 Sam. xii. 23. Kings xviii 18. xix. 10. Ezra ix. 10. Prov. xxviii. 4 Hos. xiv. 9. Acts xiii 10.

h Num. xxii. 5—7. *son of Beor*

i Num. xxii. 18—21. xxxi. 16. Deut. xxiii. 4, 5. Mic. vi. 5 Jude 11. Rev. ii 14.

k Acts i. 18.

l Num. xxii. 22—28.

m Ec. vii. 25. ix. 3. Hos. ix. 7. Luke vi. 11. Acts xxvi. 11. 24, 25.

n Job vi. 14—17. Jer. xiv. 3. Hos. vi. 4. Jude 12, 13.——o Eph iv. 14.

p 4. Matt. viii. 12. xxii. 13. xxv. 30. Jude 6 13.

q Ps. lii. 1—3. lxxiii 8, 9. Dan. iv. 30. xi 36. Acts viii. 9. 2 Thes. ii. 4 Jude 13. 15, 16. Rev. xiii. 5, 6. 11.

r Rom. xiii. 13. Jam. v. 5.

s 20. i. 4. Acts ii. 40

* Or, *for a little*, or, *a while*, as some read.

t Gal. v. 1. 13. 1 Pet. ii 16.

u John viii. 34. Rom. vi. 12—14. 16—22. Tit. iii. 3.——x 20. Is. xxviii. 1. Jer. xxiii. 9. 2 Tim. ii. 26.

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only to be taken and destroyed, to prevent the havoc which they would otherwise make of the human species; so these seducers would certainly expose themselves to destruction; nay, they would be proscribed as nuisances, and enemies to the community. Satan had caught them with his baits, and taken them captive at his will, and they were in the way to eternal destruction: for, being impatient of counsel or control, they uttered vehement revilings against the persons, authority, laws, and measures of their rulers, which they were incompetent to understand, or had never sufficiently examined: and in so doing, they not only incurred the displeasure of princes, but that of God also, and thus would utterly perish by their own corrupt practices. For, notwithstanding their vain conceit of imagined privileges, they would certainly "receive the reward of unrighteousness," seeing their pleasure was not sought in obeying God, but in riotous feastings and intemperance, in which they indulged, even during the light of the day, without shame or remorse. They were, therefore, spots and blemishes, that deformed and disgraced those Christian societies which did not expel them, whilst they wantonly sported themselves, and indulged a kind of insulting triumph, in their own deceivings, as if they were the chief favourites of heaven, and persons uncommonly illuminated in the grace and liberty of the Gospel; when in fact they were not believers at all; and were thus boasting and exulting on the brink of destruction. So that, while they partook with Christians of the Lord's supper, or joined in the religious feasts in which the rich and poor ate together in a loving manner, their conduct was so shameful, that they reflected scandal on the whole company with which they associated. For, besides their riot, luxury, and excess, "their eyes were "full of adultery," or "of an adulteress," as if their infamous paramours had never been out of their sight; so constantly were their imaginations employed about, and their desires fixed on, their habitual wicked practices! Nay, they "could not cease from sin;" not from external constraint, or *natural inability*, (which would have been an extenuation of their guilt,) but from the violence of their ungoverned passions, and the strength of their long-continued habits of vice, through which they were perfectly enslaved to their lusts, and indeed judicially given up to a reprobate mind. But, notwithstanding all their wickedness, they pleaded so speciously and confidently for their corrupt principles, and so extenuated or apologized for their crimes, that they beguiled very many professed Christians, who were not established in knowledge, faith, grace, and experience. Thus they supported the expense of their sensualities, by flattering and quieting men's consciences in the indulgence of their passions: as their hearts were exercised with covetous practices, and they constantly employed themselves in devising artful methods of obtaining money from their deluded followers, till, inured to such base pursuits, they felt no remorse about them, which showed them to be "the children "of a curse," and exposed to the wrath of God for their multiplied abominations.

V. 15, 16. The persons described by the apostle had evidently forsaken the right way of holy obedience from evangelical principles, and were gone astray, not merely from an erroneous judgment, but from the sensuality, ambition, and avarice of their hearts; so that they followed the example of Balaam, the son of Beor, (or Bosor,) who so "loved the wages of unrighteousness," that he endeavoured, in disobedience to the injunction of Jehovah, to go unto Balak, and curse the people whom God had blessed. But he was rebuked for his iniquity, not by the immediate voice of God, nor by one of his prophets, but by the ass on which he rode, which, though naturally dumb, was yet miraculously enabled to speak, that by so despised a creature God might, in the most mortifying manner, forbid the prophet, who was very proud of his visions and revelations, to proceed in his infatuated course of rebellion. (*Notes, Num.* xxii. xxiv. xxxi. 8—16.)

V. 17. The teachers whom the apostle exposed were like wells from which men expected to draw water, but which could only disappoint their expectations: (*Marg. Ref.*) they were as clouds which gave hopes of fructifying rains, but, instead of yielding any advantage to others, they were themselves carried about with tempestuous winds. Thus these teachers were driven about, with their own passions, and by every wind of doctrine, from one false opinion to another: for indeed they were given up by God to final obduracy, as the mist, the dimness, and dismay of darkness, or of wickedness, despair, and misery, was reserved for them as their everlasting portion.

V. 18, 19. These men were not only very wicked themselves, but the cause of sin and ruin to others.—Whilst they spake swelling and pompous words, which had no meaning, except as they showed the vain-glory and ostentation of their hearts: yet they allured, by their confident boasting and specious pretensions, such professed

20 For if, [y] after they have [z] escaped the pollutions of the world, [a] through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, [b] the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

21 For [c] it had been better for them not to have known [d] the way of righteousness, than, after they have known *it*, [e] to turn from the [f] holy commandment delivered unto them.

22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, [g] The dog *is* turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

y Matt. xii. 43—45. Luke xi. 24—26. Heb. vi. 4—8. x. 26, 27.
z 18. i. 4.
a i. 2.
b Num xxiv. 20 Deut. xxxii. 29. Phil. iii. 19.
c Luke xii. 47, 48. John ix. 41. xv. 22.
d Prov. xii. 28. xvi. 31. Matt. xxi. 32.
e Ps. xxxvi. 3, 4. cxxi 5. Ex. iii. 20. xviii 24. xxxiii 13. Zeph. i. 6.
f Rom. vii. 12. 1 Thes. iv 2.
g Prov. xxvi. 11.

Christians as were glad to suppose, that the lusts of the flesh, and much wantonness or lasciviousness, could consist with the salvation of the Gospel; and so they drew off those, who had *actually*, as to their outward conduct, escaped from among those who lived in error, but who abstained from their former indulgences only from fear, while their unrenewed hearts still hankered after them. But whilst they paid court to the carnal minds of hypocrites, by promising them liberty from every yoke, as if the service of God had not been the most perfect freedom, they themselves were the "*slaves* of corruption," or of the most corrupt and vile affections, as it was a general rule, that a man must become the bond-servant of him, by whom he was vanquished and taken captive. They were evidently vanquished, taken captive, and enslaved by the devil and their own lusts, and it was impossible that they could lead their followers to any better condition.

V. 20—22. If professed Christians, having escaped the outward pollutions of the world, by the knowledge of Christ, as far as convictions and a notional faith could reach, (1. 4.) were again, by the artful seductions of false teachers, entangled in those polluting practices, as consistent with the service of Christ, and so overcome as habitually to indulge in their corrupt inclinations, their latter end, after they had learned thus to abuse the Gospel, would be far worse than the beginning, when they sinned in ignorance, as they must have done violence to far clearer light and fuller conviction. It would therefore have been better for such wretched heretics, hypocrites, or apostates, if they had never known the way of righteousness, and the truths, promises, and precepts of Christianity, than, after all their instructions, convictions, and profession, to turn in avowed disobedience from the holy commandment to repent of their sins, to believe in Christ, and to love and obey him, as this would leave them more deeply condemned and completely hardened. But it was not to be wondered at, that teachers of this character made many proselytes; for it had happened unto them according to the true proverb of Solomon, (*Note*, *Prov*. xxvi. 11.) and to another of similar import; the one of which hath been explained, and the other is too obvious to need explanation. They are the two most disgusting and loathsome emblems which the whole animal race can suggest, and are adduced to illustrate the filthiness of those, who, after convictions, professed repentance, and reformation, returned back to wickedness, because their carnal hearts loved it. But if the power of God should change the swine into a sheep, (the emblem of the regenerate) though it might be thrown into the mire, yet it could no more wallow in it with delight, but must be most uncomfortable till cleansed from it. (*Notes*, *Matt*. xii. 43—45. *Luke* xi. 24—26. *Heb*. vi. 4--10. x. 26---38.) The difference between this chapter and the rest of Peter's epistles, in the style and manner, and its coincidence with that of Jude, have made several expositors suppose, that both of them borrowed their language from some ancient book which is now lost; but of this every reader must judge for himself.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

The unbelief, selfishness, and impiety, of man's carnal heart always give an opening to false teachers, who speak smooth things to draw away disciples after them, for their own credit, or lucre's sake; and, alas! many in general "turn away their ears from the truth, and are turned unto "fables," who liberally reward ingenious men for helping them to deceive themselves. Hence it hath come to pass, both in the Jewish and the Christian church, that men have arisen, who have found their account in corrupting the humbling holy truth of God, by "privily bringing in damnable heresies:" who have denied and cast off obedience to the authority of the Lord, whilst they professed to glory in his special favour and abundant mercy, and have attempted to separate the redemption and the commandments of the Lord Jesus, and to expect pardon through his blood, whilst they yielded no obedience to his laws! Thus they deceive themselves and others, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. These specious refinements, while they seem to some persons the Gospel of free grace in all its purity, are in fact "damnable heresies," which finally ruin all who follow such pernicious ways; and also cause the way of truth to be evil spoken of by those, who see the bad tendency and effects of these delusions, and charge them on all who preach and profess the doctrines of salvation by grace alone. The sober teachers of practical and experimental Christianity need not be surprised, to find their hearers drawn from them by these specious and lax preachers; for even in the primitive times, before miracles ceased, their delicious poison found many purchasers, and their merchandise of souls by feigned words brought in ample gains; whilst love of the truth and of the brethren were the pretence, but covetousness was the concealed principle, of their conduct. In vain do men of this character hope to escape with impunity: the judgment so long since foretold, and the damnation menaced, will speedily arrive, though unbelief may suppose that the justice of God lingereth and slumbereth, because he "endures with "much long-suffering the vessels of wrath, which are "fitted for destruction." His manifold goodness, if it do not lead men to repentance, and engage them to obe-

CHAP. III.

The apostle reminds his brethren of the promised coming of Christ, and predicts that scoffers would ridicule their expectation of that event, 1—4: *being willingly ignorant of the truth, in that respect,* 5—7. *He shows the reason of its being delayed, and the awful manner, circumstances, and consequences of it; with exhortations and encouragements to diligence and holiness,* 8—14. *He shows that St. Paul had taught them the same doctrine; commends his epistles; and shows how ignorant and unstable men perverted some parts of them, as they did the other scriptures, to their own destruction,* 15, 16: *and concludes with warning them against seducers, and exhorting them to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ,* 17, 18.

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dience, will no more secure them from condemnation, than the creating kindness of God to angels induced him to spare such of them as sinned in heaven itself; but "as "he cast them down to hell, to be reserved in chains of "darkness to the day of judgment," to be punished, so will he in due season execute the vengeance that is written, on all impenitent sinners. The destruction of the antediluvian world and its millions of inhabitants, and that of Sodom and Gomorrah, stand on record, to confute the vain notions of those, who imagine that God is so lenient, that he will not take vengeance on his rebellious creatures.—But his mercy does indeed shine forth conspicuously in preserving Noah and his family, and in delivering him from the flood, and from that perverse generation, to whom he was so long a most unsuccessful preacher of righteousness; but still more in rescuing Lot, and dealing with him as a righteous man, notwithstanding all the blemishes of his character. Yet his vexation in Sodom, and his escape with the loss of every thing, except his life, from that devoted city, loudly warn us to keep separate, as much as possible, from ungodly connexions, if we would avoid the most heart-rending anguish, and the most painful corrections. But, if we indeed fear, trust, love, and endeavour to obey the Lord, we should recollect, in all our conflicts and trials, that "he knoweth how to deliver "the godly out of temptation," that he hath ten thousand ways of rescuing us, of which we never thought, and that his wisdom and power will surely effect the purposes of his love, and the engagements of his truth; whilst wicked men often escape suffering here, because they are reserved to the day of judgment, to be punished with the devil and his angels.

V. 10—14.

While we take encouragement from the tender mercies of our God, let us also stand in awe of his holiness and justice. None have more cause to tremble than they who are emboldened to gratify their sinful lusts by presuming on his grace and mercy; nor can any thing more fully illustrate the desperate wickedness of the human heart, than the abominations in which men have wallowed, whilst professing to be religious, and while contending for the holy doctrines of the Gospel! Many, both in ancient and modern times, have deemed themselves at liberty to walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and have despised governments of all kinds, as if licentiousness and anarchy were the only desirable freedom, presumption and self-will equivalent to holy confidence and boldness in the Lord, and calumnies or revilings against the powers that be, the proper way of "rendering "to Cesar the things that are Cesar's, and to God the "things that are God's!" Such liberty of conscience, and licence of speech and conduct, holy angels, who are greater in power and might, never desired. If we were more like them, we should be more cautious in speaking and acting, and more scrupulous not to bring a railing accusation against our governors, though we could not approve of either their character or their measures. But there have been, in every age, professors of the Gospel, who have acted "like natural brute beasts, made to be "taken and destroyed," who have deemed themselves authorized to "speak evil of those things which they "did not understand." And if they ventured to speak evil of the divine law, and deemed themselves freed from all obligation to obey it, can we wonder that they would cast off every yoke, discard all subordination, level all distinctions, and disdain subjection to every human authority, which must be defective and liable to blame? But let Christians stand at a distance from such contests; for, alas! many professors of the Gospel, running into such excesses, bring their characters into suspicion, and open the mouths of those who speak evil of us, as of evil-doers; nay, many utterly perish in their own corruption. Especially let us fear a licentious profession; doubtless they "will receive "the reward of unrighteousness, who count it pleasure to "riot in the day time." These are indeed "the spots and "blemishes" of the Church, who "sport themselves in their "own deceivings," who join with Christians in sacred ordinances, and with the world in their licentious and dissipated revels, and who attempt to reconcile these things by perverting the doctrines of the Gospel, and boasting of their liberty and privileges. But could it have been conceived, if Scripture and facts had not evinced it, that teachers and professors of the holy doctrine of Christ could preserve their confidence, credit, and influence, whilst "their eyes "are full of adultery, and while they cannot cease from "sin?" that unstable souls could be beguiled by such men? and that success should attend the covetous practices in which their hearts are exercised? Or that they should be considered as *blessed*, who are indeed the children of the *curse*, and evidently described as such in the word of God?

V. 15—22.

Heresies in every age have grown out of the ambition, avarice, and licentiousness of teachers; and men have forsaken the right way, and gone astray after Balaam's

THIS [a] second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in *both* which [b] I stir up your [c] pure minds by [d] way of remembrance:

2 That [e] ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, [f] and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:

3 Knowing this first, [g] that there shall come in the last days [h] scoffers, [i] walking after their own lusts,

4 And saying, [k] Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* [l] from the beginning of the creation.

5 For this [m] they willingly are ignorant of, that [n] by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth * standing out of the water, and in the water:

a 2 Cor. xiii. 2 1 Pet i 1. 2.
b i 13–15 2 Tim. i. 6.
c Ps. xxiv 4. lxxiii. 1 Matt. v 8 1 Tim v. 22 1 Pet. i. 22.
d i. 12
e i 19–21 Luke i. 70. xxiv 27 44. Acts iii 18. 24–26 x 43. xxviii 23. 1 Pet i 10–12. Rev. xix. 10
f 15. ii. 21. Eph. ii. 20 1 John iv. 6. Jude 17.
g 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2 2 Tim. iii. 1, &c. 1 John ii 18. Jude 18.
h Prov. i. 22 iii. 34 xiv 6 Is. xxviii. 14. xxix. 20. Hos vii. 5
i ii. 10. 2 Cor iv. 2. Jude 16. 18.
k Gen xix. 14. Ec. i. 9 viii. 11. Is. v. 18, 19. Jer. v. 13. xvii. 15 Ez. xii 22. 27 Mal ii 17. Matt xxiv 48. Luke xii 45.
l Mark xiii. 19. Rev. iii 14
m Prov. xvii. 16. John iii 19, 20. Rom i 28. 2 Thes ii 10–12.
n Gen. i 6 9. Ps. xxiv. 2. xxxiii 6. cxxxvi. 6. Heb xi. 3.—Col. i. 17
* Gr. *consisting*.

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example and from his principle, because they loved the wages of unrighteousness; but they will be rebuked for their iniquity and punished for their madness, with as much contempt and severity as he was. Being "wells "without water, and clouds carried about" as the wind of favour or lucre changes, it is too plain that to them "the "mist of darkness is reserved for ever." They who would escape these deceivers, should consider, that they abound in high-swelling words of vain boasting and ostentation, and speak of themselves, as if wisdom and knowledge belonged exclusively to them, at the same time that they give great indulgence to the lusts of the flesh; thus they allure, with the hope of sensual gratification, and impunity in it, such stony-ground hearers, as, under convictions and transient affections, had escaped for a time from those that live in error. Persons of this description, not valuing the liberty of obeying the commandments of God, are disposed to listen to those who promise them liberty of another sort, and assure them that their practical instructors had held them in bondage; and thus antinomian tenets are embraced, as a covert way of returning to the world and sin, and as a more specious and quiet kind of apostacy. For the liberty promised by those who are overcome by their own lusts and passions, can be no other than licentiousness; and if after men have "escaped the pollutions of the world, by the knowledge "of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again "entangled" in such delusions, and brought under the dominion of their lusts, "the latter end is worse with "them than the beginning;" nor is such a departure from practical Christianity to antinomian *principles* and *behaviour* less fatal than an open apostacy, as it serves to keep conscience entirely asleep, perhaps more effectually than any opiate in the world. It is evident, therefore, that it would have been better for such men, if they had continued ignorant of the Gospel, than thus to pervert it to their own deeper condemnation, and the ruin of others along with them. Yet, alas! how many are there, who thus verify the true proverb, by "turning as the dog to his own "vomit again, and as a sow that is washed to her wallow-"ing in the mire!" But this shall never happen to any, who are "in Christ new creatures," and made partakers of a divine nature. Let us then pray continually, "Create "in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit "within me:" let us remember, that a "holy com-"mandment" is given to us, as well as exceedingly "great and precious promises;" let us beware of turning from the precepts, as much as of rejecting the truths, of Christianity; and let us equally avoid antinomian corrupters, and pharisaical opposers of the Gospel, as being alike the enemies of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1—4. This second epistle appears, by the opening of this chapter, to have been primarily addressed to the same churches as the former, though they were not mentioned at the beginning of it. It was the design of the apostle, in both of them, not so much to instruct them in truths which they had not learned, as to stimulate and animate their pure, sincere, and upright minds to practise their duty, by recalling to their remembrance the truths and precepts which they had been taught; lest remaining sinfulness, temptation, forgetfulness, and the artifices of false teachers, should turn them aside from it. He therefore wrote to them, in order to make them mindful of the words which the holy prophets of old had spoken, concerning the salvation and kingdom of Christ, and of the commandment which had been given them by him, and the other apostles of their Lord and Saviour, to prepare for his coming to judgment, with patient expectation and diligence in their several duties. Of this they needed to be admonished, as they ought to know in the first place, and as a matter of chief importance, that under the Christian dispensation, and after some time had elapsed, there would certainly come among them a set of scornful men, endeavouring to subvert their faith, by deriding their expectation of the coming of Christ to judgment, and treating the great truths of the Gospel with infidel contempt and profane ridicule, whilst they indulged without restraint the several carnal inclinations of their own evil hearts. These persons would insolently demand, What was become of the promise which the Lord had left them, that he would appear a second time among them, to complete their salvation and destroy their enemies? Had it not manifestly failed? And would they suffer themselves to be any longer imposed on, or continue to adhere to his self-denying, persecuted religion? For it could not be denied, that since the fathers, (the primitive teachers and professors of Christianity, or the ancient patriarchs and prophets, to whom it was first revealed,) had fallen asleep, all things had continued, in respect of the returning seasons, and other outward dispensations, as they had been used to do from the beginning of the world, without any material alteration answerable to the extraordinary things, which had been spoken on that subject.

6 Whereby [o] the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

7 But [p] the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire, [q] against the day of judgment, [r] and perdition of ungodly men.

8 But, beloved, [s] be not ignorant of this one thing, [t] that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

9 The Lord [u] is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; [x] but is long-suffering to us-ward, [y] not willing that any should perish, [z] but that all should come to repentance.

o ii. 5. Gen. vii. 10—22 ix 15. Job xii. 15 Matt xxiv 38 39 Luke xvii 27
p 10 12 Ps cii 26. Is. li. 6 Matt xxiv 35 xxv. 41 2 Thes i. 8 Rev xx 11 xxi 1.
q ii 9 Matt. x 15 xi 22 24. xii 36. Mark vi. 11. 1 John iv 17
r Rom. ii 5 Phil i. 28 2 Thes ii. 3. 1 Tim. vi. 9. Rev. xvii 8. 11.
s Rom. xi 25. 1 Cor x. 1. xii. 1.
t Ps. xc. 4
u Is. xxx 18. xlvi. 13. Hab ii. 3. Luke xviii 7, 8.
x 15 Ex. xxxiv. 6 Ps. lxxxvi. 15 Is. xxx 18. xlvi 13. Rom ix. 22. 1 Tim i. 16. 1 Pet iii. 20.
y Ez xviii. 23. 32 xxxiii. 11.
z Rom. ii. 4 1 Tim ii. 4 Rev. ii 21.

V. 5—7. The scorners of whom the apostle wrote, (some of whom seem to have been even then endeavouring to corrupt the church,) were willingly ignorant of the scriptural account of the creation, and of the dealings of God with men in former ages; for they perversely withdrew their attention from such subjects, because they tended to confute their self-conceited and profligate infidelity, and to confirm the doctrine of a future judgment. Otherwise, they would have known from the books of Moses, that the heavens and the earth were originally created by the omnipotent word of God, who "spake, and "it was done, who commanded, and it stood fast;" and that the earth, especially, was formed out of the chaos, which had been previously brought into existence for that purpose, the dry ground being, at the command of God, separated from the waters, which retired to the channels prepared for them. Thus the earth, with its productions and inhabitants, as distinguished from the seas, "stood up out of and above the water;" but it was surrounded by the water, which was needful to moisten, purify, and render it fruitful. Yet, when the wickedness of men had provoked the Lord to execute vengeance on them, this very arrangement, in itself so conducive to the welfare of mankind, became the means of their destruction: for all the parts of the globe being deeply covered with waters, by the omnipotence of God, the world that then was perished; all the inhabitants of the dry land, and all the works of men, were entirely destroyed; nothing remained "but Noah, and they that were with him in the "ark;" the external form of the earth was no doubt extremely altered, and a new race of inhabitants were raised up, to people it. At the same time, the Lord promised and covenanted never more to destroy the earth by an universal deluge; yet intimations had been given of a total dissolution, which was to terminate the present state of things; (*Note, Ps.* cii. 26. *Is.* li. 6.) and it had, under the New Testament dispensation, been more expressly revealed that this was to be effected by fire. It might therefore be said that the visible heavens, and the earth, with all the lower creation, were condemned to be destroyed by fire, and, by the word of God, which could not be broken, were treasured up as fuel for the general conflagration. This would certainly take place about the same time with the great day of judgment, which would prove "the "day of perdition to ungodly men," who would then be "punished with everlasting destruction." (*Note, 2 Thes.* i. 8—10.) The event was therefore certain; and the same power was engaged to effect it, which had created the world, destroyed it with the deluge, restored it to its present form, and still continued to uphold it in that state.

V. 8. Whatever scoffers were willingly ignorant of, or perversely cavilled at, as if delays were failures, or respites impunity, Christians must not be ignorant of that one thing, which tended to clear up all the rest; namely, that the divisions of time among men bear no proportion to eternity, with which all the counsels and purposes of God are immediately connected. One day, therefore, and a thousand years, are with him the same thing; for as every event comes to pass at the time which he hath appointed for it, so the intervention of a thousand years is no more than one day, in respect of those things which he will most assuredly accomplish in their season.

V. 9. It must then by no means be supposed that the Lord was slack, or dilatory, concerning the performance of his promise, as some men, (both profane unbelievers and impatient believers,) might understand the word; but, in fact, the delay of judgment was the effect of his long-suffering towards the church and the human race. (*Note, Matt.* xxiv. 48—51.) He patiently endured the provocations of the wicked, and even the scornful defiance of infidels, because he would not be influenced by their crimes to terminate the present state of things, till all his chosen people were brought to repentance, and prepared for the kingdom; as he was not willing that any of them should perish. Nay, as he delighted not in the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent and live, so his long-suffering gave sinners space for repentance; and as all things were ready, and all were invited, yea, commanded to repent, so, in this sense, God had shown himself unwilling that any should perish, and willing that all should come to repentance, though many would pervert his long-suffering, to their deeper condemnation. Men's impenitence arises from their unwillingness to return to God, not from his unwillingness to receive them; and therefore he is doubtless willing, that all who are so disposed should come to repentance, and be saved. Many, that were Christians at the time when the apostle wrote, owed their salvation to the long-suffering of God, who thus gave them time, as well as grace, for repentance; and even some of those who were then objecting to the delay of Christ's coming, as if it invalidated the truth of the Gospel, might at length be converted, and know that "God was not willing that "they should perish, but that they should come to repent-"ance." These are two distinct, but consistent, views which may be taken of the subject: the one accords to the condition of sinners, when first taught to attend to the word of salvation; to them, the long-suffering of God, the provisions of the Gospel, the general invitations, the command to all men to repent, and the promises that none shall be cast out who come to Christ, are so many

10 But [a] the day of the Lord will come [b] as a thief in the night; [c] in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and [d] the elements shall [e] melt with fervent heat, [f] the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up.

11 *Seeing* then *that* [g] all these things shall be dissolved, [h] what manner *of persons* ought ye to be [i] in *all* holy conversation and [k] godliness,

12 [l] Looking for, and [*] hastening unto, [m] the coming of the day of God, wherein [n] the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall [o] melt with fervent heat?

13 Nevertheless we, [p] according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

14 Wherefore, beloved, [q] seeing that ye look for such things, [r] be diligent that ye may be found of him [s] in peace, without spot, and blameless:

15 And [t] account *that* the long-suffering of our Lord *is* salvation; even as [u] our beloved brother Paul also, [x] according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;

16 As also [y] in all *his* epistles, [z] speaking in them of these things; in which are some things [a] hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and [b] unstable [c] wrest, as *they* do also [d] the other scriptures, [e] unto their own destruction.

a Is. ii. 12 Joel i. 15. ii. 1. 31. iii. 14. Mal iv. 5. 1 Cor. v. 5 2 Cor i. 14. Jude 6
b Matt. xxiv 43. Luke xii 39. 1 Thes. v. 2 Rev. iii. 3. xvi. 15.
c Ps cii 26 Is. li. 6 Matt. xxiv 35 Mark xiii 31. Heb. i. 11, 12 Rev. xx. 11. xxi. 1.
d 12.
e Ps xlvi 6. xcvii. 5. Am. ix. 5 13. Nah. i. 5.
f *See on*, 7.
g 12 Ps. lxxv. 3. Is xiv. 31 xxiv. 19 xxxiv. 4.
h Matt viii. 27. 1 Thes. i 5. Jam. i. 24
i Ps xxxvii. 14. 1. 23. 2 Cor. i. 12. Phil. i 27 iii 20 1 Tim iv. 12 Heb xiii 5. Jam iii 13 1 Pet. i 15 ii. 12
k i 3. 6. 1 Tim. iii. 16. vi 3 6. 11.
l 1 Cor. i. 7 Tit ii. 13. Jude 21 ——* Or, *hastening the coming* ——m *See on* 10 1 Cor. i. 8 Phil. i 6 ——n *See on*, 10 Ps l. 3 Is. xxxiv 4. Rev. vi. 13, 14.——o *See on*, 10 Mic. i. 4.——p Is lxv. 17. lxvii. 22. Rev. xxi 27.
q Phil. iii 20. Heb. ix. 28.
r i 5–10. 1 John iii. 3.
s Matt. xxiv. 46. Luke ii. 29. xii. 45. 1 Cor. xv. 58. Phil i. 10. 1 Thes. iii 13 v. 23.
t *See on*, 9. Rom. ii 4. 1 Tim i. 16. 1 Pet. iii. 20.
u Acts xv. 25.
x Ex. xxxi 3. 6. xxxv 31. 35. 1 Kings iii. 12. 28. iv. 29. Ezra vii. 25 Prov ii 6, 7. Ec. ii. 26. Dan. ii. 20, 21. Luke xxi 15. Acts vii. 10 1 Cor. ii. 13. xii. 8. Jam i. 5. iii. 17.
y *See on*, 1 Pet i 1.
z Rom. viii. 19. 1 Cor. xv. 24. 1 Thes. iv. 15
a 1 Kings x. 1. Heb. v 11.
b ii 14 Gen. xlix. 4. 2 Tim. iii. 5—7. Jam i. 8.
c Ex. xxiii. 2. 6 Deut xvi. 19. Ps lvi 5. Hab. i. 4. *Marg.*——d Jer. xxiii. 36. Matt. xv. 3. 6. xxii 29.——e ii. 2. Phil. iii. 19. 1 Pet. ii. 8. Jude 4.

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assurances, that the Lord is not willing that any (who seek salvation,) should perish, but that sinners of all descriptions should come to repentance; and that they who repent do that which pleases him, and shall be accepted. But the other refers to God; "known unto "whom are all his works from before the foundation of "the world;" and, according to it, the established believer ascribes his willingness to repent to special grace, and acknowledges that, if he had been left to himself, he should have perished in obstinate love of sin and enmity to God, as numbers of his fellow-sinners do.

V. 10—13. Though delays seemed to be made, whilst the Lord waited to complete the counsels of his wisdom and mercy, and to render the implacable enmity of impenitent sinners manifest to the whole creation, yet his great and terrible day would certainly come suddenly, when not expected, and with most surprising consternation, and inevitable destruction to all that were found unprepared. (*Notes, &c. Matt.* xxiv. 42—44. 1 *Thes.* v. 2, 3.) At that important catastrophe, the heavens, and all the hosts of them, (as far, at least, as connected with this earth and its inhabitants,) will pass away, and rush into confusion and destruction, with a tremendous noise, of which thunders, earthquakes, and all other convulsions of nature, are wholly inadequate to give the least conception. Then all the elements, of which the earth and its atmosphere, and all the luminaries connected with it, are composed, shall melt with intense heat; and not only one vast city, or one whole nation, but the earth, with all its cities, forests, mountains, yea, the contents of its bowels to the very centre, as well as all the works of men, however admired or magnificent, which cover the surface of it, shall constitute one vast conflagration, and be reduced to as confused a chaos, as that from which it was at first created. As, therefore, all those things, which were then the objects of their senses, and the coveted, admired, or envied possessions of men, would certainly be dissolved and perish, as to their present mode of existence, "what manner of persons ought they to "be, in all holy conversation and godliness?" For it must be evident, that, at the period referred to, they who had no treasure secured in heaven, nor any interest in him as a Saviour, who would then come as the Judge of the world, would be most miserable. Ought not Christians therefore to be continually "looking for," and preparing to welcome that solemn season, called "the day of God;" hastening to have all ready to meet him with comfort, and even longing for the solemn catastrophe which would perfect their felicity? Though it was in itself so terrible to think of "the heavens being on fire and dissolved, "and the elements melting with heat," yet the Gospel suggested such consolations, and inspired such hopes, that believers had no reason for terror or uneasiness; for, though all other inheritances and distinctions must then be terminated, yet they, according to the sure word of God's promise, looked for and expected "new "heavens and a new earth," another and far more glorious and blessed state of things, and an abiding habitation, into which righteous persons alone could find admission, and in which all the inhabitants would be perfected in purity, obedience, and love of each other; so that no sin could enter, to defile or disquiet them, to all eternity. In some Scriptures, "new heavens and a new earth" seem figuratively to describe the most prosperous and peaceful days of the church on earth; (*Notes, Is.* lxv. 17. lxvi. 22. *Heb.* xii. 26.) but here the state of the righteous after the day of judgment, and the dissolution of this present world, are evidently intended; but what is meant in various particulars, the fulfilment alone can fully explain.

V. 14—16. From the preceding considerations, the apostle took occasion to exhort his beloved brethren, who professed to believe and look for such things, to prove that they really did so, by diligence in every duty and means of grace; that they might be found of Christ, at his coming, in peace with God, their own consciences, each other, and all men; being also "without spot, and "blameless." For if they thus evinced themselves interested in the perfect righteousness of Christ, by the diligent obedience of faith and love, they would certainly be

17 Ye therefore, beloved, [f] seeing ye know *these things* before, [g] beware lest ye also, [h] being led away with the error of the wicked, fall [i] from your own steadfastness.

f i. 12. Prov. i 17. Matt xxiv. 24, 25. Mark xiii. 23. John xvi. 4.
g Matt. vii. 15 xvi. 6. 11 Phil. iii 2 Col ii. 8 2 Tim. iv. 15.
h ii. 18—20. Matt xxiv. 24 Mark xiii. 22 Rom xvi. 18 2 Cor xi 3. 13—15.——i i. 10, 11. ii 18—22. Acts ii 42. 1 Cor. xv. 58. Col ii 5 Heb. iii 14. 1 Pet. v. 9.

18 But [k] grow in grace, and *in* [l] the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. [m] To him *be* glory both now and for ever. [n] Amen.

k Ps xcii 12. Hos xiv 5 Mal. iv 2. Eph. iv. 15. 2 Thes. i. 3. 1 Pet. ii 2.
l i. 3 8. ii. 20. John xvii. 3. 2 Cor. iv. 6. Eph. i. 17. Phil. iii 8. Col i. 10 iii. 10.——m John v. 23 2 Tim iv. 18. 1 Pet v. 10, 11. Jude 25. Rev. i 6. v. 9—14——n *See on*, Matt. vi. 13 xxviii. 20.

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then presented faultless before God, and as perfect in regard to sanctification as justification. They ought also "to account the long-suffering of the Lord to be salvation." Every day that their lives were spared gave them the opportunity, of diligently seeking "to make their "calling and election sure;" mere professors of Christianity had space afforded them, to seek a real experience of the work of divine grace; and the goodness of God was suited, and intended, to lead sinners to repentance. All therefore who read the epistle, ought to "account "the long-suffering of the Lord to be salvation," as they owed it to that alone, that they were not then in the place of despair and final misery, instead of the land of hope, of prayer, and forgiveness; or in the way of peace and salvation. Thus the apostle observed, that his beloved brother Paul also had written to them to the same effect, according to the wisdom which God had bestowed on him. The affectionate and highly respectful language, here used by St. Peter, concerning the apostle of the Gentiles, who was supposed to differ from him in some points of doctrine, and who had openly rebuked his dissimulation at Antioch, is peculiarly worthy of observation. The fourth and fifth verses of the Epistle to the Romans are generally supposed to be intended; but it is not obvious, in what sense these could be said to be written to those whom St. Peter addressed. They, therefore, who suppose that he wrote to the Jewish converts exclusively, point out some passages in the Epistle to the Hebrews, to which they think he alluded; (ix. 27, 28, x. 36, 37;) but that epistle was directly addressed to the churches in Judea, and not to the Jewish converts in Asia. The apostolical epistles, indeed, were written to some particular churches, or description of Christians; yet they were intended for general instruction; and as Peter had read the epistles of Paul, so they, to whom he wrote, had probably done the same, even in respect of those that were addressed to other churches. The false teachers, whom Peter opposed, seem to have grounded their damnable heresies on a *misinterpretation* of some passages in St. Paul's epistles, which might appear to many contrary to Peter's exhortations: so that the general tenour of St. Paul's epistles to some of the Asiatic churches, or of that to the Hebrews, rather than detached expressions, seems to have been meant; for certainly, when properly understood, they are as exhortatory and practical as St. Peter's. Indeed, the apostle observed that this was the case in all his epistles, (as those to the Romans, the Corinthians, the churches in Macedonia, and to Timothy and Titus:) for in them all, he spoke of the coming of Christ, and the preparation to be made for it, with warnings and admonitions to different descriptions of persons. Yet in these epistles, connected with plainer subjects, were some things hard to be understood; namely, such as related to the divine decrees, and the deep dispensations of ihs government; and the sovereignty of his grace in saving some, and leaving others to be hardened: for of these doubtless Peter principally spake. Such things would not be properly understood, except by those who had come to some maturity in knowledge, grace and experience, and who received them in humble and simple faith and love. "The unlearned and unstable," therefore, even such as were *untaught* in the school of Christ, or *unteachable* through pride, prejudice, and carnal passions, and unestablished in faith and by sanctifying grace, *wrested*, or *perverted* them, by a forced and unnatural interpretation, inconsistent with the context and the apostle's general doctrine; and adduced them in support of their proud, corrupt, and licentious principles and conduct: and thus they compassed their own destruction. But this perversion of St. Paul's writings, (which Peter evidently speaks of as a part of the sacred scriptures,) must not be charged on the epistles themselves; but on those who thus perverted them contrary to their real meaning and tendency: for they did the same also with the other scriptures, both the books of the Old Testament and as many of the New Testament as were then extant, and allowed to be of divine authority; for proud, carnal, ambitious, covetous, or licentious men, could wrest some things in any of them to a *seeming* agreement with their pernicious doctrines, and so pervert them to their own destruction; in the same manner, as they made a fatal use of the mysterious subjects which St. Paul discoursed on. It was therefore proper to warn and instruct men to read them with humility and a teachable spirit; and not to perplex themselves with hard things, till they were established in such as were more plain. But this was no reason why either St. Paul's epistles or the other scriptures should be laid aside, or put out of sight: for men left to themselves abuse every good gift of God, and the corruption of the best things becomes the worst. 'The 'persons, to whom Peter's epistles were written, were 'for the most part Paul's converts.' 'Of this vice,' (wresting the scriptures,) 'they are most commonly 'guilty, who, from the pride of understanding, will re'ceive nothing but what they can explain. Whereas 'the humble and teachable receive the declarations of 'revelation, according to their plain, grammatical, un'constrained meaning; which it is their only care to 'attain, by reading the scriptures frequently and with 'attention.' (*Macknight.*) He should have added, 'and 'with prayer.'

V. 17, 18. As the Christians, whom Peter addressed, had been previously instructed and warned concerning these things, they ought to be upon their guard against the insinuations of deceivers, and to beware of the rock on which so many had split; lest, being drawn from the simplicity of believing obedience to the Lord Jesus, through the errors and delusions of wicked men, especially of those licentious teachers whom he had before described, they should fall from that steadfast adherence to the truths of the Gospel, that constant profession of faith, and that uniform course of consistent behaviour, which they had hitherto maintained, and which constituted a steadfastness peculiar to them, and distinguishing them from numbers of unstable professors. In order to be assured that this never would be their case, they ought to use every means with the greatest earnestness, in order to have every holy disposition invigorated in their hearts, that their grace might be growing to more confirmed habits, and be productive of good works in greater abundance; and that they might also increase continually in a believing, spiritual, experimental, and transforming knowledge of Jesus Christ, as their Lord and Saviour. After this important exhortation, the apostle concluded with ascribing glory to Christ as to a divine person, and with desiring that it might, or rejoicing that it would, be given to him, both at that time and for ever. Amen. 'This word, at the beginning of a sentence, is an earnest asseveration. In the conclusion of a sentence, it imports an earnest wish that it may be so.' (*Benson.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

The purest minds of men on earth want stirring up by way of remembrance; that, by habitual attention to the doctrine and precepts delivered by the holy prophets and apostles, they may be kept steadfast in faith, fervent in love, and diligent in obedience. The only wise God our Saviour, by predicting the scoffs and contemptuous objections of infidels and profane men, in ancient and modern times, hath taken care, that even their perverse opposition to the scripture should furnish an additional proof of its divine inspiration. No wonder that they who walk after their own lusts endeavour to deride our expectation of a future judgment, and of the eternal destruction of all those, who "will not have Christ to reign over them;" or that they catch at every thing, which can help to buoy up their hopes of "escaping the damnation of hell." Most of their cavils and sneers expose their ignorance of the scriptures and of the power of God: yet their very ignorance is the consequence of their ungodliness, and wilful opposition to those parts of divine truth, which condemn their darling iniquities. But none, who read and believe the scriptures, can be ignorant that the omnipotent Creator of the heavens and the earth, who upholds, preserves, changes or destroys his own work, as he sees good, has his whole plan before him; that he alone is competent to determine about times and seasons; and that with him "one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

V. 9—13.

The Lord, in reality, makes no delays, however his dispensations may appear to our unbelief and scanty knowledge; he is not slack concerning his promises, (according to men's notions of slackness,) but he is slow to anger, he waiteth to be gracious, he delighteth not in the death of a sinner, and he is willing that any perishing rebel should come to repentance, and seek his salvation. But his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure: "the heavens and earth, which now are, are reserved unto fire, against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men:" that "great day of the Lord shall come as a thief in the night," as surely as the deluge came, and equally unexpected by unbelievers. What will then be the surprise, terror, and anguish of proud scoffers, infidels, and all ungodly and worldly men, "when the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and all the works that are therein, shall be burnt up!" Here imagination itself is baffled, description would be vain, and we can only apply the inconceivable subject to practical purposes. As all these things shall be dissolved, "what manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness?" Surely Christians should not lay up their treasures on earth, or set their affections on things below! It is our great business to prepare for this great catastrophe, by daily expecting, and hasting to, the coming of the day of God; that we may possess a triumphant hope of lifting up our heads with joy, when the heavens and the earth shall form one immense conflagration, and when no refuge will remain to the wicked from the intolerable wrath of their offended Judge, and that everlasting fire to which he will doom them; and to "look and prepare for the new heavens and the new earth," which God hath promised; remembering that righteousness dwelleth there, without alloy or interruption.

V. 14—18.

In the firm belief of the great and eternal realities set before us in this chapter, let us "give diligence to be found of Christ, at his coming, in peace, without spot and blameless." Let sinners account the long-suffering of our Lord to be salvation, seeking him while he may be found, and calling on him while he is near, that they may have the privilege of blessing him to eternity for sparing them, when others were cut off in their sins. We should also avail ourselves of the apostle's caution, whilst we read the epistles of St. Paul, and other difficult parts of the holy scriptures. Most evident it is, that untaught, unteachable, self-sufficient, unstable, and unconverted men wrest many things of this kind to their own destruction. Yet they have a most important use in the system of divine truth; and if men will pervert them, they do it at their peril. But let us seek to have our minds prepared for the reception of such things as are hard to be understood, by properly digesting and reducing to practice those parts, which are most simple and intelligible: and let us take care not to give strong meat to babes, who cannot digest it, as it only "belongs to those that are of full age, and who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil." Thus taking things in their proper order, and proceeding with humility, caution, prayer, and practice, we shall be prepared to derive benefit from the deepest and most mysterious truths, and to perceive their consistency with the rest of divine revelation. Let all then, who know and read these things, beware, lest, being led away by the error of the wicked, they fall from their own steadfastness; and may we all grow continually in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and ascribe glory to him for ever. Amen.

THE
FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL OF
JOHN.

This epistle has been received, as written by the apostle John, by the church from the earliest ages; and the similarity of sentiment and expression, between it and his Gospel, is a full confirmation that he was the writer, though his name is not prefixed to it. From two expressions in the second chapter; "Because ye have "known him, that is, *from the beginning;" and "It is the last time;" several learned moderns have concluded, that it was written just before the destruction of Jerusalem, and to the Jewish converts exclusively: but it has been the more general opinion, that it was written much later than that event, and not long before the book of Revelation. The texts, on which the former opinion is grounded, do not seem to require, or even admit of, that interpretation, which these learned men put upon them;* (Notes, ii. 13. 18;) *and there is not the least intimation of any distinction between Jewish and Gentile converts, in the whole epistle. It appears, to me at least, the more probable opinion, that it was written towards the close of the apostle's life, after the death of all the other apostles: and that it was intended as a circular letter, or a general address, to all the Christian Churches, which was known to come from the only surviving apostle. The authoritative, yet affectionate manner, in which the writer addresses his dear children, favours this conclusion:* (Note, ii 1, 2:) *and the heretics, or antichrists, whom he evidently intended to oppose, came forward much more openly, at this time, than at an earlier period. It is generally allowed, that they who denied the real Deity of Christ; they who explained away his proper humanity, and the reality of his sufferings and death, as an atoning sacrifice; and they, who taught their followers, that believers, being saved by grace, were not required to obey the commandments of God; were the principal of the Antichrists. These were branched out into a variety of sub-divisions called by different names; such as Ebionites, Cerinthians, Docetee, or Phantasiastæ, Gnostics, Nicolaitans, &c. on which ecclesiastical writers have enlarged abundantly. The apostle, however, did not name any of them, and his language, was suited to refute and expose many other heretical sentiments, both of ancient and modern times; and in that view the epistle is highly interesting to us. He expatiates also on the love of God to us, as shown in the salvation of his Son; and again and again most pathetically enforces on believers love to each other, as shown in its practical effects, by almost every motive imaginable. This, I suppose, has given occasion to the general opinion of his being himself of a most loving disposition; even more so than the other apostles. Our Lord, however, called him, and James his brother,* Boanerges, (Note, Mark iii. 13—19:) *and the faithful, plain, and even sharp manner, in which he speaks of hypocrites and false teachers, sufficiently illustrates the reason, for which that name was given. He also lays down various marks and evidences; by which Christians might be distinguished from self-deceivers and hypocrites: and, while this epistle differs exceedingly in style and manner, from those of the other apostles, it perfectly harmonizes with them in doctrine and practical instruction.*

A. D. 90. CHAP. I. *A. D.* 90.

The apostle declares, what he had seen and heard of Christ, the Word of life, that others might have fellowship with him, and share his joy, 1—4. *He shows that they, who have communion with God, and are cleansed from sin by the blood of Christ, walk in the light of holiness,* 5—7; *and that the faithfulness and righteousness of God are engaged for the pardon and cleansing of those who confess their sins; but that all who deny themselves to be sinners are deceived,* 8—10.

THAT [a] which was from the beginning, [b] which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, [c] and our hands have handled, of [d] the Word of life;

2 (For [e] the Life [f] was manifested, and we have seen *it*, [g] and bear witness, and shew unto you [h] that eternal life, [i] which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)

3 That [k] which we have seen and heard, [l] declare we unto you, that [m] ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly [n] our fellowship *is* with the Father, and [o] with his Son Jesus Christ.

4 And these things write we unto you, [p] that your joy may be full.

a ii. 13 Prov. viii. 22—31. Is xli. 4 Mic v 2 John i. 1,2. viii 58 Rev i 8 11. 17, 18. ii. 8

b iv. 14. Luke i 2. John i 14 Acts i 3 iv. 20 2 Pet. i 16—18.

c Luke xxiv. 39 John xx 27.

d v 7. John i 14 v 26. Rev. xix. 13.

e v 14. 20. John i. 4. xi 25, 26 xiv. 6 ——f iii 5. 8. Rom. xvi. 25, 26. 1 Tim iii. 16. 2 Tim. i. 10. Tit. i. 3.——g John xv. 27 xxi 24 Acts i 22. ii. 32 iii. 15. v. 32. x. 41. 1 Pet. v. 1. h *See on*, e. John xvii. 3.——i Prov viii. 22—30. John i. 1, 2. 18. iii. 13. vii 29. viii. 38. xvi. 28 xvii. 5 Rom viii 3. Gal iv. 4.

k *See on*, 1.

l 5 Ps. ii. 7. xxii. 22 Is. lxvi. 19. John xvii 26. Acts xiii. 32. 41. xx. 27 1 Cor xv. 1 Heb. ii 12

m Acts ii 42 Phil. ii 1. Rom xv. 27. Eph. iii. 6. Phil. i. 7 1 Tim. vi. 2 Heb. iii 1. 1 Pet v. 1. *Gr*

n 7 ii. 23,24. John xiv. 20—23. xvii. 3 21 1 Cor. i. 9. 30. 2 Cor xiii. 14. Phil ii. 1. iii 10. Heb. iii. 14.——o v. 10, 11. Col. i 13. 1 Thes. i. 10.——p Is. lxi. 10. Hab iii. 17, 18. John xv. 11. xvi. 24 2 Cor. i. 24. Eph. iii. 19. Phil. i 25, 26. 2 John 12.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. (*Notes, John* i. 1—18.) The apostle began this epistle in the same abrupt manner as he did his Gospel, and without any particular address; and he wrote as a witness, in a sententious and declaratory style, and not in an argumentative manner. "That which was "from the beginning:" though the neuter gender is used, he seems to mean the Person of Christ; even as when it is said, "that he and the Father are one," *One Deity*, "in "the neuter gender, not *one Person*," in the masculine; (*numen*, θειον.) or when the angel said, "*That holy Thing* "which shall be born of thee." (*Luke* i. 35.) That essential Good, that uncreated and self-existent Excellency, which had been from the beginning, as coequal and coeternal with the Father, and had at length appeared in human nature for the salvation of sinners, was the great subject concerning which the apostle wrote to his brethren. If we then understand him to mean the Person of Christ, (and it does not appear what else could be meant,) "from "the beginning" seems to signify *from eternity:* for if the *creation* and *time* were coeval, "That which was from "the beginning, before God created the heavens and the "earth," must have been from eternity. Indeed, the same expression in some places may signify the first opening of the dispensation of the Gospel; (ii. 7, 8.) yet this does not appear so consistent with the context. The more obvious meaning is this: that essential Good, which was from the beginning with God, and was God, by whom all things were created, had become flesh, to dwell on earth among men; and the apostle and his brethren had heard him deliver his doctrine and publish his salvation; they had seen him with their eyes, whilst they "beheld "his glory, as of the only begotten of the Father, full of "grace and truth." They had not only viewed him with a transient glance, but had accompanied him, and contemplated him, both in respect of the wisdom and holiness of his character, the power of his miracles, and his abundant love and mercy, during some years, till they saw him crucified for sinners, and afterwards risen from the dead; and their hands had handled him, whilst he condescended to give them this full proof of his resurrection, that they might witness it to others. (*Notes, John* xx. 20. 25. 27.) This divine Person, "the Word of life," "the Word of God," become incarnate, that he might be "the Life of men," the apostle declared to mankind; and he wrote to assure his Christian brethren of the reality of his human nature, which some in those days denied, and that of his divine nature, which his resurrection fully demonstated, (*Rom.* i. 4.) For "the Life," the Source and Author of life, natural, spiritual, and eternal, who possessed life in himself necessarily and unchangeably, and who might therefore be called "the Life;" life being essential to him, and derived from him to all creatures; even he had been manifested in the flesh, to be the life of fallen men. (*Marg. Ref.*) And when the Son of God, the essential Life of all creatures, was thus manifested, the apostles were peculiarly favoured, in being chosen to be his attendants, and to see him, during his ministry, at his death, after his resurrection, and at his ascension, that they might bear witness to others of these things, and show them that eternal Life, which had always subsisted with the Father, as one with him, and yet distinct from him. One in the undivided essence of the Godhead, but possessing distinct personality, as the only Begotten of the Father, by an eternal and incomprehensible generation; and who, in the fulness of time, was manifested, as the Author and Giver of eternal life to sinners, through the redemption of his blood, and by the communication of his new-creating Spirit. They did not therefore proceed on report, or insufficient proof, when they went to the nations, and encountered all hardships, dangers, and persecutions, in preaching the Gospel to them. But they declared the things concerning the Person, doctrine, and salvation of Christ, which they had seen and heard, and had the most abundant opportunity of learning from his own lips; and of which they had been assured by his miracles, resurrection, and ascension.

V. 3, 4. The apostle likewise declared the things, not from selfish or carnal motives, but from the purest benevolence and love; in order that they to whom he wrote might have fellowship with them, and share all their immunities, hopes, comforts, and everlasting advantages: and whatever an ungodly and carnal world might imagine, concerning the condition of such poor, despised, and persecuted men, whom they treated as the "off-"scouring of all things," yet truly their "fellowship "was with *the Father*," and with his Son Jesus Christ. They shared the special love and favour of God the Father; all his perfections ensured their happiness; they were made partakers of his holiness, and even of a divine nature; and they had the assured hope and blessed earnests of enjoying him, as their all-sufficient and eternal Portion. Moreover, they had a free access to him, as their Father; and a sacred union having been formed between him and their souls, through Jesus Christ, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, a most honourable and happy communion and intercourse was continually carried on between the glorious God and them: while they poured

5 This then is [q] the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, [r] that God is Light, and in him is no darkness at all.

6 [s] If we say that we have [t] fellowship with him, and [u] walk in darkness, [x] we lie, and [y] do not the truth:

7 But [z] if we walk in the light, [a] as he is in the light, [b] we have fellowship one with another, [c] and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

q iii. 11. 1 Cor. xi. 23. r Ps. xxvii 1 xxxvi. 9. lxxxiv. 11. Is lx. 19. John i. 4. 9 viii 12. ix. 5. xii. 35, 36 1 Tim. vi. 16. Jam i 17 Rev. xxi. 23. xxii. 5. s 8. 10. ii. 4. iv. 20. Matt. vii. 22. Jam. ii. 14. 16. 18. Rev. iii. 17, 18.——t *See on*, 3. Ps. v 4—6. xciv. 20. 2 Cor. vi. 14—16.——u ii. 9—11. Ps lxxxii. 5 Prov. ii 13 iv 18, 19. John iii. 19, 20. xi. 10. xii 35. 46

x 10. iv 20. John viii. 44 45. 1 Tim iv. 2 y John iii. 21 z ii. 9, 10 Ps. lvi. 13. lxxxix. 15. xcvii 11. Is ii. 5 Rom xiii. 12. Eph v. 8 2 John 4. 3 John 4 a *See on* 5 Ps civ. 2. 1 Tim. vi 16. Jam. i. 17.——b *See on*. 3. Am. iii 3——c ii 1, 2. v 6, 8 Zech. xiii. 1. John i. 29. 1 Cor. vi. 11. Heb. ix. 14 1 Pet. i. 19. Rev. i. 5. vii. 14

out their inmost souls before him, made him their Hope and confidence, aimed to do his will and manifest his glory, celebrated his praises, were his devoted worshippers, and sought their felicity in his favour and acceptance; and while he graciously heard their supplications, accepted their persons and services, communicated to them his holy consolations, showed them his will, supplied them with wisdom and strength suited to their wants, and took on him the care of all their concerns. This their fellowship with the Father arose from their "fellowship with his Son, "Jesus Christ." By faith they were interested in him and his salvation; so that "He was made of God to them "Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemp-"tion;" and by a continued regard to his Person, mediation, and grace, and an habitual reliance on him as the Life and salvation of their souls, they had access to God as a Father. Thus, through the incarnate Son, and his sacrifice, and intercession, and the communication maintained with him by faith, they had communion with the Father also, notwithstanding their sinfulness. This was no enthusiastic imagination, or hypocritical pretence, as many were disposed to represent it; nor was it an unsatisfactory or inefficacious transaction, as others might suppose, who did not deny its reality; but they had the happy experience of it in their souls, and evidenced the excellency of it in their lives: and shared with their brethren in this sacred communion, such comforts and substantial satisfaction, as made them ample amends for all their losses, sufferings, and hardships. Being therefore assured, that this alone was sufficient to make men happy, and knowing the inexhaustible fulness of Christ and his precious salvation, they desired, exceedingly, that their fellow-sinners would come and share their felicity; and leaving the lying vanities of the world, or empty forms and superstitions of false religion, should seek with them this "fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus "Christ." The desire, glowing with intense ardour in the hearts of the apostles, and united with zeal for the honour of their Lord, animated them to all their self-denying labours, and reconciled them to all sufferings, in promoting the Gospel. The same principle induced the apostle John to write this epistle to the churches, that, rejecting the heretical doctrines of false teachers, having fellowship with Christ, and those who adhered to the apostles' doctrine; and avoiding whatever could interrupt their communion with God: their holy joy might be complete, and they might live in actual possession of those invaluable privileges, to which they were called by the gospel. The communion of the Holy Spirit is not particularly mentioned in this most interesting passage; because the communion of believers with the Father and the Son, and their loving communion with each other, are effected and maintained by the communication and influences of the Holy Spirit; who is the immediate Author of their spiritual life, hope, love, joy, peace, and holy affections; the bond of union between Christ and his mystical body, and between every member of it and all the others; the great blessing communicated from the Father's love, and through the incarnation and mediation of the Son; and the seal and pledge of, and preparation for, all other blessings in time and to eternity. As the Holy Spirit is, therefore, the great Agent in our communion with the Father and the Son, it was not necessary that communion with him should be separately mentioned. (*Note*, 2 *Cor*. xiii. 14.)

V. 5—7. In order that Christians might obtain that fulness of joy of which the apostle spoke; and that they might be upon their guard against all delusive appearances, and all false pretences to communion with God; it was needful for him, to state to them the message, or *declaration*, which they had heard from Christ, concerning the perfections of God himself. The substance of this is, "That God is Light," pure perfect intellect, an all pervading, all penetrating Spirit, essential knowledge, wisdom, holiness, love, and felicity: so that "in him is no "darkness at all;" no ignorance, error, moral evil, or defect in felicity; and therefore none of these could be derived from him, (*Note*, *James* i. 13—17.) As this is the nature of God, the doctrines and precepts which came from him must be of the same kind: true religion might be distinguished from counterfeit by that criterion; and especially his spiritual worshippers, who really had communion with him, might be known by their conformity to him. If then, any persons, professing Christianity, affirmed, as a matter of experience, that they had fellowship with God according to the Gospel, and consequently were partakers of his salvation, while at the same time, "they walked in darkness," or were deluded by Satan, through ignorance and false doctrine, to live in the habitual practice of sin, and so to have "fellowship with the un-"fruitful works of darkness," such persons spake falsehood, and were either deceiving, or self-deceived, by hypocrites, whose conduct belied their profession: for they did not practise what was sincere and faithful, and according to the truths of God's word. But if the professed disciples of Christ, "walked in the light as he was in the "Light," acting habitually as became those who knew God, and his holy truth and will; and imitating his purity, righteousness, goodness, and truth, in their behaviour among men; they might deem this a sufficient evidence, that they were partakers of Christ, and interested in the love of the Father through him: they were warranted to conclude, that their fellowship with God, and the intercourse maintained between him and their souls, was the very same in nature and efficacy with that of

8 If we [d] say that we have no sin, [e] we deceive ourselves, and [f] the truth is not in us.

9 If [g] we confess our sins, [h] he is faithful and [i] just to forgive us *our* sins, [k] and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

10 If [l] we say that we have not sinned, [m] we make him a liar, and [n] his word is not in us.

[d] i. 10. iii 5, 6. 1 Kings viii. 46. 2 Chr vi 36 Job ix. 2. xiv 4 xv. 14 xxv. 4 Ps cxliii. 2 Prov. xx 9. Ec vii 20. Is liii 6. lxiv. 6. Jer ii. 22, 23. Rom. iii. 23. Jam. iii. 2 ——[e] 1 Cor. iii. 18 Gal. vi. 3 2 Tim. iii. 13 Jam. i. 22. 26. 2 Pet. ii 13 ——[f] ii 4 1 Tim. vi 5. 2 John 2 3 John 3.——[g] Lev. xxvi. 40–42. 1 Kings viii 47 2 Chr vi 37, 38 Neh i. 6. ix 2, &c. Job xxxiii 27, 28. Ps. xxxii. 5 li. 2–5. Prov. xxviii. 13 Dan ix. 4–20. Matt. iii 6. Mark i. 5 Acts xix. 18 ——[h] Deut. vii 9 Lam. iii. 23. 1 Cor. i 9. 1 Tim. i. 15 Heb x. 23 xi. 11.

[i] Is. xlv. 21. Zech. ix 9. Rom. iii 26. Heb. vi. 10. Rev xv. 3 [k] 7 Ps. xiv 12 li. 2 Jer. xxxiii. 8. Ez. xxxvi. 25. xxxvii. 23 Eph. v. 26. Tit. ii. 14. [l] *See on*, 8. Ps. cxxx. 3 ——[m] v. 10. Job xxiv. 25.——[n] 8. ii 4. iv. 4. Col. iii. 16. 2 John 2.

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which the apostle spake; they were admitted to the communion of the saints, and entitled to all their privileges and blessings, and ought to be the objects of their special love and complacency; and they might also be fully assured, that the atoning blood of the Son of God had taken away the guilt of all their former sins, and did remove that of all their daily defects, defilements, and transgressions; nay, that the Holy Spirit, as given through the merit of his atonement, was cleansing away, and would at length perfectly destroy, all the sinfulness of their fallen nature. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8—10. While the apostle strenuously insisted on the necessity of an habitual holy walk, as the effect and evidence of the knowledge of God in Christ Jesus, and of communion with him, he guarded, with equal care, against the opposite error of self-righteous pride. If any professed Christians, while they seemed to walk in the light, should be so elated with a conceit of their own attainments, as to say "that they had no sin," but were perfectly pure, and as holy in heart and life as the law of God required, they were certainly deceived in a most awful manner; nay, the truth was not in them, as a principle of life and illumination, or they never could have fallen into a mistake, which implied the most gross ignorance of God, of his spiritual law, and of their own hearts. On the other hand, such as confessed their sins, with unreserved, ingenuous, and sincere humiliation *before God*, (for that alone can be here intended,) owning their guilt and desert of wrath, not attempting to extenuate or deny their offences, but casting themselves wholly on the mercy of God for the pardon of them, would certainly find him faithful to his promises, and just to his covenant engagements to Christ their Surety, and to them through him; yea, his very justice, (as satisfied by the atonement of his Son,) would induce him to forgive all their sins, how numerous and aggravated soever they had been; and to cleanse them, not only from the guilt, but gradually, and at length perfectly, from all the pollution of their unrighteousness, (*Ez.* xxxvi. 25—27. 2 *Cor.* vii. 1.)—But if any of them continued to deny that they had sinned, and so needed not to confess guilt, or seek forgiveness and cleansing from sin, they, in fact, "treated the words of "God as a lie," and his declaration of man's sinfulness as a libel on human nature; nay, they virtually denied the truth of the whole Gospel, which every where speaks of men as lost sinners; so that the word of God was not in them, by faith, or by the teaching of the Holy Spirit.—In this latter verse the apostle opposed such persons as totally denied their sinfulness, their need of mercy, or their desert of wrath, by whatever method they deceived themselves into a confidence that they had never sinned, or that they had in some way made amends for their offences, and were not justly deserving of punishment. But in the former verse he seems to have shown the gross error of those, who imagined that through the Gospel they were so perfectly sanctified, as to have no spot or blemish of sin in them; the present tense, "have no sin," being used in the eighth verse, and the past, "have not sinned," in the tenth. (*Notes*, &c. *Ps.* xxxii. li. *Prov.* xxviii. 13.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—4.

Our most lively gratitude is due to the Lord for that fully authenticated revelation, which he hath given us concerning "the Word of life," by those, who heard and saw him, and who had the testimony of their senses to the reality of his incarnation and his resurrection. But what words can express the praises of his love to sinners, in causing "the Life to be manifested," even "the eter-"nal Life that was with the Father," in order that we, condemned rebels, who were dead in sin, might live by him! This appears the more admirable, when we consider the deep abasement and the agonizing sufferings, to which this manifestation exposed the incarnate Word and Son of God; nay, how his very humiliation hath given occasion to the children of men to rob him of his glory, to deny his Deity, and to speak of him, whom all angels worship, as if he were altogether such a one as themselves. Faithful and zealous ministers, though they have not seen and heard the Lord of glory with their outward senses, may yet declare to men what they have known and experienced of his mercy, truth, and power: and as he became incarnate, that sinners might have fellowship with him, and in the love of the Father through him, for their everlasting felicity, so they are willing to labour and suffer, that their fellow-sinners may be brought to have fellowship with them in their most precious blessings. However men may despise and revile them, and cast out their names as evil, or deem them madmen, bigots, enthusiasts, or hypocrites, yet verily they possess the greatest honour, pleasure, privilege, and advantage imaginable, in communion with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, and in their liberty of access with boldness at all times into the presence of the eternal God; while all the perfections and persons in the Godhead are engaged, by covenant, to make them most blessed for evermore. These benefits are not like the scanty possessions of the world, which are congenial to the selfishness of our fallen nature, and inspire the jealousy of every competitor, because the more share them, the less each person can appropriate. But the joy and felicity of communion with God corresponds with the enlarged philanthropy of the regenerate soul, and tends to encrease it, because the good enjoyed is infinite and all-sufficient; so that any multitude may partake of it, without its being at all diminished; nay, the felicity seems enhanced to each possessor, by its being communicated to increasing numbers. This "fellowship

CHAP. II.

The apostle exhorts believers not to sin, and points out Christ, as the Advocate with the Father, and the Propitiation for the sins of the world, 1, 2. *He shows that the knowledge of Christ, and union with him, must be evidenced by obeying and imitating him, and by love of the brethren; that thus the love of God is perfected; and that those are deceived, blind, and hypocritical, who live in hatred and malice,* 3—11. *He warns believers of every age and attainment against the love of the world; showing the vanity of all that is in the world, compared with the eternal happiness of those who do the will of God,* 12—17. *He cautions them against many antichrists, who fatally seduce some professed Christians,* 18, 19; *declares that the unction of the Holy Spirit was the effectual preservative against them,* 21, 22: *points out to them the true doctrine of Christ; and exhorts them to adhere to his truth, and abide in him, in expectation of his coming; and to prove their regeneration by their habitual righteousness,* 23—29.

MY [a] little children, [b] these things write I unto you, [c] that ye sin not. [d] And if any man sin, [e] we have an Advocate with [f] the Father, Jesus Christ [g] the righteous:

2 And [h] he is the Propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also [i] for *the sins of* the whole world.

[a] 12. 13. iii. 7 18 iv. 4. v 21. John xiii. 35 xxi. 5. 1 Cor iv. 14, 15. Gal. iv. 19.

[b] i. 3, 4. 1 Tim. iii. 14

[c] Ps. iv 4 Ez. iii. 21. John v. 14. viii. 11. Rom. vi. 1 2 15 1 Cor. xv. 34. Eph iv. 26 Tit. ii. 11—13 1 Pet. i 15—19 iv. 1—3.

[d] *See on*, i 8—10.

[e] Rom. viii 34 1 Tim. ii 5 Heb. vii. 24, 25. ix 24.

[f] Luke x 22 John v. 19—26. 36. vi. 27 x. 15 xiv. 6. Eph ii 18. Jam. i. 27. iii. 9.

[g] 29. iii. 5. Zech. ix. 9. 2 Cor. v. 21. Heb. vii. 26. 1 Pet. ii. 22. iii. 18

[h] iv 10. Rom. iii. 25, 26. 1 Pet. ii. 24. iii. 18.

[i] iv 14 v. 19 John i 29. iv. 42. xi. Cor. v. 18—21. Rev. xii. 9.

"with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ," is "the secret "of the LORD," which is peculiar to those that fear him; and ungodly men *must* therefore treat it as the delusion of a heated imagination. No doubt there are both enthusiasts and hypocrites, who are deceived, or mean to deceive others: yet that is not worth counterfeiting, either by Satan or wicked men, which itself is of no value or reality. There are then those, who are warranted to say, that "truly their fellowship is with the Father, and with "his Son Jesus Christ;" and they all desire to bring others to partake of the same blessedness: indeed, it is the design of all the instructions in the word of God to lead us to possess these consolations, that so "our joy may be full."

V. 6—10.

It is the interest, as well as the duty, of all men to regard the message sent to us by those, who "declare that God "is Light, and that in him is no darkness at all:" for as his perfect felicity is inseparable from his perfect holiness, so our happiness must be proportioned to our sanctification. By this rule we may also judge, who *truly* have fellowship with God; for if any man profess this, and "walk in "darkness, he is a liar, and does not the truth:" but if we habitually walk in the light of holy obedience, as it becomes those who have the transforming knowledge of God, we have fellowship with prophets and apostles, and with all saints, yea, with the Lord of saints himself; and the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. For Christianity is in every respect the religion of a sinner: and they, who walk most nearly to God in holy conformity and obedience, are most sensible that their best days and duties are mixed with sin, and need cleansing with the atoning blood. No encouragement is therefore given in scripture to any of those who say they have not sinned, or that they have no longer any sin to repent of, to be pardoned, or to be cleansed away: such men deceive themselves; yea, they make God a liar, and his word is not in them: they arraign the truth of his declarations, and the justice of his government; and cannot possibly offer the sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart before him, or properly understand the nature and value of his Gospel of abounding grace. Let us then learn to plead guilty before God, and be humbly willing to know the worst of our case; let us ingenuously confess all our sins, and all their aggravations; relying wholly on his mercy and truth, through the righteousness of Christ, for a full and free forgiveness; and let us trust in him, and wait on him, to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, till no spot or blemish remain in us, even in the judgment of our holy God and merciful Father.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. It is probable that John was the only surviving apostle, when he wrote this epistle; and his old age, and long-continued usefulness, faithfulness, and love to Christians, must have given him a kind of parental authority throughout the whole church, as far as it adhered to the pure Gospel of Christ. It was therefore peculiarly proper for him to address them as his spiritual family, whose welfare he had greatly at heart: and as most of them were young in years, compared with this beloved and venerable disciple, who probably was the oldest Christian on earth at that time; none ever could with such propriety, adopt the endearing language of his Lord, and call his fellow-Christians, "My little," or my *dear*, "children," as he did: (*John* xiii. 33;) for the diminutive is commonly used by way of endearment, and to express peculiar affection. He was desirous of counselling, warning, and encouraging them, "as a father does his "children:" (1 *Thes.* ii. 11, 12;) and the things which he had written to them in the former chapter, and what he was about to add, were intended especially to preserve them from committing sin: as every part of the doctrine of salvation by Jesus Christ, was suited to display the malignant nature and effects of sin, to teach men to hate, dread, and flee from it; and to lead them to the love of God and holiness; as well as to give the most effectual encouragement, motives, and assistance to "repent, and do "works meet for repentance." Yet, "if any man had

3 And [k] hereby we do know that [l] we know him, [m] if we keep his commandments.

4 He [n] that saith, [o] I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, [p] is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

5 But [q] whoso keepeth his word, [r] in him verily is the love of God perfected: [s] hereby know we that we are in him.

6 He [t] that saith [u] he abideth in him, ought himself also so [x] to walk, even as he walked.

k 4—6. iii. 14 19 iv 13. v. 19
l Is. liii. 11 *Heb.* John xvii. 3. 2 Cor. iv 6
m iii. 22, 23 v 3 Ps cxix. 6. 32. John xiv. 15 21. 23 xv 10 14. 1 Thes. iv. 1, 2. Heb v. 9. Rev xxii. 14.
n 9. i 6. 8. 10. iv 20. Jam. ii. 14—16 ——o Hos viii. 2, 3. Tit. i. 16.——p *See on*, i. 6 8
q *See on*, 3, 4. Ps cv. 45 cvi 3. cxix. 2 4 146. Prov. viii 32. xxviii 7. Ec. viii. 5. Ez xxxvi. 27. Luke xi 28 Rev. xii. 17 xiv. 12.
r iv 12. 18. Jam. ii. 22
s 27, 28. iii 24 iv. 13. 15, 16. v. 20. John vi. 56. xv. 5. Rom viii. 1. 2 Cor. v. 17. 21. Col. ii 9, 10 ——t *See on*, 4. i. 6.——u 29. iii. 6 John xv. 4—6.——x i. 7. Ps. lxxxv. 13. Matt. xi. 29. John xiii. 15 1 Cor. xi. 1. Eph. v. 2. 1 Pet. ii. 20, 21.

"sinned," he should remember, that "they had an Advocate with the Father." Superficial speculators might here have been ready to charge the apostle with inconsistency, as if the latter part of the verse had contradicted the former: but the state of a Christian in this world is such, that encouragements *after having sinned*, are as necessary as warnings against sin: for, through the remaining power of sin in his heart, the manifold snares of the world, and the power of Satan, he cannot always stand upright. The valiant soldier will be most furiously attacked by the enemy, and may sometimes be foiled; and despondency is as inimical to watchfulness, diligence, and holy obedience, as even carnal security itself. No man on scriptural principles, can conclude himself to be any better than a hypocrite, who habitually commits sin, because God is ready to forgive the penitent: but the fallen, who desire to arise and renew the combat, have abundant encouragement so to do. From the sinner's first conviction of guilt, to the end of the Christian's warfare by death, the general rule is applicable; that, "if any man sin, we "have an Advocate with the Father;" one who hath undertaken, and is fully qualified and authorized, to plead in the presence of God the Father in behalf of every one who applies for pardon, salvation, and all things pertaining to them, in his name, and in dependence on his meritorious intercession. This gracious Advocate never refuses his patronage to any sinner, who seeks it, and he never pleads in vain. For he is "Jesus;" the Saviour, Emmanuel, the incarnate Son of God; and "Christ," the Messiah, the anointed One, chosen, appointed, commissioned, and consecrated, to his office, as a High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. He *alone* is "the "righteous One," who received his human nature pure from all spot of sin, and, as our Surety, perfectly obeyed the whole law of God, and so fulfilled a righteousness more valuable in itself, and more honourable to the Father, than that of all mere creatures could have been. Moreover, "He was the Propitiation for their sins;" for, "through the atonement of his sacrifice on the cross, and his subsequent intercession, he rendered a holy and righteous God *propitious* and favourable to sinners; so that he waiteth to be gracious upon the true mercy-seat, or *propitiatory*, of which that above the ark of the covenant was merely a type and shadow. (*Note, Rom.* iii. 25, 26.) Nor was the benefit of this propitiation to be confined to the Jewish nation: on the contrary, sinners all over the whole earth were admitted to share in it: so that all men, in every land, and through successive generations, were to be invited to come to God, through this all-sufficient Atonement, and by this new and living Way; and all who accepted of this invitation, were as much interested in Christ, and all his blessings, as if he had become incarnate, and died upon the cross for them alone. (*Note, John* i. 29.) So that there was most abundant encouragement to every one, in the whole world, who heard the Gospel, to repent, and seek salvation by faith in the blood of Christ; but none to any man to continue impenitent and unbelieving.

V. 3—6. True Christians might be "overtaken in a "fault," or even fall into a grievous sin; and their infirmities and deficiencies in their daily walk would be many: yet an habitual and unreserved obedience to the commandments of God was to be considered as the proper evidence of a saving knowledge of Christ, and of God the Father in him. (*Notes, John* xvii. 3. 2 *Cor.* iv. 3—6. *Phil.* iii. 8—10. 2 *Pet.* i. 2, 3. 8.) The knowledge of God or of Christ evidently signifies a believing, spiritual, and experimental acquaintance with him, and a cordial acceptance of his salvation. Professed Christians would desire to *know*, or be assured, that their faith and experience were genuine, and distinguishable from those of all hypocrites: and as the apostle and his brethren "knew that they thus "knew Christ," not by their exact notions, high affections, or even miraculous powers, but by a disposition of heart, habitually, unreservedly, and willingly to keep his commandments; so any other man might know his profession to be sincere, and his knowledge of Christ spiritual and saving, by the same evidence. (*Marg. Ref.*) But he, who professed to be acquainted with Christ, and to believe in him, whilst he did not keep his commandments in his habitual conduct, was a liar, and a hypocrite, in whom there was no sincerity, and in whose heart the truth had no place. On the other hand, whoever he was, that remembered and observed the counsels, and obeyed the precepts of Christ, in him *verily*, or *really*, the love of God was perfected; the love of God to him, as a chosen and redeemed sinner, had attained its end in his sanctification; and his love of God had produced its fruit, and was in a mature and perfect state, as the graffed tree is, when loaded with its intended and valuable increase. (*Note, James* ii. 22.) By this, apostles and primitive Christians knew that they were in Christ through faith and the communion of his Spirit; and thus alive to God through him; (*Note, John* xv. 1—8:) and indeed, if any man professed to abide in Christ, he ought so to walk as Christ had walked, in an habitual course of righteousness, holiness, truth, and love; or else he could not expect to be believed by those who knew the transforming efficacy of the saving knowledge of Christ. It is evident, that the obedience here spoken of, is the humble, sincere, unreserved, and loving obedience of a believer in Christ; which is not perfect, but attended with continual repentance, and application to his atoning blood for pardon and acceptance; as well as with a constant dependence on the Holy Spirit for grace, to enable him in any measure to perform it. Yet even this observance of the holy commandments of Christ, in

7 Brethren, [y] I write no new commandment unto you, [z] but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning: the old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.

8 Again, [a] a new commandment I write unto you: [b] which thing is true in him and in you; because [c] the darkness is past, [d] and the true light now shineth.

9 He [e] that saith [f] he is in the light, [g] and hateth his brother, [h] is in darkness even until now.

10 He [i] that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none * occasion of stumbling in him.

11 But [k] he that hateth his brother is in darkness, [l] and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, [m] because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

12 I [n] write unto you, [o] little children, because [p] your sins are forgiven you [q] for his name's sake.

13 I write unto you, [r] fathers, [s] because ye have known [t] him *that is* from the beginning. I write unto you, [u] young men, [x] because ye have overcome [y] the wicked one. I write unto you, [z] little children, because [a] ye have known the Father.

14 I have written unto you, [b] fathers, because ye have known him *that is* from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, [c] because ye are strong, and [d] the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.

y iii 11. Acts xvii. 19 2 John 5
z Lev xix. 18 34. Deut. vi 5. Matt. v. 43. xxii 37—40 Mark xii. 29—34 Rom. xiii. 8—10 Gal v. 13, 14 Jam. ii. 8-12
a iv 21. John xiii 34 xv 12
b iii 14—16. iv. 11. John xv. 12—15 2 Cor. viii. 9 Eph. v 1, 2. 1 Pet i. 21. iv. 1—3.
c Cant ii 11, 12 Is. ix 2. lx 1—3. Matt. iv. 16. Luke i 79 John xii. 46. Acts xvii 30 xxvi. 18 Rom. xiii. 12 2 Cor iv. 4—6 Eph v 8. 1 Thes v 5—8.
d Ps xxvii 1 xxxvi. 9 lxxxiv. 11. Mal. iv. 2 John i. 4, 5. 9. viii. 12. xii 35 2 Tim. i. 10.
e *See on*, 4.
f i 6 John ix. 41 Rom ii. 18—21
g iii 13—17
11. Ps lxxxii. 5 1 Cor. xiii. 1—3. 2 Pet i. 9.——i iii 14 Hos vi. 3. John viii. 31. Rom. xiv. 13. 2 Pet. i. 10 ——* Gr. *scandal* Matt xiii 21. xviii. 7. Luke xvii 1, 2 Rom ix. 32 33 Phil i 10. *Gr all.*——k *See on*, 9 John xii. 35 Tit. iii. 3.——l Prov. iv 19. John xii. 35

m John xiii. 40. 2 Cor. iii. 14 iv 4. Rev iii. 17.
n 7 13. 14 21. i. 4
o *See on*. a. 1.
p i 9 Ps. xxxii. 1, 2. Luke v 20. vii. 47—50. Luke xxiv 47. Acts iv 12 x 43 xiii. 38 Rom. iv. 6, 7. Eph. i. 7. Col i 14
q Ps. cvi. 8. Jer. xiv 7. Eph iv 32.
r 14. 1 Tim. v 1
s 3, 4. v 20 Ps. xci. 14. Luke x. 22. John viii. 19. xiv. 7. xvii. 3.
t *See on* i 1. Ps. xc 2
u 14. Ps. cxlviii. 12. Prov. xx 29. Joel ii. 28 Zech. ix. 17 Tit. ii. 6.
x iv. 4. v. 4, 5 Eph vi. 10—12 1 Pet. v. 8 9.
y iii. 12. v. 18 Matt xiii. 19 38
z *See on*, i 12
a Matt xi. 27. Luke x. 22 John viii. 54. 55 xvi 3 xvii. 21. 2 Cor iv. 6——b *See on*, 13.——c Eph. vi. 10. Phil iv 13. Col. i. 11 2 Tim ii. 1. d Ps. cxix. 11. John v. 38. viii. 31. xv. 7. Col. iii. 16 Heb. viii 10. 2 John 2. 3 John 3.

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imitation of his example; though far from real perfection, constitutes a degree of holiness and excellency, of which none but true Christians have any adequate conception; and which, if universal, would render the earth in no small degree like heaven itself.

V. 7—11. In exhorting Christians to obey and imitate their Lord, as the proper evidence of their love to him, and to the Father who sent him, the apostle wrote no new command to them; but that which they had received from the beginning, and which from the first had been repeatedly enforced by Christ himself. Nay, in fact, it had been virtually in force from the beginning of the world; as it could not comprise more than was contained in the law, which required Israel "to love the LORD "with all their hearts," and "their neighbour as them-"selves;" and to be "holy as God was holy." Yet this old commandment, especially that which inculcated the love of their brethren, might be called a new commandment, as given to Christians. (*Notes, John* xiii. 34, 35. xv. 17.) This was true, in respect of him their Lord and Saviour, in that he had *newly* shown them the immensity of his condescension, compassion, and self-denying love to sinners; and had laid them under *new* obligations to obey and imitate him, especially in "loving one another, "as he had loved them." The command likewise was now enforced by his mediatorial authority, to the full exercise of which he had been lately exalted. It was also "true "in them;" as their situation was *new*, and differed widely from that of the Gentiles around them, and even from that of the people of God under the Mosaic dispensation; and as they were now united by a new bond of union, as fellow-soldiers, fellow-travellers, brethren, and co-heirs of heavenly felicity. So that the love of Christians to each other, as such, though virtually comprised in the love of their neighbours as themselves, and somewhat like that of the Israelites to each other, was *new* in respect of its exercise, motives, rules, and obligations. This arose from the change, which had taken place; as the comparative darkness of the preparatory dispensation was past, and the true light shone in full splendour: so that Christians might be expected to be more exact in their obedience, and more full of love to one another, and to all men, than even believers had been under the darker dispensation of the law. He, therefore, who professed, that he walked in the marvellous light of the Gospel, as partaking of the special grace and mercy of God, (*Note*, 1 *Pet*. ii. 9, 10.) and yet hated his brother, (either any of his fellow-christians, or his neighbours,) was evidently in darkness even to that time: for though the true light shone around him; he was blinded by his pride and selfishness. Thus he continued a subject of the prince of darkness, the author of all malice, envy, murder, and malignity; for the illumination of the true knowledge of Christ always transformed the hearts in proportion to its degree, and produced a loving disposition in all those who really partook of it. He, therefore, who loved his brother, and habitually showed himself disposed to goodness, mercy, and forgiveness; to active, liberal, self-denying love; evidently lived and walked in the light of the Gospel, and was influenced by the inward efficacy of the truths, which he had professed: and there was nothing in the general prevailing disposition of his heart, by means of which Satan could succeed in tempting him to scandalous sins; or which was likely to prove an occasion of his throwing stumbling blocks in the way of others, to their destruction. Whereas, he, who hated, or bore habitual malice against his brother, or any man, was still in darkness: and as men walking in the dark, know not whither they are going, nor at what they stumble; so such a person would proceed in an ignorant, uncertain, and unholy manner, not aware of the dangers that beset his path, nor sensible that it led to destruction; as the darkness of error and sin had blinded his eyes, till at length he would fall into some destructive heresy, or scandalous crime, and not only ruin himself but cause others to fall likewise.

V. 12—14. The apostle had before addressed Christians in general, as "his little children," or his dear children: but here he spoke of such as were young in

15 [e] Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. [f] If any man love the world, [g] the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For all that *is* in the world, [h] the lust of the flesh, [i] and the lust of the eyes, [k] and the pride of life, [l] is not of the Father, but is of the world.

17 And [m] the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: [n] but he that doeth the will of God [o] abideth for ever.

e iv. 5. v 4, 5. 19. John xv 19. Rom xii. 2. Gal i. 10 Eph ii 2. Col. iii 1, 2. 1 Tim. vi. 10.
f Matt. vi. 24. Luke xvi. 13. Jam. iv 4.
g iii. 17.
h Num. xi. 4. 34. Ps lxxviii 18. 30. Prov. vi. 25. Matt. v 28. Rom. xiii. 14. 1 Cor. x. 6. Gal. v. 17. 24. Eph. ii 3 Tit ii 12. iii 3 1 Pet. i. 14. ii. 11. iv. 2, 3. 2 Pet ii. 18 Jude 16—18.——i Gen. iii 6. vi 2. Josh vii. 21. Job xxxi. 1. Ps cxix. 36, 37. Ec v. 10, 11. Matt. iv. 8 Luke iv. 5.
k Esth. i 3—7. Dan iv. 30 Rev. xviii. 11—17.
l Jam iii. 15.
m Ps lxxiii. 18-20. xc. 9 cii. 26. Is. xl. 6—8. Matt. xxiv. 35. 1 Cor. vii 31. Jam. i 10, 11 iv. 14. 1 Pet. i. 24.
n Ps cxliii. 10. Matt. vii. 21 xxi. 31. Mark iii 35. John vii. 17. Rom. xii 2. Col. i. 9. iv. 12. 1 Thes. iv. 3. v. 18. Heb x. 36 1 Pet. iv. 2.——o Ps. cxxv. 1, 2. Prov. x. 25. John iv. 14. vi 58. x. 28—30 1 Pet i. 5 25.

years, or newly converted: and distinguished them from those, who were further advanced in the life of faith and grace. He particularly addressed his exhortations to those "new-born babes, who had tasted that the Lord is gracious," (*Note*, 1 *Pet.* ii. 2, 3:) because their sins were as certainly forgiven them, for the sake of Christ, and through faith in his name, as those of their more established and experienced brethren were; though their weakness of faith, and want of distinct and exact knowledge, might prevent them from possessing the abiding comfort of it: and the counsel, which he was about to give them, would preserve them from many snares and sorrows, enable them to obtain the assurance of their acceptance, and direct them in making a suitable return for so invaluable a benefit. He wrote also to the fathers, having the same counsel and admonitions to give to those Christians, who were "old disciples," matured in knowledge and experience, and who ought to be the guides and examples to their juniors, as well as to "shine as lights in "the world." These had long known him, who was from the beginning; and their long acquaintance with Christ, and with the eternal Father in him; with all their discoveries of his glory, and experience of his love, truth, and power, should engage them to simple dependence, lively gratitude, fervent love, devoted obedience, and steady confidence in God, and zeal for his honour and that of the gospel. Moreover, he wrote to the same effect to the young men, who had for some time professed the gospel, and had passed through the state of childhood, but were not arrived at that maturity in grace, to which the Fathers had attained. These he addressed and exhorted, from the consideration that "they had overcome the wicked one:" they had successfully encountered the first trials and temptations, which attended their separation from sin and renunciation of the world; and had overcome the assaults of Satan, by giving up their secular interests, breaking off their bad habits and connexions, and entering in at the strait gate of true conversion. As they had, therefore, thus far conquered "the wicked one," who had tried all methods in vain to keep them from embracing the gospel, and giving themselves up to the service of Christ, they ought to go forth in his strength, aspiring after further victories; and endeavouring to spend the vigour of their spirits, or the prime of their years, in the services to which they were called, for the honour of Christ and the benefit of the church; and not in seeking worldly advantages. But, in order to give his exhortation the greater emphasis, the apostle again addressed the different descriptions of Christians, and admonished the little children, (for though the word is changed, the meaning seems to be the same,) (*Marg. Ref.*) as those who had known the Father, and had already experienced his parental compassion and love for them; for which they were called to make the due returns of filial confidence, submission, gratitude and obedience. The address to the fathers exactly coincides with that which went before: to the young men he added, that they "were strong" in faith, hope, love, and all holy affections; they were in the prime of their fitness for active service, to which the mature experience of old age might be less adapted; and as the word of God, which they had received when they were converted, abode in them, which appeared by their victory over the temptations of Satan, so it ought to be manifested in its effects, by their increasing fruitfulness in all good works.

V. 15—17. The general counsel and exhortation, which the apostle meant to enforce on all the persons above described, was this, "not to love the world, or the things "that were in the world." The world, as God created it, is very good, and a proper object of a measure of love; but as sin hath marred it, our affections ought to be wholly alienated from it. The men of the world, as distinguished from believers, are enemies of God and subjects of Satan; we are therefore required to renounce their friendship, to avoid intimate society with them, and to abhor their ungodly principles and practices; while we pity their miseries, love their persons, and try to do them good. The things of the world may be desired, possessed, and valued, for those uses and purposes, which were intended by God when he created them, and in subordination to his favour, authority, and glory; but for those purposes, to which sin hath abused them, and sinners idolize them, we must not desire, seek, nor value them, in any measure, or manner: and if any man thus love the world, the love of the Father is not in him: his idol has never been dethroned, his heart remains unchanged, he is not reconciled to God through Jesus Christ, and hath no true filial love of him in his heart. (*Notes*, *Luke* xiv. 25—33.) For "all that is in the world," as thus idolized and abused by men, who seek their happiness from it, and not from God, may be summed up under three heads: 1st. Such things, as are suited to excite and gratify "the lust of the flesh;" or the irregular, inordinate, and polluting hankerings and cravings of the carnal heart, and the animal appetites, after gross sensual gratifications; as if man's happiness consisted in them: 2dly. Those things, which are suited to excite and gratify "the lust of the eyes;" or the desires of the carnal heart after the possessions, embellishments, decorations, and enjoyments, which the eye is apt to look at with coveting, and inordinate desire of obtaining; such as treasures of gold and silver, or precious stones, houses, lands, gardens, stately mansions, elegant furniture and equipages, costly garments; and in short, all that wealth can purchase, which gratifies the beholder's eye or his other senses, but is not directly to be considered as gross

18 [p] Little children, [q] It is the last time: and as [r] ye have heard that [s] antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; [t] whereby we know that it is the last time.

19 They [u] went out from us, but they were not of us; [x] for if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us; but *they went out*, that [y] they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

p *See on*, 1. q 2 Tim iii. 1. Heb. i. 2. 1 Pet. i 5. 20 2 Pet. iii. 3. Jude 18. r Matt. xxiv. 5. 11. 24. Mark xiii. 6. 21, 22 Acts xx. 29, 30. 2 Thes. ii. 3—12. 1 Tim. iv, 1—3. 2 Tim. iii. 1—6. iv. 3, 4.——s 22. iv. 3. 2 John 7.——t *See on*, q——u Deut. xiii. 13. Ps. xli. 9. Matt. xiii 20, 21. Mark iv. 5, 6. 16, 17. Lnke viii. 13. John xv. 2. Acts xv. 24. xx. 30. 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21 Jude 19.

x Job xvii 9 Ps. xxxvii. 28. cxxv 1. 2. Jer. xxxii. 38—40 Matt. xxiv 24 Mark xiii. 22 John iv. 14. vi 37—39 x. 28—30 2 Tim. ii. 19 1 Pet. i. 2—5. Jude 1.

y Rom. ix. 6. xi. 5, 6. 1 Cor. xi. 19. 2 Tim. iii. 9. Heb x. 39.

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animal indulgence. 3dly. "The pride of life," or those titles and dignities, that authority and honour, that reputation and splendour, which form the summit of earthly exaltation, and the highest prize in the poor lottery of this present life, to which the pride and ambition of man's apostate nature can aspire: and the greatest gratification of that mental concupiscence, which is congenial to the old temptation, "ye shall be as gods." For a poor vainglorious worm to be advanced to such dominion over his fellows, or to possess such honour among them, as to be tempted to forget his own mortality, as well as his Creator and Judge, and to be so surrounded with vassals, attendants, and flatterers, or so emblazoned with high-sounding titles, and encumbered with magnificence, as to have nothing on earth that he can behold above him, and thus to disregard him that is "higher than the highest," this is the perfection of the pride of life; and all pre-eminence and distinction above others partakes of the same nature, whether power, splendour, or renown, on any account, be the immediate source of it. All these things, (to which every earthly object that any man is tempted to put in competition with the will, favour, and glory of God, must be referred,) are "not of the Father:" this idolatrous desire of created things did not attach to them, or to man, as God made them; they do not consist with his prescribed use of them; they are not bestowed for these purposes; nor do they, who are his children and influenced by his grace, desire, seek, or use them in this manner. But "they are of the world," as lying "under the wicked "one:" these desires after created things, and this use of them, are the effects of man's apostacy and subjection to Satan; they are thus made the baits, by which men are seduced into sin, and kept in rebellion against God, and the incentives to all their vile passions. They suit the taste, and form the supreme good of worldly men, and are their only portion; and for the sake of them the whole earth is filled with violence, fraud, crimes, and misery. But the world passeth away, and the lust of it: all its pleasures, treasures, honours, and splendour, will soon vanish for ever, (*Note*, 1 *Pet*. i. 24;) and they, who have lusted for them, and idolized them, will be eternally disappointed and miserable. But the man, who doeth the will of God, as revealed to sinners by the Gospel, will abide for ever in the possession and enjoyment of that substantial good, which he hath been enabled to make choice of. It is evident, that the apostle did not speak of the lawful, moderate, subordinate, and holy use, possession, or desire of God's good creatures, for the ends to which he hath appointed them; but of the unlawful, inordinate, unholy, and idolatrous hankering after them, and valuation of them, to which all men are addicted, so long as they remain in an unregenerate state. Many vain efforts have been made, by limitations, distinctions, and exceptions, to evade the force of this passage; and many have written on it, as if they meant to prove how far we might safely be carnally minded, and lovers of the world: but, in the apostle's evident meaning, we are no more allowed to love the world at all, than we are to worship Dagon; for we cannot serve God and Mammon; or love the Lord, and the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. A man may carry on any business, fill any station, or possess any wealth, as the servant and steward of God, according to his commandments, for his glory, and for the good of mankind; and he may desire food and raiment, and things suitable to his rank in life, and use them with thankfulness, temperance, and humility: but he cannot love or desire them, to gratify his sensuality, pride, avarice, or ambition, or seek his happiness in them, without being an idolater. Every regenerate man is delivered from the dominion and allowed indulgence of the love of the world; and strives and prays against the remains of it, as it works in his heart, or breaks forth into his life: he desires to love God supremely, and seek all his happiness from him alone; and to love all other things in him, for his sake, and as his bounty; and to use them in submission to his precepts and providence. In proportion as men get this victory over the world, the reality of their grace is evidenced, and they are prepared for labouring and suffering in the cause of Christ: but unless it is begun in the heart, a man has no root in himself, and he will either fall away in time of temptation, or remain a mere unfruitful professor of Christianity. (*Notes*, v. 4, 5. *Matt*. xiii. 18—23.)

V. 18, 19. The love of the world, as unsubdued in professed Christians, gave Satan his greatest advantage, not only in tempting them to open apostacy, but also in seducing them by destructive heresies, through which they were enabled to reconcile a quiet conscience with a carnal mind, and the indulgence of their favourite passion, under the mask of a religious profession. So that the transition was natural, from warning Christians against the love of the world, to putting them upon their guard against false teachers. The apostle therefore showed his beloved children, especially such of them as were young and inexperienced, that it was the last time, or the last dispensation which God intended to introduce on earth, under which he would establish the kingdom of his Son on the ruins of the usurped dominion of Satan; and this kingdom of Christ should continue till all enemies were put under his feet. But they had all heard, both from the predictions of ancient prophets, and from those of Christ and his apostles, that under this dispensation Antichrist should arise: for Satan would not only oppose the gospel by exciting persecutions, but also by corruptions of the faith; and, especially, by one great enemy to the Person, truth, authority, and glory of Christ, he would obtain immense power and influence in the visible church, (*Notes*, 2 *Thes*. ii. 1—12:) and as St. Paul had declared that this

20 But [z] ye have an unction from [a] the Holy One, [b] and ye know all things.

21 I have not written unto you, [c] because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth.

22 [d] Who is a liar but [e] he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? [f] he is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.

23 Whosoever [g] denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [*but*] *he that acknowledgeth the Son, hath the Father also.*

24 Let that therefore [h] abide in you, [i] which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, [k] ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.

25 And [l] this is the promise that he hath promised us, *even* eternal life.

z 27. iv. 13. Ps. xxiii 5 xlv 7. xcii.10 Is. lxi 1 Luke iv 18 Acts x. 38 2 Cor. i. 21, 22. Heb i. 9

a Ps. xvi 10 lxxi. 22. Is. xliii 3. Mark i. 24 Luke iv. 34 Acts iii 14. Rev. iii. 7. iv. 8.

b Prov. xxviii. 5. John xiv. 26 1 Cor. ii. 15. Heb viii 11

c Prov. i 5. ix 8, 9 Rom. xv. 14, 15. 2 Pet i. 12.

d 4. i. 6 iv. 20. John viii. 44 Rev. iii. 9 ——e 23. iv. 3 1 Cor. xii 2, 3. 2 John 7 Jude 4.——f *See on,* 18.——g 22. iv. 15 Matt xi 27 Luke x. 22 John v. 23. viii. 19. x. 30. xiv. 9, 10. xv. 23, 24 2 John 9—11.

h Ps. cxix. 11. Prov. xxiii 23. Luke ix 44 John xv. 7. Col. iii 16. Heb. ii. 1. iii. 14. 2 John 2 3 John 3 Rev iii 3. 11

i 7 Luke i. 2. John viii. 25 Phil. iv. 15. 2 John 5

k i. 3 7. iv. 15, 16. John xiv 23 xv. 9, 10 xvii. 21—24

l i. 2. v. 11—13. 20. Dan xii 2. Luke xviii. 30. John v. 39. vi. 27—47 54 68. x. 28 xii 50. xvii. 2, 3. Rom ii. 7. v. 21. vi. 23. Gal. vi. 8. 1 Tim. i. 16. vi. 12. 19 Tit i. 2. iii 7. Jude 21

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mystery of iniquity did already work; so John observed that "there were many antichrists," or opposers of the pure Gospel of the Lord Jesus, whose character, principles, intentions, and machinations, were of the same stamp, as those of the great antichrist would be, and who were evidently his fore-runners. By this they might know that it was the last time; and that while God was specially exerting his power, by means of faithful ministers, to honour his Son, the devil and his servants were peculiarly active in endeavouring to defeat the design. (*Notes,* 1 *Tim.* iv. 1—3. 2 *Tim.* iii. 1—9. iv. 3, 4.) These antichrists did not arise from among such as had before been avowed unbelievers; but they were professed Christians, who separated from the church, and became leaders of heretical sects, contrary to the doctrine of the apostles, and derogatory to the honour of Christ. But, though they went out from the disciples, having been admitted to outward fellowship with them, yet they had never been of them, as regenerated persons, and living members of the body of Christ: for if this had been the case, they would "surely have continued with them;" as the Lord would not have given them over to a strong delusion, but would "have put his fear into their hearts, that "they should not depart from him," according to the engagement of his everlasting covenant to all true believers. But, as they had not received the truth in love, they had been left to the pride and lusts of their hearts, and to the artifices of Satan, to be deceived into fatal heresies, and to separate from the churches of Christ; that it might evidently appear, that all they who professed the Gospel were not true disciples. Thus the church was purified; and true Christians were approved, and rendered more watchful and humble; whilst the distinction between them and hypocrites was more strongly marked. (*Note, John* xv. 2—6. 1 *Cor.* xi. 18, 19.) Some explain "the last "time," to mean the last age of the Jewish church: but, probably, that had been subverted some years, when St. John wrote this epistle; and the marginal references may show on what grounds another interpretation is adopted. It seems very unreasonable to interpret antichrist, in the singular, to mean the same as the "many antichrists," afterwards mentioned; and then to confine the whole, either to the Jewish opposers, or Judaizing corrupters, of Christianity, as some do; or to the Gnostics, as divided into different sects, as others do. Antichrist signifies, one that opposes Christ, whether he oppose the doctrine of his deity, or his humanity; or whether he set himself against him, in respect of his priestly office, by substituting other methods of atoning for sin, and finding acceptance with God; his kingly office, by claiming authority, to enact laws in his church, contrary to his laws, or to dispense with his commandments; or his prophetical office, by claiming authority to add to, alter, or take away from the revelation which he has given in his holy word. 'They 'oppose the person of Christ, or his doctrine, or both to'gether.' (*Beza.*) In this view, there were, at an early period of the church, many antichrists; and the heads of any sect of heretics might be in a subordinate sense so called: but the direct opposers of Christianity could not be meant in this place. The term is used in this epistle, and in St. John's second epistle, and in no other part of scripture; not even in the Revelation. "They went out from us," that is, 'they went out from the apostles in Judea,' (*Whitby,*) "but they were not of us:" this then must mean, that they were not apostles. It does not, however, appear, that they professed to be apostles; nor is it said, that they had previously been teachers in the church. But they professed Christianity, and had been admitted to communion with true Christians; yet their subsequent apostacy proved, that, (like Judas,) they had from the first been hypocrites.

V. 20—25. The apostle wrote to his fellow-christians, for their caution, comfort, and establishment; though his observations were especially calculated to put all, who professed to believe the Gospel, on self-examination, and to prevent new converts from self-deception. They, however, whom he peculiarly addressed, had "an unction "from the Holy One;" they were anointed by the Spirit, as sent forth, through Christ the Holy One of God, to illuminate, sanctify, and consecrate them, to be a spiritual priesthood unto the Father. By his teaching and influences they knew all things, which related to the principles of Christianity, in a spiritual and experimental manner; so that no antichrist could fatally delude them. (*Marg. Ref.*) He had not therefore written to them, because they knew not the truth: for if he had addressed persons of that description, it would have been requisite for him to have discussed his subject more copiously; but he had written to them, because they did know the truth, and that no lie belonged to it, or could consist with it. The general self-evident proposition was not more certain, than the particular application of it to the delusions of their seducers, whose false doctrines could not proceed from the same source with the truth of God. For "who "was a liar," but the man who denied that Jesus was the Christ? Some of these heresiarchs denied the Deity of

26 These *things* have I written unto you [m] concerning them that seduce you.

27 But [n] the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you; [o] and ye need not that any man teach you: [p] but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, [q] ye shall abide in * him.

m iii 7 Prov xii. 26. Ez. xiii. 10. Mark xiii 22. Acts xx. 29, 30. 2Cor. xi. 13—15. Col. ii. 8. 18 1 Tim. iv. 1 2Tim. iii. 13. 2 Pet. ii. 1—3 2 John 7.
n See on, 20. iii. 24. John iv. 14. 1 Pet. i. 23 2 John 2.
o 20, 21. Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. John xiv. 26. xvi. 13.
p 1 Cor. ii 13. Heb. viii. 10, 11. Eph. iv. 21. 1 Thes. ii. 13. 1 Tim. ii. 7. 2 Pet. i. 16, 17.
q 28. John viii. 31, 32. xv. 4—7 Col. ii. 6.——— * Or, *it*.

28 And now, [r] little children, abide in him; that, [s] when he shall appear, we may [t] have confidence, and not be ashamed before him [u] at his coming.

29 If ye know that [x] he is righteous, † ye know [y] that every one that doeth righteousness [z] is born of him.

r See on. 1.
s iii. 2 Mark viii. 38. Col iii. 4. 1 Tim. vi. 14. 2 Tim. iv. 1. 8. Tit. ii. 13. Heb. ix. 28 1 Pet. i 7. v. 4. Rev. i 7
t iii. 21. iv. 17. Is. xxv. 9 xlv. 17. Rom. ix. 33.
u Mal. iii 2. iv 5. 1Cor. i. 7. xv. 23. 1Thes iii. 13. v. 23. 2 Pet. iii. 4. 12.——— x 1. iii 5. Zech. ix. 9. Acts iii. 14 xxii 14 2 Cor. v. 21 Heb. i. 8, 9. vii. 2. 26. 1 Pet. iii. 18.——— † Or, *know ye*.——— y iii. 7. 10. Acts x. 35 Tit ii. 12—14.——— z iii. 9. iv. 7. v. 1. John i. 13 iii. 3—5 Jam. i. 18. 1 Pet. i. 3. 23 2 Pet. i. 4.

Christ; others explained away his incarnation, and so denied his humanity, and the reality of his sufferings; and some opposed his kingly authority. Thus, whilst they retained the name of Christians, they virtually denied his Person, as the Christ, the Son of God, and the Son of man; or his offices, as the anointed Prophet, Priest, and King of his church: they denied that God was manifested in the flesh, to ransom the church with his own blood; that in virtue of his one oblation, he might appear in the presence of God as our great High Priest, and reign over his redeemed people, as his willing subjects, to the end of the world, and for ever. Now, whether they denied his divine or his human nature, his atonement, or his authority; they virtually denied him to be the Christ; as they who had the unction of the Holy Spirit would readily perceive. Such a teacher was, therefore, in fact, an antichrist, who denied both the Father and the Son; seeing the Father can only be known, approached, worshipped, and glorified by sinners, in and through his incarnate Son; and they who honour not the Son, honour not the Father that sent him. (*Notes, Matt.* xi. 25—27. *John* v. 23.) The denial of the Son is, therefore, a denial of the Father: and the supreme Being, the supposed Deity, which ancient or modern deniers of the personal or mediatorial honour of the Son have professed to worship, is in fact the creature of their own imagination, and not the wise, just, holy, merciful, and faithful God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He, therefore, who denies the Son, has not the Father, as his God, his Friend, and his Portion; but he, that in true faith acknowledges the Son, hath the Father also. This last clause is printed in Italics, because it is wanting in most copies of the Greek Testament: yet it is found in several manuscripts; so that Beza and several other able critics, look on it as genuine. As these things were so, the apostle exhorted his beloved children, to let that abide in them, and sink deep into their hearts, which they had heard from the beginning of their profession of the Gospel, concerning the Person and salvation of Christ; for if the doctrine which they had at the first heard from the apostles and evangelists, remained in them practically and efficaciously; they also would continue in union and fellowship with the Son, and with the Father through him; and they ought to remember, for their encouragement and confirmation against the artifices of false teachers; that the promise, which God had irreversibly given to all true believers, engaged to them eternal life and felicity, and all things pertaining to it. *No lie,* &c. (21.) 'Lie, here means 'a doctrine contrary to that taught by the apostles; which 'being the *true* doctrine, its contrary must be *false*, or a 'lie.' (*Macknight.*)

V. 26—29. These admonitions the apostle wrote to his beloved Christians, concerning those false teachers who attempted to seduce them, and had prevailed with many, who had once belonged to their company. He meant to caution and fortify them against the specious insinuations of deceivers: but in respect of real believers, the anointing which they had received of Christ, abode in them, as an incorruptible principle of life, and light, and spiritual discernment: so that they needed not that any man should teach them; except as that same anointing taught them, and by "stirring up their pure minds in the way of "remembrance;" for by this teaching of God himself they were instructed in all things essential to salvation, and could not be fatally deluded. Now this teaching was altogether truth, and no lie; they could not, therefore, have any occasion to change the doctrine, which they had thus received from apostles and evangelists, for new improvements. On the contrary, they who wanted to induce them to this change, evidently aimed to seduce them from the truth to believe a lie; whereas the apostle only sought to establish them in the truth, which had been "preached "to them, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven:" and indeed, they who had thus been taught would abide in *him*, or in *it:* in Christ, or in the truth of his Gospel. He therefore needed only to exhort them, with all parental affection, to abide in *him*, or in Christ; for the apostle's mind, being full of warm affections towards his beloved Lord, spoke frequently of him by a pronoun without an antecedent, and so without naming him. Let them then adhere steadfastly to the truth of the Gospel; live in a constant dependence on Christ by faith for every thing; attend diligently on his ordinances, and yield a loving simple obedience to his commandments: and thus they might be assured, that when he should appear to judge the world; they would not be ashamed, as all hypocrites and apostates would be; but would have confidence before him, as his approved servants, at this his second coming, and amidst all the solemn and important events of that decisive season. In this the apostle joined himself; intimating, that he took the same method of preparing for the coming of his Lord and Judge, which he recommended to them; and that their abiding in Christ would then increase *his* confidence and joy. As they therefore could not but know, that he their Lord and Saviour was righteous; so they might be assured, that all, who habitually practised righteousness, as what they loved and delighted in, were born of him by the regeneration of his Spirit, and so were the children of God and the heirs of heaven. So that abiding in Christ, and bringing forth much fruit by working righteousness, was the proper method of preparing to meet him in judgment with confidence and joy. The

CHAP. III.

The apostle breaks out in admiration of the love of God, in making believers his children, and giving them present privileges, with the hope of an inconceivable felicity; and shows them that this hope is always connected with a disposition to follow after holiness, 1—3. *He shows how the children of God, and the children of the devil, may be known,* 4—10. *He exhorts his readers to love one another, contrasting this love with the example of Cain, and warning them to expect the hatred of the world,* 11—13. *He points out the love of the brethren, as the distinguishing evidence of conversion; explains the nature and effects of it, contrasting it with enmity and selfishness; and enforces the practice of it, by the example of Christ,* 14—17. *He exhorts them to love in deed and in truth; and shows that confidence in God was connected with the consciousness of upright obedience,* 18—24.

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expression, "born of him," which is most obviously interpreted of Christ, concerning whom the apostle was speaking: and thus becoming the sons of God, (iii. 1,) clearly shows what John believed concerning his Lord. (*Marg. Ref.*) The quakers, and some others, have inferred, from the language of the twenty-seventh verse, that a stated ministry is not necessary in the church; as true believers, being anointed by the Spirit, need not such teaching: 'but it may be of moment to observe, that the 'Christian ministry was in the highest repute in the 'church, when the gifts of the Spirit were poured down 'upon it in the greatest abundance.' (*Doddridge.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

The Gospel, when well understood and duly received, sets the heart against all sin, and effectually prevents the allowed practice of it: at the same time that it gives the most blessed relief to the wounded consciences of those who have sinned; by the hope of pardon, through our "Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," and his all-sufficient propitiation. Thus the divine original of the scriptures is evinced, by the complete suitableness of the remedy proposed in them, to the actual state of men in this evil world; whilst all other schemes are founded on false principles; and therefore are totally inapplicable to the case, and cannot effectually bring peace to the conscience, and lead the heart to abhor all iniquity. While we seek for grace to make a holy use of the intercession and atonement of our heavenly Advocate, and encourage our fellow-Christians to do the same; we should remember, that "He is the propitiation, not for our sins "only, but for those of the whole world;" and therefore, if any sinner in any part of the earth be willing to accept of this salvation, he will surely be made partaker of it: and we should desire and endeavour, by every proper means in our power, to be the instruments of bringing others to share with us in so precious a benefit. But we should carefully guard against every sentiment, which tends to pervert the abundant provision of the Gospel for the forgiveness of our sins, into an encouragement to disobedience: "Hereby we know that we know Christ, if "we keep his commandments;" and "he is a liar, and "the truth is not in him," who pretends to know him, and does not habitually obey him. What then shall we say to the unguarded language of some persons, who have argued, or asserted, that sanctification is not the proper ground of assurance, and evidence of our justification; and that it is *legal* for men to look to their works, as the proof of their being true believers? We can only say, that they directly contradict the apostle, and that therefore they are most certainly mistaken. "Whoso, then, keepeth the "word of Christ, in him verily is the love of God per-"fected." By this apostles knew that they were in Christ, and by the same means we must know it also, if we would not deceive ourselves: he, therefore, that saith he abideth "in Christ, ought himself so to walk, even as he "walked;" and no competent judge will believe his assertion, if his spirit and conduct habitually be contrary to those of his Lord; for at last he who hath most closely copied Christ's example, will be found to be the best Christian. These are no new commandments or declarations, but the same which the disciples had heard from the beginning; though some persons affect to treat them as novelties, even as others do the peculiar doctrines of a gratuitous salvation. Christianity, instead of rendering the love of God and man, and good works, superfluous and unnecessary, furnishes us with new motives, and lays us under further obligations to abound in them; and it gives us new directions concerning the love of our neighbours, by requiring love to our brethren for Christ's sake, and to our enemies after the example of his love to us. These things are true and important, according to his conduct towards his redeemed people, and their peculiar privileges and obligations, "because the darkness is past, "and the true light now shineth:" and we must remember, that hatred of our brethren or neighbours, and the prevalence of any malignant passion, is proportionably a proof that a man is still in darkness. The degree of our holy love is the proper criterion and standard of our illumination, as well as the best preservative from sin, and the most active principle of obedience. He that most loveth his brother abideth in the clearest light, and will be best kept from stumbling, or from occasioning the falls of others: but he, who is of a violent, selfish, and malicious temper, however he may boast of his knowledge, walketh in darkness, and is in the road to destruction; though he is not at all aware whither he is going, because "the darkness" and the prince of darkness, "have blinded his eyes." These things demand our closest attention, and most serious self-examination; and should lead us earnestly to pray that God would show us what we are, and whither we are going.

BEHOLD, [a] what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, [b] that we should be called the sons of God! therefore [c] the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

a iv. 9, 10. 2 Sam. vii. 19. Ps. xxxi. 19. xxxvi. 7—9. lxxxix. 1, 2. John iii. 16. Rom. v. 8. viii. 32. Eph. iii. 18, 19.
b Jer. iii. 19. Hos i. 10. John i. 12. Rom. viii. 14—17. 21. ix. 25, 26. 2 Cor. vi, 18. Gal. iii. 26. 29. iv. 5, 6 ——c John xv. 18, 19. xvi. 3. xvii. 25. Col. iii. 3.

2 Beloved, [d] now are we the sons of God, and [e] it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, [f] when he shall appear, [g] we shall be like him; [h] for we shall see him as he is.

d *See on*, b. 1.—v. 1. Is. lvi. 5.
e Ps. xxxi. 19. Rom. viii. 18 1 Cor. ii. 9. xiii. 12. 2 Cor. iv. 17.
f ii. 28 Mal. iii. 2. Col. iii. 4. Heb. ix 28.
g Ps. xvii. 15. Rom. viii. 29. 1 Cor. xv. 49. Phil iii. 21. 2 Pet. 1. 4 ——h Job xix. 26. Ps. xvi. 11. Matt. v. 8. John xvii. 24. 1 Cor xiii. 12. 2 Cor. iii. 18. v. 6—8.

V. 12—17.

When there is real "faith *that worketh by love*," even little children and weak believers may be assured, that their sins are forgiven them for the sake of Christ: and though there are different degrees of growth, strength, knowledge and grace, among the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty; and though some of them have obtained more victories over the wicked one, or are more fit for active service, or to give wise counsel, than others are; yet they are all alike dear to their heavenly Father. They all have some knowledge of him and love to him; and through his word abiding in them, he will lead forth the young ones of his family to the same victories, and train them up to a measure of the same vigour and maturity, to which others have already attained. But all, who would share these blessings, must be careful not to love the world, or any of its polluting vanities: this idolatry, remaining unsubdued in the hearts of many professors of the Gospel, hath occasioned their apostacy or total unfruitfulness: nay, through some remains of it, numbers are kept from comfort and assurance; their spiritual life continues low and feeble; they are mere babes, or dwarfs, to the end of their days, and enter eternity before they obtain any comfortable satisfaction, what their eternal state will be. Indeed, all that is in the world, as apostate, and so the kingdom of the devil is diametrically opposite to the holiness, spirituality, temperance, humility, and lowliness of the Christian religion: its pleasures, interests, pomps, and honours, can only excite and strengthen the propensities of our fallen nature, which it is our great business and interest to subdue and crucify. The pursuit, acquisition, or enjoyment of them only tend to pollution and condemnation; they are soon passing away, to be possessed no more; whilst the portion of him that doeth the will of God shall be for ever. Yet are these vanities so alluring to the remains of corruption in our hearts, that without constant watching and prayer, we cannot escape, or obtain victory over, the world, and him who is the god and prince of it!

V. 18—25.

They who have been delivered from that original and universal idolatry, the love of the world, and the things in the world, will be less liable to be deceived by the seductions of those many antichrists, who, in every age and place, endeavour to corrupt the Gospel, and to oppose the honour and cause of Christ. Many thus go out from the society of Christians, but they never were true believers; for if they had belonged to that blessed company, they would no doubt have continued with them: nay, in fact, damnable heresies as much prove the faith of nominal Christians, as furious persecutions do. The unction from the Holy One alone can teach that knowledge, which will surely preserve a man from all delusions: and when we are *thus* established in the great truths of the Gospel; we shall know that no lie is of the truth; and shall therefore disregard the eloquence, learning, ingenuity, and confidence, of those who contradict the Bible; and be satisfied with opposing the express testimony of the truth itself to their well varnished and ably defended falsehoods. We shall in this manner most clearly perceive, that every man is an antichrist, who denieth the Person or any of the offices of Christ; and that in denying the Son, he denieth the Father also, and hath no part in his favour, whilst he rejects his great salvation. Candour and liberality of sentiment are good words; bigotry, fanaticism, and a contracted mind, sound very harsh: but let us not aspire to the reputation of liberality, or desire to escape reproach, more than the apostles did. Whilst we judge favourably of all, who trust in Christ as a divine Saviour, and obey his word, let us pity and pray for those deluded men, who deny the Deity and atonement of Christ, and the work of his new-creating Spirit; protest against their antichristian doctrine, and refuse all needless intercourse with them.—Let *that* abide in all, who have professed the Gospel, or would be deemed Christians, which was taught the primitive disciples; that they may continue in the Son and in the Father, and that the promise of eternal life may belong to them.

V. 26—29.

The subjects, above treated on, are peculiarly needful at this day, concerning those who seduce the professed disciples of the Saviour, and would persuade them, that it is of no consequence what they believe concerning his Person or doctrine. This fashionable species of infidelity directly contradicts the whole word of God, and in fact does its utmost to antiquate the Bible as an useless book, in this age of wisdom and illumination. We should desire to teach no man any thing, except what the Holy Spirit hath taught us in his word, to which our appeal must be made; and the same Spirit teaches all those, who partake of his sacred anointing, the grand truths of the sacred word, though they be left to differ in less essential matters. May we then receive from Christ more and more of his anointing, to abide in us, and to illuminate our mind in the truth unmixed with error; that we may abide in it, even as they did who of old adhered to the doctrine of the holy apostles: and let all, who profess the truth, and appear to have come to Christ, abide in him; without listening to the suggestions of any modern *illuminaters* of mankind; that when our Judge shall appear, we may all, with prophets and apostles, "have confidence, and not be ashamed "before him at his coming." Yet let us be equally careful not to hold the truth in unrighteousness; but remember that they only are born of God, who bear his holy image, and walk before him in his most righteous ways.

3 And [i] every man that hath this hope in him, [k] purifieth himself, [l] even as he is pure.

4 Whosoever [m] committeth sin, [n] transgresseth also the law: [o] for sin is the transgression of the law.

i Rom. v. 4, 5. Col i. 5 2 Thes ii. 16. Tit. iii. 7. Heb. vi. 18, 19.
k Acts xv. 9. 2 Cor vii. 1 Heb. xii 14. 2 Pet i 4 iii. 14
l ii 6. iv 17 Matt v 48 Luke vi. 36. Heb. vii 26.
m 8, 9 1 Kings viii. 47. 1 Chr. x 13. 2 Cor. xii 21. Jam v. 15 ——n Num xv. 31. i Sam. xv. 24. 2 Chr xxiv. 20. Is liii. 8. Dan. ix 11. Rom iii. 20. iv. 15. Jam. ii. 9–11.——o v. 17. Rom. vii. 7–13.

5 And ye know that [p] he was manifested [q] to take away our sins; [r] and in him is no sin.

6 Whosoever [s] abideth in him, sinneth not, [t] whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him.

p 8. i. 2. iv 9–14. John i. 31. 1 Tim iii. 16. 1 Pet. i. 20.
q i. 7 Is. liii. 4–12 Hos xiv. 2. Matt. i. 21. John i. 29 Rom iii. 24–26 Eph. v. 25–27. 1 Tim. i. 15 Tit ii. 14. Heb. i 3 ix. 26. 1 Pet. ii. 24. Rev i. 5 ——r ii. 1. Luke xxiii. 41. 47. John viii. 46. xiv. 30. 2 Cor. v. 21. Heb. vii. 26. ix. 28. 1 Pet. ii 22 iii. 18.——s ii. 28. John xv. 4–7.——t 2. 9. ii 4. iv. 8. v. 18. 2 Cor. iii. 18. iv. 6. 3 John 11

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1—3. (*Note, John* i. 10—13.) The apostle, having declared that they who did righteousness were born of God, here broke out into a joyful and admiring view of the love of the eternal Father, in having bestowed on them the unspeakable honour and felicity of being called "his children." What manner of love was this! or by what words could it be described? Whether *his* majesty, purity, and justice, or *their* guilt, vileness, and misery, were considered; whether the blessing conferred on them, or the method in which it was bestowed, were contemplated; the love of the Father in it must be adored, as passing knowledge and comprehension. Indeed, the world of ungodly men, among whom the children of God lived, commonly in poverty, affliction, and contempt, would not acknowledge their claim, approve their character, or desire their privileges; but this was the effect of their ignorance of God, and contemptuous alienation from his holy excellency; so that, when the only begotten Son of the Father appeared on earth, they knew him not, but rejected, despised, and crucified him. But, whatever the world thought of them, true believers, even in their afflicted condition on earth, were the children of God, regenerate, adopted into his family, the special objects of his love, and the heirs of his kingdom; and, whatever their trials were, their almighty Father would surely protect, provide for, comfort, and bless them. It did not indeed *then* appear what, or how glorious, they would at length be, nor could even the beloved apostle frame an adequate conception of heaven, and its ineffable felicities, which would be ennobling and rapturous beyond all his thoughts. Yet they knew, in general, that when he, even Christ, or God in human nature, should be manifested, his believing people would be made completely like him, both in the incorruptibility of their bodies, and the perfect holiness of their souls. For, in the beatific vision, the eyes of the children of God shall behold his glory in the Person of Christ, and their souls shall know his fulness and excellency by immediate perception; then, beholding of "him as he is" will complete the renewal of the divine image upon them, and for ever destroy all unholy affections; and thus they will be prepared for the consummate, unalloyed, and most felicitating enjoyment of God, in and through Jesus Christ, of which we can gain the most remote idea. But wherever the regenerating Spirit of God had produced this genuine hope in a man's heart, it would certainly induce him to desire and follow after holiness, as the preparation for this final happiness, and the anticipation of it; for he who hoped in God, that he would render him perfectly happy, by fully renewing him to the holy image of the divine Saviour, would also be assured that his present comfort must bear proportion to his sanctification: the assurance, that his labour in following after holiness would not be in vain, would also give energy to his endeavours; nor would he ever rest satisfied with his attainments, so long as sin remained in him: but he would use all means, and wait on God for the performance of his promises; till all his affections and powers were fully sanctified, all sinful passions destroyed, all holy dispositions perfected, and all his words and actions made conformable to those of his beloved Lord. As this can never be fully attained in the present life; the true Christian's diligence, in purifying himself as Christ is pure, must be continued till death: then the soul will be admitted into his presence, and perfected in his likeness: but the complete conformity of the Christian to his Lord, in body and soul, will not be possessed till the general resurrection. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'He does not say "has purified," but "purifieth," 'that we may understand him to signify, following after holiness, not the perfect attainment of it.' (*Beza.*) (*Note*, 1 *Cor.* vii. 1.)

V. 4—6. According to what had before been observed, they who did not follow after holiness, could not possess the genuine hope of the Gospel: but the apostle further remarked, that he who committed, or *practised*, sin, transgressed also the law, or violated and directly opposed the authority and requirements of the moral law; (for the ceremonial cannot here be intended.) Thus it was taken for granted, that the holy law of God was the rule of conduct to all his true servants; and that none of them wilfully and habitually did any thing contrary to it. For sin is a transgression of the law, or a *lawless conduct.* Whatever in any degree exceeds, comes short of, or deviates from, the law; and in thought, word, or deed is not perfectly coincident with it, is sin, a violation of the law, and deserves death according to the covenant of works: but an habitual commission of sin tends to the destruction of the law and its authority, and can never be allowed of by any disciple of Christ. For they know, that he was manifested in human nature, to take away the sins of his people, by atoning for their guilt, and by renewing them to his own holy image. Moreover, in him was no sin, and the perfection of his holiness, and active obedience, both magnified the precept of the law, constituted him a proper Person to be a sacrifice for sin, and was intended as an example to his people. Whosoever, therefore, abides in Christ, as one with him, and as maintaining communion with him, doth not sin in his allowed and general conduct: and whosoever sinneth, wilfully and habitually, has never seen the glory of Christ by faith, or had any experimental saving knowledge of him; for if he had, he would be transformed in a measure into the holy image of him, in whom there was no sin.

7 Little children, [u] let no man deceive you: [x] he that doeth righteousness is righteous, [y] even as he is righteous.

8 He [z] that committeth sin is of the devil; for [a] the devil sinneth from the beginning. For [b] this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

9 Whosoever is [c] born of God, doth not commit sin; [d] for his seed remaineth in him: [e] and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

10 In this [f] the children of God are manifest, [g] and the children of the devil: [h] whosoever doeth not righteousness [i] is not of God, [k] neither he that loveth not his brother.

u ii. 26. 1 Cor vi. 9. Gal. vi. 7, 8. Eph. v. 6. Jam. i. 21.
x ii. 29 v. 1–3. Ps cvi. 3. Ez xviii. 5–9 Matt v 20. Luke i 75. Acts x 35 Rom ii 6–8. vi. 16–18 Eph. v. 9. Phil. i. 11. 1 Pet ii 24
y 3. ii. 2. Ps. xlv. 7. lxxii. 1–7. Heb i. 8. vii 2. 1 Pet i. 15, 16.
z 10. v. 19. *Gr.* Matt. xiii. 38. John viii. 44 Eph. ii. 2
a 2 Pet. ii. 4 Jude 7.
b 5. Gen iii 15 Is xxvii. 1. Mark i. 24 Luke x. 18 John xii. 31. xvi. 11. Rom. xvi. 20. Col. ii. 15. Heb. ii. 14. Rev. xx. 2, 3. 10. 15.
c ii. 29 iv. 7. v. 1. 4 18 John i. 13
d Job xix 28. 1 Pet i. 23
e Matt vii. 18. Acts iv. 20. Rom vi 2. Gal. v. 17 Tit ii. 1.
f v. 2. Luke vi. 35. Rom viii. 16, 17 Eph v 1.
g Matt. xiii. 38. John viii 44.
h *See on.* 7, 8
i iv. 3. 4. 6. v. 19. John viii 47. Acts xiii. 10. 3 John 11.
k 14, 15 ii 9, 10 iv. 8 20.

V. 7—10. The apostle, therefore, warned his beloved children, as others before had done; (*Notes*, 1 *Cor*. vi. 9. *Gal*. vi. 7. *Eph*. v. 6. *James* i. 22. 2 *Pet*. i. 9;) not to let any man deceive them by plausible pretences, into an opinion, that they might live in habitual sin and yet be true Christians. For he, who practised righteousness, as his business and delight, was a righteous man; and his conformity to Christ, (being righteous as he was righteous,) was the proper evidence of his interest, by faith, in his obedience and propitiation. On the other hand, he who committed sin, as his business and delight, was evidently of the devil's party, family, and disposition; as he was the first sinner, and had practised rebellion and iniquity from the beginning, and had no pleasure in any thing else. But it must be impossible to imitate and adhere to the devil, and at the same time to be a disciple of Christ; seeing the Son of God was manifested, for the single and express purpose of destroying, abolishing, or undoing the works of the devil, in behalf of all his people. He came to deliver them from that condemnation and slavery, into which the influence and temptation of Satan had reduced them and all mankind; and to restore them to the favour, image, and service of God. This was done, by atoning for their sins and pardoning them, and by a new-creation of their souls to holiness; but whilst men lived habitually in pride, infidelity, impiety, injustice, fraud, cruelty, malice, intemperance, or licentiousness, or in the neglect of a sober, righteous, and godly life: it could not be supposed, that the works of the devil had been destroyed, or his fortifications in their hearts cast down, by the power of Christ. Consequently the end of his incarnation and humiliation had not been answered *in respect of them;* and therefore they could not be warranted to account themselves his disciples. For all, that belonged to Christ, were born of God; (*Notes, John* iii. 1—8;) and no one who was regenerate, lived in the commission of any allowed sin: because the incorruptible seed of God, being made to grow and live in his heart by the Holy Spirit, (*Note*, 1 *Pet*. i. 23—25,) remained in him, and rendered it impossible that he could sin with allowance, continuance, and satisfaction; even as a fish cannot live out of water, because it is out of its element, and can only languish and die unless it be again put into it. This must be all that the apostle's general words can mean; because, if strictly taken, they would not only prove, that some men are perfect, but that all regenerate persons are incapable of sinning any more for ever; an inference, which no man, who either reads the Bible, or the history of mankind, will ever admit. General declarations of this kind must always be explained according to the argument of the sacred writer: otherwise, an antinomian may prove, that God justifies those who are in every sense ungodly, and who never do good works of any kind, or for any purpose, as long as they live: (*Rom*. iv. 4, 5;) and a man, who runs into the other extreme, may prove, that all God's children are perfectly sinless, and that no regenerate person can possibly fall into any sin. But scripture must be explained by itself, and soberly; and the context evidently shows, that the apostle spoke of an allowed practice of some habitual sin: this he declared to be impossible to the regenerate, and a full proof of a man's being the child of the devil. For in this especially the children of God, and the children of the devil, were manifestly distinguished from one another: and he who did not practice righteousness was not of God; whatever his creed, profession, gifts, or pretended experience might be: nay, this was to be carried to so great a strictness, that he who did not love his brother, but showed a selfish, envious, and malignant spirit in his general conduct, was not to be accounted a child of God, but of the devil. "*He that committeth sin* "*is of the devil.*" (8.) 'It is not he, who committeth 'one or more sins of infirmity; for so did Christ's dis'ciples while they were with him; nor he, who com'mitteth one great sin, through the power of a strong 'temptation, of which he bitterly repents, and from 'which he returns to his obedience; for thus did David 'and St. Peter, who yet were not then the children of 'the devil: but they who comply with the lusts of Satan, 'and will do them. The other interpretations of these 'words, including the preceding verses, seem either vain 'and impertinent, or false and dangerous.' (*Whitby.*) Some have explained them, to signify, that he who is born of God, *ought not to sin;* some have argued, that when a Christian sins he ceases to be the child of God; and others have maintained, that they "who are born of God sin "not;" because their sins will never be imputed to them. 'He that is born of God proposeth to himself a life as 'free from sin as possible, nor does he ever of his own 'accord employ himself in sin; if at any time, contrary 'to the purpose of his mind, he has offended, he does not 'persist in the same; but, acknowledging his fault, he 'speedily returns to his former plan of life, as soon, and 'as much as he can.' (*Gataker.*) As "doing righteous"ness," means, not a single action, but habitual obedience to God; "committing sin," (it is the same verb in the original,) cannot properly signify merely a single act of sin, but habitual disobedience, in some particular at least. The word rendered "sinneth not," in this connexion, must signify the same, as those translated "com'mitteth not sin;" and be explained by them. Doing

11 For [l] this is the * message that ye heard from the beginning, [m] that we should love one another.

12 Not [n] as Cain, *who* was [o] of that wicked one, and slew his brother. [p] And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, [q] and his brother's righteous.

13 [r] Marvel not, my brethren, [s] if the world hate you.

l i. 5. ii. 7. 8.—* Or, *commandment.* 1 Tim. i. 5. *Gr.*—m 23 iv 7. 21. John xiii 34, 35. Gal. vi. 2. Eph. v. 2. 1 Thes iv. 9. 1 Pet i. 22 iii. 8. iv. 8—n Gen. iv. 4—15. 25. Heb. xi. 4. Jude 11—o *See on*, 8.—ii. 13, 14 Matt. xiii. 19. 38—p 1 Sam. xviii. 14, 15 xix. 4, 5 xxii. 14-16. Ps xxxvii. 12. Prov. xxix 27. Matt xxvii. 23. John x. 32. xv. 19—25. xviii. 38—40. Acts vii. 52. 1 Thes. ii. 14, 15. 1 Pet. iv. 4. Rev. xvii 6.—q Matt. xxiii. 35 Luke xi. 51. Heb. xi. 4. xii 24—r Ec. v. 8. John iii. 7. Acts iii 12. Rev. xvii 7.—s Matt. x. 22. xxiv. 9. Mark xiii. 13. Luke vi. 22. xxi. 17 John vii. 7. xv. 18, 19. xvi. 2. 33. xvii. 14. Rom. viii. 7. 2 Tim. iii. 12. Jam. iv. 4.

14 [t] We know that [u] we have passed from death unto life, [x] because we love the brethren. He [y] that loveth not *his* brother, abideth in death.

15 Whosoever [z] hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer [a] hath eternal life abiding in him.

16 Hereby [b] perceive we the love *of God*, because he laid down his life for

t ii. 3. v. 2. 13. 19, 20. 2 Cor. v. 1.—u Luke xv. 24. 32. John v. 24. Eph. ii. 1, 5.—x ii. 10. iii 23. iv. 7, 8. 12. 21. v. 2. Ps. xvi. 3. Matt. xxv. 40. John xiii. 35. xv. 12. 17. Gal. v. 22. Eph. i. 15. Col. i 4. 1 Thes. iv. 9. Heb. vi 10, 11. xiii. 1. 1 Pet. i. 22. iii. 8. 2 Pet. i. 7.—y iv. 20. Pro. xxi. 16.—z Gen. xxvii. 41. Lev, xix. 16, 17. 2 Sam. xiii. 22—28. Prov. xxvi. 24—26. Matt. v. 21, 22. 28. Mark vi. 19. Acts xxiii. 12—14. Jam. i. 15. iv. 1, 2.—a 9. John iv. 14. 1 Pet. i. 23. Rev. xxi. 8—b iv. 9, 10. Matt. xx. 28. John iii. 16. x. 15. xv. 13. Acts xx. 28. Rom. v. 8. Eph. v. 2. 25. Tit. ii. 13, 14. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. ii. 24. iii. 18. Rev. i. 5. v. 9.

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righteousness, *evidences* that a man is righteous; that is, a justified believer: but the apostle does not say, that it *constitutes* his righteousness; nor could he say this consistently with the tenour of the sacred scriptures. "He that doeth "righteousness is born of God;" it is the evidence and effect, and not the cause, of his regeneration. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11, 12. The message, which had been delivered from the beginning to Christians, in the name of their Lord, had especially required them to love one another, as the distinguishing evidence of being disciples. They therefore, who were manifestly destitute of this grace, ought not to be considered as true Christians; but were to be ranked with Cain, who being a professed worshipper of God, showed himself to belong to the family of that wicked one, the devil, by envying, hating, and murdering his brother Abel. (*Notes*, &c. *Gen.* iv.) But for what cause did he commit this atrocious murder? What provocation had he received? What injury had been done him? None at all: but he hated the holy image of God in Abel, and the example of his humility, faith, and piety; he was angry with God for accepting his brother's oblation in preference to his; and so he was enraged to that degree, that he slew him, "because his own works were evil and "his brother's righteous." (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13—15. The disposition of Cain naturally belonged to the children of the devil, some of whom had despised, hated, and crucified Christ for the same reason: Christians therefore ought not to wonder, that the world hated them; seeing the men of the world were in subjection to the wicked one, and under his influence, as the children of his family. Indeed no Christian, who was well acquainted with the heart of man, could wonder at any effects of the contempt and enmity of ungodly people against the children of God; for it was the most unequivocal proof, that themselves had passed from that state of condemnation and spiritual death, in which they all once lay, into a state of life, and acceptance with God; when they were conscious that they loved the brethren. Humble disinterested love of men, for the Lord's sake, is indeed a good evidence of regeneration; but it is manifest that the apostle spoke especially of the love of believers towards their brethren in Christ, as such. Naturally, they all were disposed to hate, deride, revile, and injure those, who professed the truths of the gospel, bore the image of Christ, and were spiritual worshippers and servants of God through him: they had once been ready to deem them unsociable, precise, morose, and troublesome enthusiasts, or hypocrites, and to shun and dislike them as such. But, being born of God, and having thus passed from death unto life, they were made congenial with them in judgment and disposition; and thus they were brought to love, esteem, and honour them; to sympathize with them, and show them kindness; and to take pleasure in them, as the excellent of the earth. This affection for them was not entertained on account of their belonging to the same party, or holding the same notions; but, because it appeared to them that they loved Christ, bore his image, and were devoted to his service. Thus "they had purified their hearts, in obeying the truth, "through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren:" (*Note*, 1 *Pet.* i. 22:) but, on the other hand, he who did not love his brother, even every one of those who appeared to be Christians, with cordial affection, and indeed every one of his neighbours, with good-will, abode still in death, condemned, and unregenerate. "For whosoever hated his "brother was a murderer;" that is, he had the heart of a murderer, and the pride, selfishness, envy, and malice, which habitually ruled in it, constituted the root of bitterness whence murder naturally sprang; so that, if all restraints had been removed, and suitable temptations interposed, the act of murder would have infallibly been the consequence. And they "knew, that no murderer had eternal life abiding "in him;" that is, no one, who had habitually the heart of a murderer, and a disposition to perpetrate that crime, could be a regenerate person, or a partaker of the Spirit of Christ. No doubt David, when in one dreadful instance he was guilty of murder, had eternal life abiding in him; nor is there any single sin, into which it is impossible for a regenerate man to fall: but the apostle was showing, that no true believer could live in habitual sin; and he stated, that he who loved not his brother did in effect hate him; and he who habitually hated his brother was constantly of the temper of a murderer; that is, he bore the image, and was of the disposition, of the devil, and therefore was one of his children, and not one of the children of a God of love. What an awful view do the concluding words give of the state of those numbers, who habitually determine by duelling, to attempt the commission of murder, whenever an occasion seems to call for it! 'The apostle does not 'say, that by loving our brethren, we are translated 'from death to life; but that we may know that we have 'passed.' (*Beza.*) It is the evidence and effect, and not the cause. The state of death in sin and condemnation, in which all men are by nature, is here taken for granted, as an undeniable fact.

us: [c] and we ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren.

17 But [d] whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, [e] and shutteth up his bowels *of compassion* from him, [f] how dwelleth the love of God in him?

18 [g] My little children, [h] let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

19 And [i] hereby we know that we are of the truth, [k] and shall * assure our hearts before him.

20 For [l] if our heart condemn us, [m] God is greater than our heart, [n] and knoweth all things.

c ii. 6. iv. 11. John xiii. 34. xv. 12, 13. Rom. xvi. 4. Phil. ii. 17. 30.
d Deut. xv. 7—11. Prov. xix. 17. Is. lviii. 3 0 Luke iii. 11. 2 Cor. viii. 9. 14, 15. ix. 5—9. 1 Tim. vi. 17. Heb. xiii. 16.
Prov. xii. 10.
f Marg. xxviii. 9. iv. 20. v. 1.
g *See on*, ii. 1.
h Ez. xxxiii. 31. Matt. xxv. 41—45. Rom. xii. 9. 1 Cor. xiii. 4—7. Gal. v. 13. vi. 1, 2. Eph. iv. 1—3. 1 Thes. i. 3. Jam. ii. 15, 16. 1 Pet. i. 22.
See on, 14. vi. 8. John xviii. 37.
k 21. Is. xxxii. 17. Heb. vi. 10, 11. x. 22.
* Gr. *persuade*. Rom. iv. 21. viii. 38. 2 Tim. i. 12. Heb. xi. 13.——l Job xxvii. 6. John viii. 9. Acts v. 33. Rom. ii. 14, 15. 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25. Tit. iii. 11.——m iv. 4. Job xxxiii. 12. John x. 29, 30. Heb. vi. 13.——n Ps. xliv. 20, 21. xc. 8. cxxxix. 1—4. Jer. xvii. 10. xxiii. 24. John ii. 24, 25. xxi. 17. Heb. iv. 13. Rev. ii. 23.

21 Beloved, [o] if our heart condemn us not, *then* have we confidence toward God.

22 And [p] whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, [q] because we keep his commandments, and [r] do those things that are pleasing in his sight:

23 And this is [s] his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, [t] and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

24 And [u] he that keepeth his commandments [x] dwelleth in him, and he in him: and hereby [y] we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

o iii. 28. iv. 17. Ps. vii. 3—5. 1 Cor. iv. 4. 2 Cor. i. 12. 1 Tim. ii. 8. Heb. iv. 16. x. 22.
p v. 14. Ps. x. 17. xxxiv. 4. 15—17. l. 15. lxvi. 18, 19. cxlv. 18, 19. Prov. xv. 29. xxviii. 9. Is. i. 15. lv. 6, 7. Jer. xxix. 12, 13. xxxiii. 3. Matt. vii. 7, 8. xxi. 22. Mark xi. 24. Luke xi. 9—13. John ix. 31. xiv. 13. xv. 7. xvi. 23. Jam. i. 5. v. 16.
q 23, 24. Matt. vii. 24, 25. xvii. 5. John xv. 10. Acts xvii. 30. xx. 21.
r John vi. 29. Phil. iv. 18. Col. i. 10. Heb. xiii. 21.
s Ps. ii. 12. Mark ix. 7. John vi. 29. xvii. 3. Acts xvi. 31. 1 Tim. i. 15.
t *See on*, 11. ii. 8—10. 1 Pet. i. 22.——u 22. John xiv. 21—23. xv. 7—10.——x iv. 7. 12. 15, 16. John vi. 54—56. xvii. 21. 1 Cor. iii. 16. vi. 19. 2 Cor. vi. 16. 2 Tim. i. 14.——y iv. 13. Rom. viii. 9—17. Gal. iv. 5, 6.

V. 16, 17. The effects of genuine love of the brethren required to be ascertained; and this might be understood, by considering the love of God to sinners. The reality and immensity of his love was perceived especially, in that he, in the person of Christ, as incarnate, laid down his life for his people, to atone for their sins, and ransom their souls. Many copies read "his love," and not "the "love of God," so that the same weight cannot be laid upon this passage as on a similar one. (*Acts* xx. 28.)—If, however, this love of Emmanuel to lost sinners was duly considered, it must appear that Christians were required, according to the perfection of their rule and example, to lay down their lives for their brethren, when the case was urgent, and a proportionable good might be done by it; and therefore all inferior things ought surely to be given up for their benefit, when circumstances called for it. If, then, a man had "this world's good," and possessed what was sufficient for his own necessary expenses, and had any thing to spare for indulgence, or to hoard, and should see his brother have need, through sickness, calamity, or distress, yet, instead of cheerfully supplying his wants from his own plenty, should shut up his bowels from him, and stifle his compassionate feelings, through reluctance to be at the expense of relieving him, and so leave him in want and misery, how could it be thought that the love of God abode in that man's heart? By what could it be known that he had a true sense of the love of Christ for perishing sinners, when he laid down his life for them? or that the love of God had ever been planted in his heart by the Holy Spirit? seeing that the love of the world and its goods overcame and choked the risings of compassion to his suffering brother. (*Note*, ii. 15—17.)—Every instance and degree of this selfishness must weaken the evidence of a man's conversion; and when it is habitual and allowed, it must decide that he doth not belong to God, but more resembles Cain; seeing he would rather leave the children of God to suffer or die, than part with his money to alleviate their sorrows, or save their lives.—This might also be deemed *constructive murder*, as such a man refused to preserve life, when it was in his power, and his bounden duty to do it; and if the Lord had acted thus towards sinners and enemies, we must all have perished. As no higher expression of love is mentioned, than a willingness to lay down our lives for our brethren, it is manifest that the apostle did not maintain the extravagant notion, that true grace will make us willing to be eternally miserable, for the glory of God, and the good of the universe.

V. 18—24. (*Note, James* ii. 13—17.) From the preceding considerations, the apostle earnestly admonished his dear children to love one another, and their poor brethren and neighbours, "not in word, neither in "tongue," or merely in profession, and with kind and obliging language, "but in deed and in truth," showing the sincerity and strength of their affection for them by their actions, and in self-denying, liberal, communication to the supply of their wants. If they did this from faith in Christ and love to him, they would "thereby know, "that they were of the truth;" these fruits of the Spirit would show that they held the truth in love, and experienced the power of it in their hearts; and so they would be able "to assure their hearts before God," in humble confidence of his acceptance, and enlarged expectations of having all their wants supplied from the riches of his liberality. But they could not have this warranted assurance of his love, if they allowed themselves in known sin, or the neglect of known duty; for if their own hearts and consciences condemned them of secret wickedness, or of selfish disregard to the distresses of their brethren, they could not but know "that God was greater than their "hearts, and knew all things;" and the consideration of his acquaintance with all their sins, his holy hatred of them, his impartial justice, and almighty power, must fill them with fears of his vengeance, and prevent their confidence in him. For if they could not but decide against themselves, when made judges in their own cause, notwithstanding their partial self-love, insensibility to the odiousness of their sins, and their proneness to forget them and their aggravations, how could they hope to stand in judgment before the infinite God? According to the law,

CHAP. IV.

The apostle warns Christians against pretenders to inspiration; and gives directions for distinguishing the Spirit of truth from that of error, 1—6. He exhorts them to love one another, by the example

and the covenant of works, every man's heart must condemn him, in proportion as he knows his rule, and examines himself by it. Even according to the Gospel, every man's heart must condemn him of hypocrisy, who lives in allowed habitual sin, unless his conscience be seared, and God have given him up to be judicially blinded and hardened. Nay, when true believers are betrayed into any known sin, of omission, or commission, they are arraigned at the tribunal of their own hearts, and condemned for it; and their confidence in God is weakened, till deep humiliation, and faith in the atoning blood for pardon, make way for the renewal of their peace and the revival of their confidence: and if, through more grievous declensions, their consciences lose this salutary though painful sensibility, severe corrections will surely be employed, as the merciful means of preventing their total ruin. But if the hearts of Christians do not condemn them of any allowed or unrepented sin, or neglect of duty, then have they confidence towards God, through the Spirit of adoption, and by faith in their great High Priest; and thus coming to the throne of grace, they may ask what they will of their reconciled Father, and shall certainly receive it, (if good for them,) because their conduct evidences the reality of their repentance and faith; as they uprightly keep his commandments, and habitually do those things that are pleasing in his sight. He has especially commanded sinners, by the Gospel, to believe in his Son Jesus Christ, and to come to him, pleading his name and merits, that they may thus receive forgiveness of sins, and all the blessings of salvation; and that, for Christ's sake, and after his example, they should love one another, in a forgiving, compassionate, liberal, and self-denying manner, even as Christ had given them commandment.—He therefore, who uprightly obeys these commandments, and others connected with them, is thus proved to "dwell "in Christ," his Ark, Refuge, and Rest, and in the Father through him. It was also manifest, that Christ dwelt in him, as the Lord of his affections, and as exercising his power, and displaying his glory, in and by him: and it was known, that this mystical union subsisted between Christ and their souls, by the Spirit which he had given them. This could not relate to the miraculous operations of the Holy Spirit, which were no full proof of this gracious indwelling, but to his new-creating energy, producing holy love, and renewing the image of Christ on their souls, and then "witnessing with their spirits that "they were the children of God."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—5.

We can never sufficiently admire the love, which the Father hath bestowed upon us, or rejoice in our own felicity, if indeed we are numbered among the children of God. Who and what were we, or what had we done, that the infinite Lord should condescend thus to notice and distinguish us! What manner of love was this, that he should so redeem, regenerate, adopt, and bless such worthless worms, such guilty polluted rebels! doubtless it was vast beyond conception, and incapable of being illustrated by any comparison. May we then be followers of him as his dear children; and thus show our sense of his unspeakable mercy, and express that obedient, grateful, and humble mind, which becomes those so highly favoured and distinguished. Should the world disown us, and deride our pretensions, of being "the sons and daughters of "the Lord almighty," or even treat us with the utmost contempt, enmity, and cruelty, we may recollect, "that "the world by wisdom knew not God;" and that even his professed worshippers knew not "the Brightness of "his glory, the express Image of his Person," but crucified him, "whom all angels worship!" But as they could not exclude the First-born from his inheritance, so neither will they be able to prevent the eternal felicity of those whom he graciously owns as his brethren. Even in our lowest estate, and under our heaviest trials, "we are the "children of God," if we indeed believe in Jesus Christ; and we shall experience such consolations and possess such hopes, as will support us under our transient sorrows: but none on earth can conceive, in an adequate manner, the nature of "that exceeding and eternal weight of glory," into which we shall speedily enter. It doth not indeed yet appear what we shall be, but enough is known to animate us to the conflict: for what more can the believer desire, than to behold his beloved Saviour "as he is," in all his inexpressible glory, to be perfected in his image, filled with his love, and enabled to praise and serve him in a manner worthy of his infinite excellency, and his own immense obligations? But let none suppose that they possess holy hope in God, if they do not now desire, pursue, and practise holiness: for *every man*, without exception, in whose heart it is planted by the Holy Spirit, "purifieth himself," in dependence on the grace, and in contemplation of the glory of Christ, unto increasing conformity to his perfect purity. This distinguishes the living hope of God's children from the presumption of all kinds of hypocrites. The Redeemer did not magnify the law, and make it honourable, that his disciples might violate and despise it; but that they might be delivered from its righteous condemnation, and taught to obey and delight in its most holy and reasonable precepts. As in him was no sin, so none that abide in him allow themselves in any transgresssion of the divine law: for he, who committeth sin, hath not seen or known Christ, and is miserably deluded, if he think that he has.

V. 7—10.

In the vast concern of eternal happiness or misery, how careful should we be not to deceive ourselves! and the argument of the apostle in these verses points a way, in which many, it is to be feared, are self-deceived: for, however we interpret his expressions, they must prove, beyond all reasonable doubt, that they only are righteous *of God in giving his Son for sinners; and various considerations tending to show the necessity, benefit, and efficacy of this sacred affection,* 7—21.

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before God, as justified believers, who are taught and disposed, by the renewal of the Holy Spirit, to practise universal righteousness in the general tenour of their conduct; and that a man's conformity to the example of Christ is the only adequate evidence of his being interested in his redemption. It should also be observed, that all, who are not as regenerate persons, the children of God, are the children of the devil; and, as they copy the example "of "him who sinneth from the beginning," they no doubt will be heirs of his inheritance, if they die unchanged. For the Son of God was manifested on purpose to destroy the works of the devil; so that they, in whose hearts the works of the devil are not destroyed in any degree, but who still continue proud, selfish, sensual, malicious, envious, and alienated from the life of piety, purity, and righteousness, cannot have received the special benefit of his incarnation. "Whosoever is born of God doth not *com-* "*mit* sin:" nay, he cannot do it; for his new nature, the divine seed that remaineth in him, effectually hinders him: even unallowed deficiencies, or such transgressions as he may be sometimes betrayed into, give him the most poignant distress. It is indeed impossible that he can live in known sin, or take any pleasure in such a course, because it is impossible to destroy the principle of divine life, and sensibility of conscience, which hath been communicated by the regenerating Spirit, or to turn again *the heart of flesh* into an unfeeling stone. "In this the children of "God are manifested, and the children of the devil;" and "whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God." May all professors of the Gospel lay these truths to heart, and examine themselves by them; and let all ministers be sure, as they will answer it before the Lord Jesus at the day of judgment, to insist fully on these topics, and make them plain to their hearers; for numbers are most certainly deceived by vain words; "sin on that grace "may abound;" make the lamented fact, of a believer's liableness to be overcome by temptation, a palliation of their habitual wickedness, and hope for heaven, whilst living in the secret, nay, perhaps, the open commission of those things, "for which the wrath of God cometh "upon the children of disobedience."

V. 11—17.

In ascertaining our state and character, as well as in inquiring after our duty, it behooves us to advert especially to the message delivered to Christians from the beginning, "to love one another." For the children of God are distinguished by humble, harmless, and self-denying love, as those of the devil are by proud, selfish, and mischievous hatred: the former love all men, and desire the happiness of those whose crimes they detest, and whose society they shun, though the household of faith attracts their special affection, and are the objects of their cordial estimation and complacency; but the children of the wicked one, whilst "they live in malice and envy, hateful and hating one "another," above all, despise, revile, envy, detest, and persecute those who bear the image, profess the truth, worship the name, love the cause, and seek the glory of Christ. For they are "like Cain, who was of that "wicked one, and slew his brother, because his own "works were evil, and his brother's righteous." Whilst we remember that the same nature belongs to, and the same spirit works in, all the children of disobedience," as prompted Cain to murder Abel, and the Jews to crucify the holy Jesus, we cannot marvel if the world hate us, nor ought we to be disconcerted by any insults or injuries with which we meet; and if indeed we love the brethren, we may know that we have passed from our natural state of enmity and spiritual death, and are brought into the company of those who are alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. But if this radical grace be wholly wanting, the most plausible professor of the Gospel abideth in death; yea, he is a murderer in his heart; he bears the image of Satan, and hath not eternal life abiding in him. Nor is it enough for us to avoid express malice and revenge: our love of our brethren, of our neighbours, and even of our enemies, must be positive and active, like that of our God and Saviour, who laid down his life for those whom he loved when enemies, in order that he might make them his friends and brethren. (*John* xv. 12—15.) If, then, it may in some cases be our duty to lay down our lives for our brethren, surely we are bound continually to labour, expend, and deny ourselves, in various ways, to alleviate their sorrows, and promote their good, as circumstances may require, and opportunities are given us! What then shall we say to such persons, professing the Gospel of Christ, as are rich in this world, and either hoard the greatest part of their wealth, or spend it in gratifying "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, or "the pride of life;" whilst they behold their poor brethren in distress, and refuse to pity them, or to part with any due proportion of their abundance for their relief? How can it be thought that the love of God dwelleth in them? How can they help dreading "judgment without mercy, "who have shown so little mercy?" Or how can "they "suppose themselves followers of Christ," when this world's good is more valued by them, than his example, commandment, glory and favour, or the comfort and lives of their brethren? (2 *Cor.* viii. 9.)

V. 18—24.

All Christians, whether rich or poor, should be careful to love one another, "not in word and in tongue, but in deed "and in truth," leaving cheap and hollow compliments to the children of the wicked one, as the necessary varnish of their selfishness. Thus, in proportion as grace expands our hearts in love, and the fruits of it abound in our conduct, "we shall know that we are of the truth, and shall "assure our hearts before God;" and there can be no reasonable doubt, but that Christians would in general be more satisfied of their acceptance, and enjoy more abundant consolation, if they were more diligent, self-denying, and liberal, in administering to the relief and comfort of their brethren. But when our hearts condemn us of

BELOVED, [a] believe not every spirit, but [b] try the spirits whether they are of God; because [c] many false prophets are gone out into the world.

2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God; [d] Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is [e] come in the flesh, is of God:

3 And [f] every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God: [g] and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

a Deut xiii. 1–5. Prov xiv. 15 Jer v. 31. xxix. 8, 9 Matt. vii. 15 16. xxiv 4, 5. Rom. xvi 18. 2 Pet. ii. 1. b Luke xiii. 57. Acts xvii. 11. Rom. xvi. 19 1 Cor. xiv. 29. 1 Thes v. 21 c ii 18. Matt. xxiv. 23—26. Mark xiii. 21, 22. Luke xxi. 8. Acts xx. 29, 30. 1 Tim iv 1. 2 Tim. iii. 13. 2 John 7.——d v. 1. John xvi. 13—15 1 Cor. xii 3

e 3. John i. 14 1 Tim iii. 16. f ii. 23.

g *See on*, ii. 18–22. 2 Thes ii. 7, 8. 2 John 7.

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acting contrary to our duty, and inconsistently with our profession, the consideration of the greatness, holiness, and omniscience of God must weaken our confidence, and give us apprehensions of being dealt with after our own measure of penuriousness and severity; whilst the Spirit of God, being grieved by our selfishness, will leave us disconsolate, and full of darkness and terror. But when our hearts do not condemn us of allowed deviations from our duty, then, like children who are conscious of having done aright, and assured of their loving parents' approbation, we have confidence with God; and whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we show that we repent and believe, by "keeping his commandments, and doing "those things which are well-pleasing in his sight." Thus a gratuitous salvation and the holy obedience of love are inseparably connected, as the substance of the command of God to sinners is faith in his Son Jesus Christ, and love to one another, for his sake. This obedience, though utterly insufficient for our justification, (for we are made the righteousness of God in Christ,) proves that we dwell in him, and he in us; the sanctifying Spirit which he hath given us forms and maintains the sacred union, and seals us the children of God, and his consolations are the foretastes of our eternal felicity.

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1—3. While the extraordinary gifts and operations of the Holy Spirit were vouchsafed to the church, as well as his sanctifying and comforting influences, it was peculiarly incumbent on Christians to be upon their guard against false prophets, and important for them to be able accurately to distinguish between them, and those who "spake as they were moved by the Holy "Ghost." The apostle therefore exhorted his brethren not to believe every spirit, or every man who professed to speak by a supernatural impulse, and to be under the guidance of the Spirit of God; but to make trial of all such pretensions, whether they who made them were of God, or not. This was absolutely necessary, because many false prophets were gone forth into the world, who were instigated and prompted by Satan to propagate destructive heresies, in opposition to the doctrine and glory of Christ. (*Note, Matt.* xxiv. 24.) In giving this direction, the apostle did not make his appeal to the miracles wrought by the true prophets. (*Note, Deut.* xiii. 1—5. 2 *Thes.* ii. 9—12.) But he deemed it more decisive to determine the matter, by the agreement or disagreement of their doctrine to that which the apostles had "preached with the Holy "Ghost sent down from heaven;" for this was confirmed by the Scriptures of the Old Testament; by all the miracles of Christ, and all the prophecies fulfilled in him; by his resurrection, and the accomplishment of his engagements and predictions; and by all the miracles performed by the first preachers and professors of Christianity, during a number of years; and nothing done by those false prophets, who opposed their doctrine, could pretend to equal this multiplied demonstration. This shows that Christians, who are well acquainted with the Scriptures, may, in humble dependence on divine teaching, know, *for themselves*, who preaches according to the doctrine of the apostles, and who contradicts it, and that they are bound to make this trial of men and their tenets; that no pretences to the Spirit, to inspiration, or new revelations, are to be regarded as any thing but Satanical delusions, when they are brought to disprove or oppose the fundamental doctrines delivered by the apostles: that even apparent miracles would be totally insufficient to authenticate such a doctrine, and consequently that philosophical reasonings and human authority must be entirely disregarded, which concludes equally against Mystics, Enthusiasts, Papists, Socinians, and Deists, who may mutually despise and oppose each other, but all agree in setting up *new lights* against the authenticated and complete light of divine revelation. The apostle, therefore, exhorted his brethren, in determining who spake by the Spirit of God, and who did not, to observe, that "every spirit, which confessed Jesus "Christ *as having come* in the flesh, was of God." (*Note*, ii. 18—22. *Matt.* x. 32.) This must be understood of an intelligent confession of the doctrine delivered by the apostles concerning the Lord Jesus, his Person, and his offices. The reality of his human nature was no doubt peculiarly adverted to by the expression, "come in the "flesh;" but who could have doubted of his having been *really* a Man, if it had been generally understood and believed that he was *merely* a Man? And if the apostle had not known, that, as the Son of God, he could have come otherwise than *in the flesh*, he would scarcely have noticed his "coming in the flesh" as an essential part of this confession; for who would have said that John Baptist, or John the apostle, came *in the flesh*, when they were employed in preaching the Gospel, as they must have come in human nature, seeing they had no other nature? But the coming of Christ in human nature, when God "the Word "became flesh, and tabernacled among men," was indeed essential to the apostle's doctrine concerning his redemption. So that they who did not confess him as "come "in the flesh," or advanced any tenets contrary to his being the Christ, the Son of the living God, or any of those offices, which as God manifested in the flesh he was anointed to perform, were not of God, whatever pretences they advanced to inspiration, or appearances they exhibited of miraculous powers. For the spirit that suggested such heresies was that of antichrist, and they who spake by it were men of the same infidel, ambitious, and impious disposition, as the principal antichrist would be, of whose coming they had heard, and who in fact was already in

4 Ye [h] are of God, little children, and [i] have overcome them: because [k] greater is he that is in you, than [l] he that is in the world.

5 They [m] are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, [n] and the world heareth them.

6 [o] We are of God: [p] he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. [q] Hereby know we [r] the Spirit of truth, [s] and the spirit of error.

7 Beloved, [t] let us love one another: for [u] love is of God; and [x] every one that loveth is born of God, [y] and knoweth God.

8 He that loveth not, [z] knoweth not God; for [a] God is Love.

h 6. 16 iii. 9, 10. v. 19, 20

i ii. 13 v. 4, 5. Eph. vi 10—13. Rev xii 11.

k 13 16. iii. 24 John x. 28—30 xiv. 17—23. xv. i. 23. Rom viii. 10, 11. 1 Cor. vi. 19. 2 Cor vi. 16. Eph. iii. 17.

l v. 19. *Gr.* John xii 31 xiv 30. xvi. 11. 1 Cor. ii. 12 2 Cor iv 4. Eph ii 2 vi. 12 ——m Ps xvii. 14 Luke xvi. 8. John iii. 31. vii. 6, 7. viii. 23. xv. 19, 20 xvii 14 16 Rev xii. 9 ——n Is. xxx 10, 11. Jer. v. 31 xxix. 8. Mic. ii. 11. 2 Tim iv 3 2 Pet. ii. 2, 3. ——o *See on*, h 4. Mic. iii 3 Rom i. 1. 1 Cor. ii. 12—14 2 Pet. iii. 2. Jude 17 ——p 8. Luke x. 22 John viii. 19. 45—55 x. 27. xiii 20. xviii. 37. xx. 21. 1 Cor. xiv 37. 2 Cor. x. 7. 2 Thes. i. 8.

q *See on*, 1. Is. viii. 20.

r John xiv. 17. xv. 26.

s Is. xxix. 10 Hos. iv. 12. Mic. ii 11. Rom xi. 8. 2 Thes. ii. 9—11.

t 20, 21 *See on*, ii. 10 iii. 10—23. v. 1

u 8. Deut. xxx. 6. Gal. v. 22. 1 Thes. iv. 9, 10. 2 Tim. i. 7 1 Pet. i 22.

x 12. *See on*, ii. 29. iii. 14 v. 1.

y John xvii 3 2 Cor. iv. 6. Gal. iv. 9. ——z 20. ii. 4. 9. John viii 54, 55. ——a 16. 5 Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Ps. lxxxvi. 5. 15. Eph. ii 4. Heb xii. 29.

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the world, in the various false prophets that were raised up to oppose the true doctrine of Christ, of whom the grand antichrist would prove the genuine successor. These very heretics, whom the apostle here showed to be the fore-runners of the principal antichrist, might be proved to be the very same persons, whose sentiments the Socinians and others adopt and patronize, as primitive Christianity: and it is not very improbable that the most fatal prevalence of antichrist, which is yet supposed to be future, will be in the garb of infidelity, or open opposition to the Deity and atonement of Christ; that is, "denying that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is "come in the flesh," to be "the propitiation for the sins "of the world;" not in that of popery.

V. 4—6. (*Note*, ii. 20.) The Christians, whom John so affectionately addressed, were "of God," his children, bearing his image, and adhering to his truth and will; and they had overcome these false prophets, who were of the wicked one; they had been enabled to withstand their assaults, and to reject with decision their pernicious doctrines. This had been done through the teaching and assistance of the Spirit of Christ, who dwelt in them, and who was more powerful to uphold and preserve them, than the evil spirit, that dwelt and wrought in these deceivers, and in the whole world of unbelievers, was to assault or injure them. The undeniable and stupendous miracles also, as well as the holy lives of true Christians and faithful ministers, had, in many places, given them decided advantages over the false teachers, and driven them away with disgrace. These indeed were of the world, though they professed to be Christians, they belonged to Satan's kingdom, they were of a worldly disposition, and aspired at secular distinctions and advantages. They, therefore, spake of the world, agreeably to its wisdom, maxims, and taste; so as not to offend, but to gratify, carnal men, who loved the world, and to ensure their friendship, by flattering them, and giving them encouragement while indulging their worldly lusts; and, on this account, the world heard them with approbation, they made rapid progress, had numerous followers, and drew off many unestablished professors of Christianity from their faithful teachers. But the apostle might say with confidence of himself and his brethren, "We are of God;" and those who knew the holy and glorious character of God, and had an experimental acquaintance with him, through regeneration, adhered to their doctrine and instructions: whereas they, who were not born of God, and did not truly belong to him, would not hear them, but attended to the more amusing or flattering speculations of other teachers. But by this token all impartial inquirers might know the Spirit of truth, and that of error; for they who were influenced by the Spirit of truth, adhered to the doctrine of the apostles, whilst their genuine piety and holiness showed that they belonged to God; but they who were guided by the spirit of error, opposed the doctrine of the apostles; and the worldly disposition and conduct of those who propagated and embraced such delusions, as well as the tendency and effects of them, showed evidently that neither they nor their religion were of God. The same is the test and standard of truth to this day; nor can we by any other rule "try the spirits, "whether they be of God, or not." (*Note*, *Matt.* xvi. 18, 19.) 'Though the apostles be all dead, yet, as they 'speak in their divinely inspired writings, John in this 'passage, declares that their writings are the test, by 'which the disciples of Christ, since the decease of the 'apostles, are to judge both of teachers and of their doc'trine.' (*Macknight.*)

V. 7, 8. The apostle here returned to exhort those who adhered to the true doctrine of Christ, that they would cultivate the most endeared affection towards one another; for this holy, spiritual, and self-denying love was "of God," the effect and evidence of regeneration; insomuch, that every one, who thus loved Christians with special affection, and took pleasure in doing them good because of their likeness and relation to Christ, was certainly born of God, and had a saving knowledge of him; (iii. 14.) whereas he, who did not thus love the image of God in his people, was not born of God, and was destitute of any transforming knowledge of him. For "GOD "is LOVE," or essential goodness and benevolence: it is, as it were, his very nature, to be kind, to communicate life and impart felicity, and to provide for the happiness of his creatures, in all cases and methods, which consist with his infinite wisdom, justice, truth, and holiness; for love must be exercised consistently with these attributes by a perfect Being. The earth is filled with the goodness of the Lord, and doubtless the immensity of the creation is the same: holy angels derive from God complete and endless felicity, and rebellion alone has made any rational creatures suffer pain and misery. Being and happiness could not have been communicated in that vast extent and degree that it is, and will be, without the creation of intelligent agents. These form a kingdom, to be governed by a perfect law, and a righteous Sovereign. The very law of God is love, as well as his nature; love of him and each other constitutes the whole of its holy, just, and kind requirements; and all would have been per-

9 In this [b] was manifested the love of God towards us, because that [c] God sent his [d] only begotten Son into the world, [e] that we might live through him.

10 [f] Herein is love, [g] not that we loved God, but that he loved us, [h] and sent his Son *to be* the Propitiation for our sins.

11 Beloved, [i] if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

12 No man hath [k] seen God at any time. If we [l] love one another, God dwelleth in us, [m] and his love is perfected in us.

[b] iii. 16. John iii. 16. Rom. v 8—10. viii 32.
[c] 10 Luke iv. 18. John v 23 vi. 29 viii. 29. 42.
[d] Ps. ii. 7. Mark xii. 6. John i. 14 18. iii. 18. Heb. i. 5. 6.
[e] v. 11. John vi. 57. x. 10 28—30. xi. 25, 26. xiv. 6. Col. iii. 3, 4
[f] *See on*, 8, 9. iii. 1.
[g] 19. Deut vii. 7. 8. John xv 16. Rom. v 8—10. viii. 29, 30. 2 Cor. v. 19—21. Eph. ii. 4, 5, Tit. iii. 3—5.
[h] ii. 2. Dan. ix. 24 Rom. iii. 25, 26. 1 Pet. ii. 24. iii. 18.
[i] iii. 16, 17. 23. Matt. xviii. 32, 33. Luke x. 37. John xiii. 34. xv. 12, 13. 2 Cor. viii. 8, 9. Eph. iv. 31, 32. v. 1, 2. Col iii. 13.
[k] 20 Gen xxxii 30. Ex. xxxiii. 20. Num. xii. 8. John i. 18. 1 Tim. i. 17 vi 16. Heb. xi 27.
[l] 16 *See on*, iii. 24
[m] 17, 18. *See on*, ii. 5.

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fectly happy, had all perfectly obeyed it. Unless infinite wisdom had seen it proper, that omnipotence should be exerted to prevent free agents from transgression, which undeniable facts demonstrate that it did not, this law must be guarded by sanctions, and they who break it must be exposed to a punishment proportioned to the offence. Thus love to creatures at large dictated both the law and its sanctions. When angels sinned, a God of love, in kindness to his obedient creatures, turned those from heaven to hell, who would have converted heaven into hell, if they had continued there, except some other act of omnipotence had prevented it. When man's apostacy took place, the love of God was shown, not only in sparing sinners, and giving them such a rich profusion of temporal benefits, whilst the sentence denounced against them was in part respited; but in so ordering it, that even their pains, sorrows, and temporal death, were expressive of his wise compassion, and tended greatly to prevent the multiplication of crimes, and the increase of condemnation. Especially, the provision of the Gospel, for the forgiveness of sin and the salvation of sinners, in consistency with the glory of the law and justice of God, whilst present sufferings are made subservient to the final and eternal felicity of believers, doth undeniably manifest that "God is Love." So immense were the obstacles to be surmounted, and so astonishing the method, by which mercy is honourably exercised to rebels deserving of eternal misery, that, even if the entrance of sin had been prevented, or impunity and recovery to holiness could have been ensured to all transgressors without any such expedient, the love of God would not so clearly have appeared to be infinite and incomprehensible. Something we can now see of its immensity: and, though impenetrable mystery and obscurity rest on many things respecting it, yet it will surely at length be seen, resplendent as the noon-day sun, that the most perfect love presided, when, in infinite wisdom of God, the entrance of sin was permitted, and when infinite justice, holiness, and truth, determined to leave many rebels in their impenitency, to be vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, as connected with the election, redemption, and sanctification of the vessels of mercy, who are thus prepared before unto glory. So that, if *wise* and *holy* love, in its most perfect exercise towards universal being, through eternity, had required or even admitted of it, no pain would have been suffered by any creature. much less would any have been left to be finally miserable. But to argue from hence, that none will be finally miserable, in direct opposition to his testimony, who is TRUTH, as well as LOVE, is the height of impiety and presumption. What do we know concerning the purposes of love to unnumbered millions through eternal ages, which may be answered in the infinitely wise counsels of God, by leaving *comparatively* a small number of rebels to the *merited* punishment of their crimes? Men might on the same principles argue, that prisons and executions could not have any place in the dominions of an eminently benevolent prince; when, in reality, wise and equitable benevolence to numbers would dictate severity to a few atrocious criminals, who would otherwise make many wretched. Indeed, we might as reasonably argue, that, since "God is love," there can be no such thing as misery in the creation; for omnipotence could certainly exclude it: but if infinite wisdom, justice, holiness, and truth, require that Love himself should cause his creatures to endure anguish, (and here facts preclude the vain hypothesis, which speculation might otherwise have adopted,) no created understanding can determine, in what degree, to what duration, or in how many instances, the wise, righteous, and holy purposes of LOVE may require the suffering of his rebellious subjects. So that all arguments and calculations of this kind prove nothing but the vain self-wisdom of foolish man, who deems himself competent to determine what God ought to do, and what he will do: and, in this presumption, opposes his arguments to the explicit testimony of God himself, and professes to honour his love, whilst he treats his truth as a lie, and supposes his awful threatenings to be terrifying delusions, to frighten the ignorant part of mankind into good behaviour, and to be despised by the more discerning! But it is enough for our purpose, that God hath so shown himself to be Love in his dealings with us, that, after all our crimes, we cannot come short of eternal happiness, except through our unbelief and impenitent rebellion; whilst strict justice would have consigned us to hopeless and final misery, as soon as ever we transgressed our Creator's law.

V. 9—12. In this, the love of God towards us, lost sinners, hath been especially manifested; "because he "sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we "might live through him." (*Note, John* iii. 16—21.) Hence it appears, that Christ is called the only begotten Son of God, previous to his incarnation, or coming into the world; and that the love of God, in giving his *own* Son to assume our nature, in order to his expiatory sufferings, was more stupendous, than even in giving him as *incarnate* to the death upon the cross for us. When God designed so vast a blessing as life eternal for fallen sinners, in his infinite compassion and mercy, his most perfect justice and holiness rendered it impossible for him to do it, (for he cannot deny himself,) except an all-sufficient atonement could be made for their sins: and when no other method, or none so proper for this end, was perceived by his infinite wisdom, as the sending of his own Son to be our Surety, and the atoning Sacrifice for our

13 Hereby [n] know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

14 And [o] we have seen and do testify, that [p] the Father sent the Son *to be* [q] the Saviour of the world.

15 Whosoever shall [r] confess that Jesus is the Son of God, [s] God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

16 And [t] we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. [u] God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.

17 Herein is * our love [x] made perfect, that [y] we may have boldness in [z] the day of judgment: because [a] as he is, so are we in this world.

18 There [b] is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because [c] fear hath torment. [d] He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

n 12; 16. *See on,* iii. 24. John xiv. 20—26. Rom. viii. 9—17. 1 Cor. ii 12. iii. 16, 17. vi. 19. Gal. v. 22—25. Eph ii. 20—22.
o i. 1—3. v. 9. John iii. 11. 32 v. 39. xv 26, 27. Acts xviii 5. 1 Pet. v. 12.
p *See on,* 10. John iii. 34. v. 36, 37. x. 36.
q ii. 1, 2 John i 29. iii. 16, 17. iv 42 xii. 47.
r 2. v. 1 5. Matt. x 32. Luke xii. 8. Rom. x 9. Phil. ii. 11. 2 John 7
s *See on,* 12 iii. 21.——t *See on,* 9, 10. iii. 1. 16. Ps. xviii. 1—3. xxxi. 19. xxxvi. 7—9. Is. lxiv. 4 1 Cor. ii. 9.
u *See on,* 3. 12, 13.
* Gr. *love with us.*
x *See on,* 12. ii. 5. Jam. ii. 22.
y ii. 28. iii. 19—21. Jam. ii. 13.
z Matt. x 15 xi 22. 24. xii. 36 2 Pet. ii. 9. iii. 7
a iii. 3. Matt. x. 25. John xv 20. Rom. viii. 29. Heb. xii. 2, 3. 1 Pet. iii. 16—18. iv. 1—3. 13 14.
b Luke i 74, 75. Rom. viii. 15. 2 Tim i. 7. Heb. xii. 28.
c Job xv. 21. Ps. lxxxiii. 19. lxxxviii. 15, 16. cxix. 120. Jam. ii. 19——d *See on,* 12.

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sins; he spared him not, but sent him into the world, that we might live through him. None of our words or thoughts can do justice to such free, rich, astonishing love of a holy God towards sinners, to whom he owed nothing; who could not profit, or harm him; whom he might justly have crushed in a moment; who were shown to have been deserving of his tremendous vengeance, in the very method by which they were saved; and when he could by his omnipotent word have created countless worlds, replenished with far more exalted beings, if he had seen good. Search we then the whole universe for love, in its most enlarged and glorious displays? We must at length be constrained to own, that it is to be found in the Person and the cross of Christ. Herein is that love, the splendour of which eclipses all that hath been seen elsewhere, from the beginning of the world, and which will be the special subject of admiring and adoring praise to all eternity. Doth love subsist between God and sinners? Herein was the origin of it; not that we loved God, for we were enemies to his holy character, law, sovereignty, worship, and providence; but that he, most freely, and with most condescending compassion, forgiveness, and liberality, loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiatory sacrifice for our sins. (*Note,* ii. 1—3.) In this great event, all holy beings will for ever see that "GOD is LOVE;" and the more redeemed sinners understand of this subject, the clearer views will they have of that love, which can never fully be comprehended: whereas they, who exclude this view of the divine benignity, may speculate about the subject, but can scarcely know any thing concerning its real nature and glory. If then God hath so loved us, in providing salvation, and bringing us to partake of it, we ought also to love one another, in imitation of his example, and in grateful obedience to his command; and to express this love, by a forgiving, peaceable, kind, liberal, and compassionate conduct towards each other. For no man hath seen God, in respect of his divine essence, at any time: (save, that he who hath seen Christ hath seen the Father also:) we therefore best prove that we love him, by loving his image in his people, and by doing good to them for his sake. Thus it will appear, that God dwells in us, by his new-creating Spirit, and that his love produces its genuine effects upon our hearts, by our renewal to his holy image. (ii. 5.)

V. 13—17. Christians might, therefore, know that they dwelt in God by faith, and he in them, as in his consecrated temple, "because he had given them of his "Spirit:" (*Marg. Ref.*) for, besides the miraculous powers conferred on some whom the apostle addressed, the same Spirit had so changed their hearts, and made them partakers of a divine nature, that they loved the children of God with a holy love, and copied his example in their conduct to each other. Under this influence and energy, the apostles, and others who had seen Christ, and were experimentally acquainted with his precious love, did testify to their fellow-sinners, every where, that "the "Father had sent his Son to be the Saviour of the "world," and to confer pardon, grace, and eternal life, on all men, in every place, who applied for them, through his atoning blood, by living faith in his name. Whosoever, therefore, should hear and receive this testimony, and confess Jesus to be the Son of God, acknowledging the love of the Father in this gracious dispensation, cordially falling in with the design of it, and venturing the enmity of ungodly men, in professing the faith of the Gospel, and obeying the divine Saviour, might be assured that he dwelt in God, as his Refuge and Rest, and that God dwelt in him, as his beloved temple. All such general expressions must be interpreted according to the context: for unless such a confession of Christ were sincere, intelligent and influential, the man could not be a partaker of holy love; and therefore the apostle would have contradicted what he before asserted, if he had meant a mere confession with the lips, without faith and grace in the heart. (8.) But true Christians had known, understood, and experienced, as well as believed, the love which God had shown towards them in the redemption of his Son; and it had had a transforming effect upon them, by bringing them to resemble God, in the nature and fruits of their love, and so by an habitual exercise of this holy affection towards God, each other, and all men; and to live in the most endeared and intimate union with him. Thus their love to the Lord was made perfect, or produced its genuine and valuable effects, in their love to one another: and they cultivated this holy disposition, and acted from it, in order that they might have boldness in the day of judgment, (*Notes, Matt.* xxv. 31—46:) because, as Christ was, so were they in this world: like him, they were influenced by holy love to do good to others in a self-denying manner; and being treated with contempt, reproach, and enmity, they meekly and patiently endured it, and persevered in doing good against evil, as he had done. Or, as God is, so were they; they bore his image, which the world hated, &c.

19 We [e]love him, because he first loved us.

20 If [f]a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God [g]whom he hath not seen?

21 And [h]this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

e *See on*, 10. Luke vii. 47 John iii. 16. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. Gal. v. 22 Eph. ii. 3—5. Tit. ii. 3—5.

f *See on*, ii. 4. iii. 17.

g *See on*, 12.

h 11. iii. 11. 14. 18. 23. Lev. xix. 18. Matt. xxii. 37—39 Mark xii. 29—33 Luke x. 27. John xiii. 34, 35. xv. 12 Rom. xii. 9, 10. xiii. 9, 10. Gal. v. 6. 14. 1 Thes. iv. 9. 1 Pet. iii. 8. iv. 8.

V. 18. In the love of God through Jesus Christ, as made perfect in love to Christians and to all men, for the Lord's sake, there is no fear or terror: the obedience and good works performed from this principle are not like the servile diligence of one, who reluctantly labours from dread of a hated master's indignation; but like that of a dutiful child, who performs services to a beloved father, which conduce to the benefit of his brethren, and are, on every account, pleasing, and voluntarily performed. Reverence of the majesty of God, and fear of dishonouring him, are intimately connected with the most perfect exercises of holy love; but terrifying apprehensions of vengeance have no place in it, and cease, in proportion as love prevails, and inspires confidence and gratitude. So that perfect love of God, (and of man for his sake,) must produce such full satisfaction of acceptance, such delight in his service, and such experience of his consolations, as to cast out all servile fear: this gives torment and distress to the mind, from which the Spirit of adoption proportionably delivers the believer. (*Note, Rom.* viii. 15—17.) The remains and returns of these terrors, therefore, in the experience of established believers, show that they are not perfect in love, though they have great use, in this state of conflict and imperfection, in all respects; yet the habitual prevalence of them in many persons implies, that they are not duly brought under the influence of the Spirit of adoption, but serve God, more from slavish fear, than from filial love. In heaven this love will be perfect, and uneasy fear will be for ever excluded; and in this world, the more we obey God from love, and the less we need and experience that "fear, which hath torment," the more of heaven do we enjoy. But this does not imply, that any Christians are made perfect in love on earth absolutely, to the full demand of the divine law, or that slavish fears prove a man to have *no love* or grace, or that exemption from fear of every kind is the privilege of believers. It is equally true, "that blessed is he that feareth alway," as that "perfect love casteth out fear;" for different kinds of fear are meant. (*Notes, Rom.* xi. 20. 1 Pet. i. 17.)

V. 19. They who serve God from filial affection, not slavish fear, "love him, because he first loved them;" not that their love is *merely* gratitude for his previous benefits, which, abstracted from other exercises of love, would be a very selfish affection: nor could any man in that case love God at all on good grounds, without some immediate revelation, to assure him that he was the object of his special love, even whilst he had no grace, and was wholly impenitent and sinful. But the evident meaning is, that if the Lord had not loved them before they loved him, even when they were dead in sin, they must for ever have continued enemies to him. His love suggested the plan, and provided the means of redemption; he revealed to sinners his glorious perfections and abundant mercy, in the Person and work of his Son; he sent his word, to declare to sinners this great salvation, and to invite them to partake of it; he regenerated them by his Spirit, and so brought them, by repentance, and faith in Christ, into a state of acceptance and reconciliation; and thus taught and enabled them to love his excellency, to value his favour, to be thankful for his inestimable benefits, and zealous for his glory. As, therefore, his love to them was the original source of their love to him, so from the latter they may infer the former, and take the comfort of the happy change which hath been wrought in them, whilst they give him the glory of it.

V. 20, 21. The love of God in Christ, produced in the heart of Christians by the spirit of adoption, is to be considered as the grand proof of their conversion; yet that also must be tried by its effects, in their temper and conduct towards their brethren. For if a man profess to love God, and yet hate his brother, and either indulges habitual resentment against any one, or shows a spiteful or selfish disposition, or contempt and enmity of God's image in his children, he is no doubt a liar, a false professor: for if a man do not love the holy image of God in his brother whom he hath seen, and whose good behaviour is sensibly endearing and advantageous to him, or refuses to show kindness to his brother in distress, when he knows this to be the commanded expression of love to God, how can he be supposed to love God, whom he hath not seen? whose perfection he can only contemplate at a distance; who is not visibly present, to excite him to suitable returns of affection; and who cannot want, or be profited by, any of his services? So that the pretence of loving God, when the love of the brethren is neglected, is no more than a cloak of selfishness, or an excuse for malignant passions. And indeed this is his express command, that our love to God should be shown by the love of our brethren: but how can he be supposed to love God, who habitually violates his command, and acts contrary to his most endearing example? (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V 1—6.

We live in an age, in which few comparatively pretend to immediate revelations; yet we have at least as much cause to try men's doctrines and religion by the word of God as they had in the primitive times. For "many "false teachers are gone forth into the world," who agree in scarcely any thing, but in denying "that the Son "of God is come in the flesh, to be the propitiation for "our sins, and the anointed High Priest, Prophet, and "King of his Church." If indeed no teachers are of God, who do not confess the doctrine of the apostles, concerning the person and salvation of Christ, "God "manifested in the flesh," and if all others are actuated by the lying spirit of antichrist, we may truly say, that antichrist did not much more prevail, in the darkest days of popery, than in these times of infidelity, skepticism,

CHAP. V.

The apostle shows the connexion between faith in Christ, regeneration, love to God and his children, obedience to his commandments, and victory over the world, 1—5. *He states the manifold testimonies, by which the doctrine of Christ is proved; and declares the inseparable union between faith and eternal life; and the contrary,* 6—13. *He reminds Christians of the Lord's readiness to hear their prayers, for themselves and each other,* 14, 15; *gives an intimation of the sin unto death, and the regenerate man's security against committing it,* 16—18; *marks the difference between the world that lieth in wickedness, and true believers,* 19, 20; *and cautions Christians against idolatry,* 21.

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socinianism, arianism, mysticism, and antinomianism: whilst the scriptural doctrine concerning the Person, or some of the offices of Christ, seems to be wholly excluded from the religion of most of his professed disciples. But there is a remnant, who are of God, and who have overcome the assaults of all these deceivers, and will be finally victorious over them; because they are taught and kept by the Spirit of Christ, who is greater than the evil spirit, which still worketh in the children of disobedience. Indeed, they whose wisdom, principles, spirit, and conduct, accord to the judgment and disposition of the world, will be heard, applauded, and followed, by worldly men, as far as their consciences find it convenient to have some kind of religion, by way of an opiate: and, as the way to destruction is broad and frequented, no wonder that they have the majority on their side; for in all ages and places hitherto, the friends of God have been comparatively few. *We* must not indeed take it for granted, as the apostle did, that we are of God; and that he, who "knoweth God, heareth us;" but, as far as we can prove that our doctrine, temper, and conduct, "accord to the oracles of God," we may be confident that he will maintain our cause, and that his friends and children will favour us: and the characters of the persons who adhere to, and of those who reject, the testimony of preachers, may go far in deciding who declare the humbling holy truths of God, and who speak the dictates of the spirit of error; for many are incapable of doing such honour to the ministry of God's servants in any other way, as they do by forsaking, deriding, and reviling it; whilst their actions show to all, who understand that emphatical language, the reasons of their dislike.

V. 7—17.

Again and again we are exhorted to "love one another, because love is of God:" in proportion as this abounds in our heart, and regulates our behaviour, we bear the image of God, and show that we are born of him, and know him: thus we anticipate the temper and happiness, and, as it were, breathe the air, of heaven; whilst enmity, selfishness, malice, and revenge, are from hell, and the beginning of the misery prepared for the devil and his children. But our "GOD is LOVE:" and with such displays of this endearing attribute before us, and such obligations as we are brought under to it, how large, liberal, and fervent, ought our love of each other to be, and even that of our very enemies! Seeing that God hath manifested his love towards us, in sending his own Son, to be the propitiation for the sins of us rebels and enemies, that we might live through him, how earnest ought we to be in using all means, with persevering self-denial, to promote the welfare and save the souls of those who are most injurious to us! And how should we lay ourselves out to do good to our fellow-christians, for the Lord's sake! Let us not then think it enough to admire the love of God in Christ Jesus to us sinful creatures; but, since we cannot profit him, "whom no man hath seen or can see," let us show our love and gratitude to him, by imitating his kind and merciful conduct, in our dealings with our brethren and neighbours. Thus it will appear that he dwelleth and ruleth in our hearts; and his love will be perfected in us. Whilst we profess to believe the doctrine, which the apostles testified to mankind, and confess "that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world," may our holy loving tempers show, that he hath given us of his Spirit! Thus it will appear that we have understood the nature and glory, as well as believed the revelation, of the love which God hath to us; and that, as "God is Love," so we dwell in love, and in God, and he in us. In this way our love will grow unto perfection, and our confidence before the mercy-seat will be an anticipation of our boldness in the day of judgment; whilst we are conscious, that as he our Lord and Saviour was, so are we in this evil world.

V. 18—21.

By the work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope, we shall the most effectually be relieved from slavish and tormenting fears; for the more we feel of the loving temper of children towards our Father, and of affection to our brethren for his sake, the less we shall fear being treated as enemies, and the fuller will be our assurance of the special love of God to us. Nor would there be occasion for our being left to the painful restraint and impulse of terror, if we were more entirely constrained by love, in every part of our duty; so that all our disquieting doubts and apprehensions arise from our not being made perfect in love. Let us then pray, without ceasing, that we may more entirely love him, who hath first loved us: and if it be evident that our natural enmity is changed into filial affection and gratitude, let us bless the name of our God for this seal and earnest of eternal felicity; and, in return for his mercy, and in obedience to his commandments, let us do good to our brethren also, and to all men, for his sake, and after his example; and thus show, that, though our love is imperfect, yet that we

WHOSOEVER [a] believeth that Jesus is the Christ, [b] is born of God: [c] and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him.

2 By this [d] we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.

3 For [e] this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: [f] and his commandments are not grievous.

4 For [g] whatsoever is born of God [h] overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith.

5 Who is he that overcometh the world, [i] but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

a ii. 22, 23 iv 14, 15 Matt xvi. 16. John i 12 13 vi. 69. Acts viii. 37 Rom. x. 9. 10
b 4 ii. 29. iii 9 iv 7
c ii 10 iii. 14. 17 iv. 20 Jam i. 18. 1 Pet. i. 3 23.
d iii. 22--24. iv. 21. John xiii 34, 35. xv. 17
e Ex. xx 6 Deut v. 10. vii 9. x. 12. 13. Dan. ix 4 John xiv 15. 21--24. xv. 10. 14. Matt. xii. 47—50. 2 John 6.
f Ps xix. 7—11 cxix. 47. 48 103 104 127, 128. 140 143. 174. Prov iii 17. Mic. vi. 8 Matt xi. 2 --30 Rom. vii. 12. 22 Heb. viii. 10.
g *See on*, 1. iii 9.
h 5 ii 13—17 iv. 4 John xvi. 33. Rom. viii 35—37. 1 Cor xv. 57. Rev. ii. 7 11. 17. 26 iii. 5. 12, 21. xii. 11 xv. 2.
i *See on*, a. 1. iv. 15

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essentially differ from all those who profess to love God, whom they have not seen, and yet hate their brethren, whom they have seen.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1—3. Every man, who truly believed Jesus to be the promised Messiah, and received, honoured, and obeyed him in that character, according to the predictions of the Old Testament, and the testimony of the apostles concerning him, was doubtless born of God; as this faith must be the effect of divine life, and could not be separated from repentance, love, and other graces, or those good fruits which spring from them: and all, who credibly professed this faith, were entitled to that love which Christians owed to their brethren, whatever differences there might be in their previous character, abilities, rank, or situation. For every one, who loved God, the Father of all the regenerate, must also love every one of his children; even as men commonly love and show kindness to the offspring of their dear friends and liberal benefactors. But as every gracious affection might be counterfeited, it was necessary to observe, that this genuine love of the children of God might be distinguished from all natural benevolence, or party attachments, by its inseparable connexion with the love of God, and a cheerful upright obedience to all his commandments; for the same Spirit, who had brought the sinner's heart to love the image of God in his children, must also have taught them to love his holy character, precepts, and service. (*Note, James* ii. 10.) Christians might therefore know their love of the brethren to be spiritual, and evidential of their having "passed from death to life," by a disposition to love and obey God in all other respects; whereas that man could not truly love the children of God, who habitually committed known sin, or neglected known duty. So that these two parts of the Christian's character must reciprocally prove each other to be genuine. In fact, the nature, tendency, effect, and, as it were, the essence, of love to God, consists in its disposing the heart to unreserved and cheerful obedience: and as his commandments are holy, just, and good, the rule of liberty and felicity, so they, who are born of God, and love him, do not deem them grievous, but delight in obedience; and only groan and lament that they cannot serve him more perfectly. Indeed, the natural love of worldly objects, which is found in every human heart, and the fear of those inconveniences and sufferings, which the displeasure of ungodly men threatens and occasions, (in some measure at all times,) to the faithful servants of God, render obedience in the present state of things arduous, and connected with self-denial, and various losses, perils, hardships, and distresses, from which, in other circumstances, it would be wholly exempted. But true Christians are possessed of a principle of divine life, which carries them above all these obstacles and impediments.

V. 4, 5. That which is born of God, that new and heavenly nature which is communicated in regeneration, tends so powerfully to God and holiness, and includes in its essence such a spiritual judgment, and such heavenly affections, that all, in whom it is found, are by it made victorious over the world, and overcome both their natural love for its honours, riches, pleasures, decorations, and friendship, and their natural fear of the frown, rage, and contempt of worldly men. Thus they are prepared for losses, self-denial, and enduring affliction, in the cause of God, and taught to disregard the maxims, fashions, customs, and opinions of ungodly men, however eminent, numerous, or powerful. This new creature, as born of God, hath the ascendency in the heart of the youngest and feeblest true Christian, and therefore they all aspire after and attain unto this victory; for though the conflict of grace with corrupt nature, and the allurements and terrors of the world, is often very sharp, and the regenerate man may be baffled, cast down, and apparently slain in the battle, yet the divine life within him, being invigorated by the Holy Spirit, will again excite him to arise, and renew the combat with redoubled fortitude and resolution. So that at length the victory will be his decidedly; and he will *habitually* profess the truth, and do the will of God, as far as he knows them, whatever loss, suffering, disgrace, or hardship, may ensue, even if he should be exposed to death, in its most terrifying form, by his adherence to his duty. In acquiring this honourable victory, faith is principally concerned; a realizing belief of the testimony of God concerning invisible and eternal things, operating by fear of his wrath, and hope of felicity in his favour; a believing reliance on Christ for redemption, and all the blessings that flow from it, working by love and gratitude; with an abiding sense of God's presence at all times, to witness every action, and to support, help, and comfort those who trust in him, give such a determination to the true Christian's conduct, that he cannot habitually do what he knows to be contrary to the will of God, whatever emolument, credit, or favour, he may acquire by so doing: nor can he habitually neglect what God commands, to whatever loss, reproach, or suffering, it may expose him. Through temporary weakness of faith, he may be drawn into sins and negligences: but he will soon find such fear, shame, sorrow, remorse, and self-abhorrence, in his heart and conscience, that he cannot but

6 This [k] is he that came [l] by water and [m] blood, *even* Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is [n] the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit [o] is Truth.

7 For there are three that [p] bear record in heaven, [q] the [r] Father, [s] the Word, and [t] the Holy Ghost: [u] and these three are one.

8 And [x] there are three that bear witness in earth, [y] the Spirit, [z] and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

k John xix.34,35.
l Is. xliv. 3,4. Ez. xxxvi. 25 John i. 31—33. iii. 5. iv 10. 14. vii. 38, 39. Acts viii. 36. Eph. v. 25—27. Tit. iii 5. 1 Pet iii. 21.
m i. 7. iv. 10. Lev. xvii. 11. Zech. ix. 11. Matt. xxvi. 28. Mark xiv. 24. Luke xxii. 20. John vi. 55. Rom. iii. 25. Eph. i. 7. Col. i. 14. Heb. ix. 7. 14. x. 29. xii. 24. xiii. 20. 1 Pet. i. 2. Rev. i. 5. v 9 vii 14.——n 7, 8. John xiv. 17. xv. 26. 1 Tim. iii. 16.——o John xiv. 6. xvi. 13.——p 10, 11. John viii. 13, 14

q Ps xxxiii 6 *Heb.* Is xlviii. 16, 17. lxi 1. Matt. iii. 16 xxviii 19. 1 Cor. xii. 4—6. 2 Cor. xiii 14. Rev i. 4, 5
r Matt. iii 17 xvii. 5. John v 26. viii. 14. 54. x. 37, 38. xii. 28.
s *See on*, i. 1 John i. 1. 32—34.——t *See on*, 6. Matt. iii. 16. John i. 31, 32. Acts ii. 33. v. 32. Heb ii. 3, 4. u Deut. vi 4. Matt. xxviii. 19 John x. 30.——x *See on*, 7.——y *See on*, 6 Matt. xxvi. 26—28. xxviii. 19. Rom. viii. 16. Heb. vi. 4.——z Mark xiv. 56. Acts xv. 15.

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return into the way of obedience, and reject the wages of transgression, whatever may be the consequence: nor can this ever be altered, unless it were possible that the shield of faith should be finally torn from him. (*Note, Luke* xxii. 31—34.) This is universally the case with true believers, though the temporary suspension of faith, and a consequent prevalence of worldly affections, may be longer in some cases than in others, during which lamentable seasons their evidence of sincerity must be equally weakened. And this is *peculiar* to believers; so that we may challenge the whole earth to produce one instance of a man, who did not believe in the Son of God, who had in all respects so overcome the love and fear of all persons and things in the world, as not *habitually*, in some way or other, to act contrary to his own judgment and conscience, from a regard to interest, reputation, ease, liberty, indulgence, friendship, or social and relative comfort and affection; or in order to avoid derision, reproach, the censure of singularity, or more material losses and sufferings. All men, but believers in Christ, are habitually enslaved, in some respect or other, to the customs, opinions, or interests of the world: and who is there, that dares in all things act according to the conviction of his own mind, without being warped by the general influence of society, or that of his own particular circle? He, and he only, can do this, who "believes that Jesus is the Son of God," and trusts in him for salvation, according to the scriptures: his faith, united with humble love, spirituality, fear of coming short of salvation, hatred of sin, a constant respect to his Lord's example, an indifference for worldly objects, and a deep persuasion of the miserable condition of all worldly men, gives him this victory.—(*Note, Gal.* vi. 14.) He habitually in all things follows the dictates of his own conscience, and the commandments of his Lord, whatever consequences may follow; and when he is betrayed into an incidental deviation from this rule, he deeply repents of it, and attempts renewed obedience. Hence it is, that the world will tolerate all other persons, except true believers, whatever their forms or notions be; because all others will, in some respects, comply with the humours, and court the friendship, of worldly men. But Christians are so unpliant, and so determined to follow their Lord according to their own judgment of truth and duty, without regarding the opinions, counsels, attentions, derision, revilings, or enmity of the many, the wise, the great, the learned, or the virtuous; nay, without being turned aside by persuasion, or the dictates of affection and gratitude, from the line of duty, they cleave to their religious singularities, (as they are deemed,) at so great an expense, and often amidst so many sufferings; and in so many ways they testify of the world, that its works are evil and its wisdom folly; that they can hope for no quarter from worldly men, but must expect to be hated or despised by all, for Christ's sake; even as he was, who perfectly overcame the world, as their Surety and example. It may be proper here to observe, that the Christian, in proportion to his knowledge and grace, will be singular only where truth and duty require him; and steadfast, according to the certainty or importance of the truth and duty: but in all things that he deems indifferent, and where his own will or interest alone are concerned, he will endeavour to be pliant, in order to show, that his pertinacious adherence to his rule is the effect of conscientiousness, and not of obstinacy and affectation,

V. 6. Having mentioned Jesus, the Son of God, the apostle observed, that this was the anointed Saviour, who came by water and blood. As he entered on his ministry on earth when he was baptized by John, and closed it by shedding his blood on the cross, so, after his death, water and blood flowed from his pierced side, as emblematical of the removal of our guilt by his atoning sacrifice, and the purifying of our souls by his grace, after his example, and according to his commandments: (*Note, John* xix. 32—37.) For "he came" to save sinners, "not by water only," not *merely* by teaching them the way of holiness, and enabling them to walk in it, "but by water and blood," by atoning for their guilt, and thus making way for their sanctification, and the acceptance of their persons, and works of faith and love: and to this the Holy Spirit bore witness, both in the miracles wrought by those who taught this doctrine, and the holy lives, the patient sufferings, and the abundant consolations of such as embraced it: and this witness of the Spirit to the doctrine 'of his atonement, as the Son of God come in the flesh, to save sinners by his blood-shedding,' could not be objected to, or rejected; "because the Spirit is Truth," even essential Truth itself, which cannot possibly deceive or be deceived. (*Notes*, 20, 21. iv. 1. *John* xiv. 6.)

V. 7, 8. These doctrines, concerning the Person and salvation of Christ, had been and were attested in the most unexceptionable manner; for there were Three, who from heaven, the holy habitation, in which the divine presence and glory is peculiarly displayed, had borne witness to it "The Father," who repeatedly, in an audible voice from heaven, had declared Jesus to be his "beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased," and had borne witness to the same truth, as well as the acceptance of his sacrifice, by raising him from the dead: the Word, who was himself God, as well as "from the beginning with God," who had testified that "He and the Father were One;" that "he who had seen him had seen the Father;" and that "he would shed his blood a ransom for many:" whilst his miracles, and the fulfilment of ancient pro-

9 If [a] we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God, which he hath testified of his Son.

10 He [b] that believeth on the Son of God, [c] hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God, [d] hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

a 10 John iii. 32, 33. v. 31—36. 39. viii. 17—19. x 38. Acts v. 32. xvii. 31. Heb iii. 4. vi. 18.

b See on, 1 John iii. 16

c Ps. xxv 14 Prov. iii 32. Rom viii. 16 Gal. iv. 6. Col iii. 3 2 Pet. i. 19. Rev. ii. 17. 28

d i. 10 Num xxiii. 19. Job xxiv. 25. Is. liii. 1. Jer. xv. 18 John iii. 33. v. 38. Heb. iii. 12.

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phecies in him, the accomplishment of his own predictions in his resurrection, and various other events, showed his testimony to be divine, and the voice of God came from heaven in human nature, to attest these truths to man: "and the Holy Ghost," who descended from heaven as a dove, and rested on Christ at his baptism; who had borne witness to him, by the mouth of all his prophets from the beginning of the world; and who came forth from the Father and the Son, to attest his resurrection and exaltation to the mediatorial throne, by the gift of tongues, and other miraculous powers, communicated to the apostles on the day of Pentecost. And these three divine witnesses, though personally distinct, were yet One in the unity of the Godhead, in a most mysterious and incomprehensible manner. There were also "three that bore witness on "earth," perpetuating, as it were, the testimony of the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, whose especial abode is in heaven, and whose testimony was immediately from thence: even "the Spirit," in the miraculous powers communicated to the disciples, by the laying on of the apostle's hands; the sanctifying efficacy of their doctrine; the holy conduct and consolations of Christians; and the prophecies delivered to the new-testament church, which would be fulfilled from age to age: "the Water," or the initiatory ordinance of baptism, by water, "into "the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy "Spirit," as the perpetual emblem of the polluted sinner's sanctification by faith and grace from the Lord Jesus: "and the Blood," or the Lord's supper, which was appointed as a memorial and attestation of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, till his second coming: and permanently testifies, that pardon and salvation can only be obtained by faith in the atoning blood of him, whose name is Emmanuel, who is "God manifest in the flesh," and who will surely come to be our Judge. As the accomplishment of the prophecies contained in the New Testament more than counterbalances the ceasing of miraculous gifts, so these divine attestations to the doctrine of Christ's Person, and the two great constituent parts of his salvation, continue to this present day, and shall to the end of the world: and we at present have abundant testimony to those truths, which our Father in heaven, the incarnate Word, and the Holy Spirit, immediately testified to the primitive Christians. It is well known, that many volumes have been written concerning part of the seventh verse and the beginning of the eighth, in order to prove, or to disprove, its authenticity. It is certainly wanting in many of the ancient versions and manuscripts; but whether the Trinitarians interpolated it, or the Arians and other Unitarians omitted it, is to this day a matter of controversy, and not likely to be determined. Upon such questions men will in general decide according to their preconceived opinions; yet it is very wrong to deviate from truth in support of system. It is, however, perhaps, somewhat more likely that the Arians or Anti-Trinitarians should silently omit, in their copies, a testimony that was so decisive against them, or that it should be left out by the mistake of some ancient transcriber, than that the Trinitarians should directly forge and insert it. The Trinitarian in fact would be deprived only of one argument, with which he might attempt the conviction of his opponent, if this text were wholly rejected as spurious; for his doctrine is abundantly supported by other scriptures: but if this testimony were admitted as the unerring word of God, all the ingenuity and diligence of their opponents would scarcely suffice to explain it away, or to avoid the inference that must naturally be drawn from it, except by rejecting the apostle's testimony. It has indeed by some, even Trinitarians, been maintained, that the words, rendered "these three are One," only mean, that their testimony is one: but the writer is not speaking of *testimony*, but of *persons*: else, why is the word translated *three*, masculine? Or why is the expression so remarkably varied in the next verse? "These three, the Father, the Son, and "the Holy Spirit are One," θειον, *numen*. It may also be doubtful, whether the passage connects with so much propriety, if the contested words be omitted, as it otherwise does: for if we read, with the copies in which they are wanting, "The Spirit beareth witness, because the Spirit "is truth: for there are three that bear record, the "Spirit, and the water, and the blood, &c." there seems to be a remarkable repetition, and a want of the apostle's usual energy in the passage: and it does not appear evident for what reason "the water, and the blood," or the two great ordinances of the new testament, as outward signs of sanctification and justification, by the grace and atoning blood of the Son of God, and as agreeing in One with the testimony of the Spirit, should be mentioned, and yet nothing should be hinted, concerning the testimony of the Father from heaven to Christ, as his beloved Son; or that of Christ himself, as confirmed by his miracles and resurrection, and the fulfilment of his promise, in pouring the Holy Spirit on his assembled disciples. As the words stand in our copies, there is indeed a most abundant concurrence of divine testimonies to the Person and doctrine of Christ, pointed out in a most compendious and energetic manner, —It cannot, however, be expected, that, in such a publication as this, a question, which has long employed the attention of the most learned men in Christendom, should be settled; and, after assigning the above reasons in favour of the authenticity of the passage, I am very doubtful, whether they are sufficient to counterbalance the arguments of those who think otherwise. But we need not be anxious on the subject, as we have scriptural evidence in abundance, without this text, to confirm our faith in one God, subsisting in three co-equal Persons, "the Father, "the Son, and the Holy Ghost," into whose One name we were baptized.

V. 9, 10. The testimony of two or three credible men was, by the law, deemed sufficient to prove any

e 7 10. John i. 19. 32—34 viii. 13, 14 xix 35. 3 John 12. Rev. i. 2.
f 13 ii. 25. Matt. xxv 46. John iii 15, 16. 36. iv. 14. 36. vi 40. 47. 68. x. 28 xii. 50. xvii. 2, 3. Rom v. 21. vi. 23. 1 Tim. i. 16. Tit i. 2. Jude 21.——g 12. 20 i. 1–3. John i. 4. v. 21. 26. xi. 25, 26. xiv. 6 Col. iii. 3, 4 Rev xxii. 1.

11 And [e] this is the record, that [f] God hath given to us eternal life; and [g] this life is in his Son.

12 He [h] that hath the Son, hath life; [i] *and* he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life.

h ii. 23, 24. John i. 12 v. 24 1 Cor. i. 30. Heb. iii. 14. 2 John 9.
i Mark xvi. 16. John iii. 36. Gal. ii. 20.

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matter of fact; and almost all human affairs, even when the lives or interests of whole nations lie at stake, are conducted and determined by "receiving the testimony of "men;" and though it is known that all men are liable to be deceived or mistaken, and prone to deceive, yet he that should refuse to act upon human testimony, and should require another kind of demonstration in the various concerns of life, must soon not only give over all business, but refuse his most needful sustenance. If, then, the witness of men must be received, how absurd is it to reject that of God! This must be greater, or more indisputably certain; (iii. 20;) as he knoweth all things, cannot mistake or be imposed on, can have no possible inducement to deceive his creatures, is essential Truth, and cannot lie. (6. *Ps.* xix. 7.) The testimony of God is therefore the highest kind of demonstration: and we need only inquire into the evidence, that he hath spoken; and into the meaning of his words, which the honest, humble, and diligent inquirer will not be left greatly to mistake in; and then we obtain the utmost certainty that can be conceived, in things of the greatest importance. Thus faith appropriates the information contained in the testimony of God, and in a most compendious manner renders a man wise unto salvation. But the principal truth which God hath testified, in his authenticated word, is that which relates to his Son, and the way of salvation through him. He therefore who credits the witness of God, will "believe "on the Son of God," and rely on him for the blessings which he came into the world to purchase for sinners, and to bestow on them; and in consequence of this faith, he will receive another, and still more satisfactory testimony to the truth of the Gospel, which also seals to him his interest in Christ and his salvation. For "he that believeth "on the Son of God hath the witness in himself;" his discoveries of the glory of God in the Person of Christ, and the change thus produced in his judgment, dispositions, and affections; the views which he hath received of the evil of sin, of his own character and condition, of the deceitfulness and wickedness of his heart, and of the wretched state of the world around him; all of which he now perceives to accord exactly with the declarations of scripture, though once he saw nothing of it; the victory which he is enabled by faith to obtain over the world, his own bad habits and propensities, and the temptations of Satan; the evident answers which many of his prayers receive, and his experience of the faithfulness of God to his promises, and of his providential regard to him; and above all, "the love of God shed abroad in his heart by "the Spirit" of adoption; the peace, hope, and consolation connected with it; the pleasure he finds in communion with God, and obedience to his will; his delight in the society of spiritual persons, and the support which he receives when afflicted; these, and similar experiences, form a "witness in himself," to which all other men must be strangers; for "the Spirit of God thus witnesses with his "spirit, that he is the child of God," and gives him sweet earnests and foretastes of his eternal inheritance. This puts the matter out of all doubt with him, (except in hours of peculiar darkness, conflict, temptation, or humiliating correction;) and he can no more be argued out of his belief of the leading truths of the Gospel, respecting the Person and salvation of Christ, by any ingenuity or sophistry of infidels or heretics, than he could be convinced by logic that the sun was a dark, cold body, when he saw its light, and felt its genial warmth. This testimony proves, both that the scripture is the word of God, that he rightly understands the most essential parts of it, and that he is a partaker of the blessing thus announced to him. (*Notes, John* xi. 40. 2 *Pet.* i. 19.) On the other hand, he that believeth not God, in respect of his testimony to his Son, can never receive "the witness in himself;" but must expect his heavy displeasure; seeing "he maketh God a "liar," or treats his word as utterly unworthy of credit or confidence. This is the case of every one, "who believes "not the testimony which God hath given of his Son," and confirmed in all the ways above enumerated. (*Marg. Ref.*) As all revelation centres in this fundamental doctrine, it is in vain for a man to pretend that he believes the testimony of God in other things, whilst he rejects it in this. His opinion may indeed accord with the doctrine of scripture, in matters less affronting to human pride, more level with the human understanding, or more reconcileable to the love, friendship, and pursuits of the world. Thus a man assents to scriptural truths, because he thinks they may be *otherwise* proved; at least there is no other evidence to be opposed to the testimony of God, and nothing to be lost by assenting to it: but if his own reasonings, or those of some proud philosophy, lead him to a conclusion contrary to the word of God, he will lean to his own understanding, or believe in a philosopher, and treat the testimony of God as a lie. Nay, men professing to believe the scriptures will reject doctrines expressly revealed there, or employ a perverse diligence and ingenuity to explain them away, merely because they can find no philosophical arguments, with which to confirm God's testimony! The light of the sun is not sufficient for them, nor will they be satisfied with it, unless they can see the same objects by their own dim candle! On the other hand, they will pretend to believe the word of God, when it accords with the opinion of some philosopher, who perhaps borrowed that glimmering from scripture, which preserves his scheme from total darkness: and they sometimes suppose themselves doing good service, when they call such witnesses to support the testimony of God. So that, in fact, they do not believe God, but other witnesses, when they assent to scriptural truth; for they directly treat him as a false Witness, when he contradicts their preconceived opinions. Thus it is evident, that no belief of the Bible, or of any thing revealed in it, is of any avail, except a man "believe the testimony which God "hath given of his Son;" which is a subject as much beyond the reach of man's reasonings, as it is contrary to his pride and worldly lusts. (*Note, John*. iii. 12—16.)

13 These things [k] have I written unto you that [l] believe on the name of the Son of God; that [m] ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

14 And [n] this is the confidence that we have * in him, that [o] if we ask any thing according to his will, [p] he heareth us:

15 And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, [q] we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

k i 4 ii. 13, 14. 21. 26. John xx. 31. xxi. 24 1 Pet. v. 12.
l iii. 23. John i 12. ii. 23 iii 18. Acts. iii. 16. iv. 12. 1 Tim. i. 15, 16.
m 10. i. 1, 2. Rom. viii. 15—17 2 Cor. v. 1. Gal iv 6. 2 Pet. i. 10, 11.
n iii 21. Eph iii. 1. Heb. iii. 6. 14. x. 35.
* Or, *concerning him.*
o *See on* iii. 22. Jer. xxix. 12, 13. xxxiii. 3 Matt. vii 7—11. xxi 22 John xiv 13. xv. 7. xvi. 24. Jam i 5, 6 iv. 3 v. 16.
p Job. xxxiv. 28 Ps xxxi. 22. xxiv. 17 lxix. 33. Prov. xv. 29 John ix 31. xi. 42.——q Mark xi. 24. Luke xi 9, 10.

16 If any man see his brother sin a sin, *which is* not unto death, [r] he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. [s] There is a sin unto death: [t] I do not say that he shall pray for it.

17 [u] All unrighteousness is sin: [x] and there is a sin not unto death.

18 We know that [y] whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God, [z] keepeth himself, and that [a] wicked one toucheth him not.

r Gen. xx. 7. 17. Ex. xxxii. 10-14. 31, 32. xxxiv. 9. Num. xii. 13. xiv. 11—21 Deut. ix. 18—20 2 Chron. xxx. 18—20. Job xlii. 7—9. Ps. cvi. 23. Ez xxii 30. Am. vii. 1—8. Jam. v. 14 15,
s Num. xv. 39. xvi. 26—32. 1 Sam. ii. 25. Jer. xv 1, 2. Matt xii. 31, 32. Mark iii. 28—30. Luke xii. 10. 2. Tim. iv. 14 Heb. vi. 4—6. x. 26—31. 2 Pet. ii 20—22
t Jer vii 16. xi. 14. xiv 11. xviii. 18—21 John xvii. 9
u *See on*, iii. 4. Deut. v. 32. xii 32——x *See on*, 16.—Is. i 18. Ez. xviii. 26—32 Rom. v. 20. 21. Jam. i. 15. iv. 7-10.——y 1. 4. ii. 29 iii. 9. iv. 6 John i. 13. iii. 2-5. Jam. i. 18. 1 Pet i. 23, z 21. iii 3. Ps. xvii. 4 xviii. 23. xxxix. 1. cxix. 101 Prov iv. 23. John xv. 4 7. 9, 10. Acts xi. 23. Jam. i. 27 Jude 21. 24 Rev. ii. 13 iii. 8—10.——a *See on*, ii. 13, 14, iii. 12.

V. 11, 12. The record, or testimony, of God, about which the apostle had repeatedly spoken, might be summed up in few words, as to its grand outline, "God hath given," of his free mercy and bounty, "to us," men, sinners, rebels, and enemies, even to all of our fallen race, who accept of the gift in his appointed way, "eternal life," or everlasting felicity, with every thing pertaining to it: "and this life is in his Son," in his Person, as "God manifested in the flesh;" and in his mediatory offices, as having all *fulness* in him, in consequence of his atoning sacrifice, for the pardon, sanctification, and salvation of every believer; so that this eternal life must be obtained and enjoyed by union and communion with Christ, both in respect of the title to it, the meetness for it, and the earnests of it. (*Note*, 1 *Cor*. i. 29—31. *Col*. iii. 1—4.) He therefore, "that hath the Son, hath life;" he that by true faith receiveth Christ, as the Son of God and as his Prophet, High Priest, and King, his "Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption;" who humbly depends on him for all these purposes, and is thus interested in him, and vitally united to him, and continually seeks and derives the blessings of salvation from him, through the influences of the Holy Spirit, "hath "life," is spiritually alive, hath the promise of eternal life ratified to him, and the sure earnests of it in his soul, which shall certainly issue in his everlasting felicity. "And he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life;" he who denies him to be truly and properly the Son of God, and refuses to trust and honour him as such; or who disdains to submit to his teaching as his Prophet, to rely on his atonement and intercession as his High Priest, or to obey him as his King, has not life; he is dead in sin, under condemnation, and the wrath of God abideth on him; nor will his morality, learning, philosophy, forms of religion, doctrinal notions, or enthusiastical confidence, at all avail him. For Christ is the believer's Life; and if a man do not live in Christ, by "faith working by love" and by the supply of his Spirit, he hath no life; whether he be an Infidel, a Socinian, or Arian; a Pharisee, a Mystic, an Enthusiast, or an Antinomian. To have Christ, we must receive him and abide in him, for all the purposes for which he came into the world; we cannot truly receive him in one character, whilst we reject him in another. He will not protect, deliver, or accept services from those, as a King, who will not be taught by him, or who despise his precious blood; and he will not save, as a High Priest, those who will not have him to rule over them.

V. 13. The apostle wrote the things above stated unto those who believed on the name of the Son of God, to confirm their faith, and to put them upon their guard against the seductions of false prophets; to assure them that theirs was the true religion of Christ, and that in him they had eternal life; and to encourage their hope, that they might more constantly and vigorously exercise and profess this faith in the Son of God, amidst all the delusions, persecutions, and tribulations, with which they met. The epistle might indeed be, and it has been, very useful to other descriptions of men; but this was the primary intent of it.

V. 14—18. The confidence which established Christians had in God, respecting the promise of eternal life in his Son, had an especial reference to his readiness to answer their prayers, through the heavenly Advocate, notwithstanding their sinfulness. They were assured, that if they asked any thing, however great or difficult, according to his will, after the prescribed manner, in humble faith, hope, and uprightness, grounding their requests upon his promises, and submitting themselves to his wise and righteous providence, "he certainly heard them," and accepted of their worship. And, knowing this, they were thence assured, that they had the "petitions which they "desired of him;" being confident that his omnipotence would certainly effect the purpose of his love, and fulfil his faithful promises. In some things their prayers were evidently and speedily answered; in others, they might be satisfied that they were granted in the best manner, though not exactly as they expected; and even when their requests were for the present denied, they made themselves sure, that in the best time and way they would at length be answered, in case this was for the glory of God, and their own real and abiding advantage: and this composed their minds, even as if they had already obtained their petitions. Whilst they thus asked and received, in their own behalf, that "their joy might be full," that love, which had been so largely insisted on, would dictate many prayers for their brethren; especially when they had been overcome by temptation, or were under some sharp chastisement; and they might be assured, that the Lord would graciously accept and answer such prayers; and in answer

19 *And* [b] we know that we are of God, [c] and the whole world lieth in * wickedness.

20 And [d] we know that the Son of God is come, [e] and hath given us an understanding, that we may know [f] him that is true; [g] and we are in him that is true, *even* in his Son Jesus Christ. [h] This is the true God, and eternal life.

21 [i] Little children, [k] keep yourselves from idols. [l] Amen.

See on, 10 13 20 iii. 14. 24. iv. 4 6. Rom viii. 16 2 Cor i 12. v. 1. 2 Tim i 12 c *See on* iv 4, 5. John xv. 18, 19. Rom. i. 28--32. iii. 9--18 Gal i 4 Tit iii 3. Jam. iv. 4 * Or, *the wicked one*. 18. John xii. 31 xiv 30 xvi 11. 2 Cor. iv. 4. Eph. ii 2. Rev. xii. 9. xiii. 7, 8 xx. 3 7 8 ——d 1 iv. 2 14 ——e Matt. xiii. 11. Luke xxi 15. xxiv 45. John xvii. 3. 14. 25, 26. 1 Cor. i. 30. 2 Cor iv. 6 Eph. i 17, 18 iii 18, 19. Col ii. 2, 3.——f John xiv. 6. Rev. iii. 7 14. vi. 10. xv 3 xix 11.

g *See on*, ii. 6. 24. iv. 16.—John x. 30. xiv. 20 23. xv. 4. xvii. 20—23. 2 Cor. v. 17. Phil. iii 9. h 11, 12 i 1—3. Is ix 6. xliv. 6. xlv. 14, 15. 21—25. liv. 5. Jer. x. 10 xxiii. 6 John. i. 1—3 xiv 9 xx. 28 Acts xx 28 Rom ix. 5. 1 Tim iii. 16. Tit. ii. 13. Heb. i 8 —i *See on*, ii 1 —k Ex. xx. 3 4 1 Cor. x. 7. 14. 2 Cor. vi 16, 17. Rev. ix. 20. xiii. 14, 15. xiv. 11.——l *See on*, Matt vi. 13.

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to them, grant repentance unto life to such as had sinned, but not unto death; and that he would remove the corrections, with which they had been visited. Yet they must observe, that "there was a sin unto death," which would be an exception to this rule; nor were they required or encouraged to pray for those who had committed it. It hath been shown, that apostacy, after an intelligent and credible profession of the Gospel, when connected with strong expressions of enmity, could seldom be separated from the sin against the Holy Spirit. (*Notes, Matt.* xii. 31, 32. *Heb.* vi. 4--8. x. 26—31.) This, no doubt, was that sin unto death, which the apostle intended; and, when it appeared evident that any person had committed it, Christians were directed to leave him to the righteous judgment of God, without expecting to see him renewed to repentance. Indeed, "all unrighteousness," or every deviation from the perfect rule of righteousness, is sin, and so deserves death, or final condemnation, according to the law; and all who turn aside from the Gospel, or act contrary to it merit this punishment: yet "there is a sin," even of this kind, "which is not unto death;" for, being the effect of surprise rather than of deliberate enmity, many, who were thus overcome in the moment of danger, had been and might be recovered: so that they were admonished to pray for their brethren, when grievously fallen, if they did not see in them the marks of determined obstinacy and enmity. The apostle had before observed, that none who were born of God could live in known and allowed sin, (iii. 9:) and he here added, that none of them were left to commit the unpardonable sin; for though such apostates had gone out from them, they had never been of them; (ii. 19.) As the man, (who is born of God, not allowing himself in any sin, but watching and praying, in the faith, fear, and love of God, to be preserved from temptation, or supported under it;) "keeps "himself," by the Holy Spirit, out of the way of this fatal transgression: so that the wicked one, by whom false professors are overcome and induced to apostatize, is not allowed access to him, or can make no impression on him. Satan obtained leave to *sift* all the apostles, and he grievously baffled and wounded Peter; but he could touch none of them, except hypocritical Judas, so as to prevail with them deliberately to renounce and betray their Lord: for the incorruptible seed abode in their hearts, in the genuine faith, love, and integrity, produced by it; and therefore they could not thus sin, because they were born of God.

V. 19. The apostle, and such established Christians as had "the witness in themselves," in love to God and each other, hatred of sin, and victory over the world, knew assuredly that they "were of God," born of God, his servants and worshippers, his children and heirs: and they also clearly perceived, that "the whole world lay in "wickedness," or *under* "the wicked one." All the human race, unless born of God, and become a part of Christ's kingdom, abide in willing subjection to the devil, (who is the god and prince of this world,) and are his vassals and slaves. They are overcome by him, and brought into bondage to him; they bear his image, and copy his example of pride, envy, malice, deceit, murder, mischief, slander, apostacy, rebellion, ingratitude, and enmity against God. They do the works of the devil, and concur in supporting his cause; they have neither wisdom, power, nor will, to deliver themselves; and they all must for ever have continued in this dreadful state, if Christ had not "come to destroy the works of the devil." This general declaration includes all unbelievers, whether Jews or Gentiles, idolaters, or hypocritical worshippers of the true God; atheists, infidels, profligates, profane persons, and formalists: the wise and foolish, the learned and unlearned, the rich and the poor, the royal and noble, as well as the base and vile; yea, the moral and virtuous, as well as the vicious. All lie in wickedness, under the power of unrepented and unmortified sin; or under the wicked one, as in some way or other doing him service; those only excepted, who "are delivered from the power "of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of the "Son of God." This the well instructed and established Christian knows assuredly: and the criminality, slavery, and misery of the human race excite his lamentations, prayers, and endeavours to spread the Gospel, as the only method, by which they can be delivered from their abject condition. Yet other men perceive nothing of it; but are exceedingly offended at the declaration, and at the endeavours used, "to turn them from darkness to light, and "from the power of Satan unto God." As the apostle made no exception in favour of unbelieving Jews in his day; so we can allow of none, in favour of unbelieving, heretical, and carnal men, *called Christians* in this present time. (iv. 5.)

V. 20, 21. The apostle, and his brethren also, knew, "that the Son of God was come; and that he," either Christ, or the Father, for it is not evident which Person was intended, "had given them an understanding, to "know him that is true;" (*Notes, Luke* xxi. 15. xxiv. 45:) so that their believing, experimental, and sanctifying knowledge of the Son of God, as the true and faithful Witness, the Truth and the Life, and of the only true God in him, (*John* xvii. 3.) was the effect of divine grace through the Spirit, who is Truth, (6.) Thus, having "the witness in themselves;" they knew that they "were "in him that is true," united unto the true and eternal God, by faith and love, abiding in him as their Rest and Refuge, and living in him by his indwelling Spirit; "*even* "in his Son Jesus Christ:" by union with Christ they were thus spiritually united unto God; because "He and "the Father are one." (*Note, John* xvii. 21—23.) "*This* "*Person* is the true God, and eternal life." (i. 2.) The language here used is peculiarly to be noted: it is not obvious to determine, in some clauses, whether the Father or the Son was intended; but when "the Son of God, "even Jesus Christ" had been mentioned, the apostle made use of a personal pronoun, (often *improperly* rendered "this man," when applied to Christ, but commonly signifying *this Person*.) This demonstrative pronoun hath Jesus Christ for its immediate and evident antecedent; and having said "*this Person* is the true God, and eternal 'Life," the apostle concluded by solemnly cautioning his beloved children "to keep themselves from idols;" which must imply, that this would be done, by worshipping the Son as the true God and eternal Life. The scripture, and the New Testament especially, was expressly intended to draw men off from the worship of idols of every kind, to serve the One, living, and true God; and can it possibly be imagined for a moment, that an *inspired* writer should speak in this manner of Jesus Christ, if he had not been, equally with the Father, the proper object of all adoration? If the worship of the Son of God were idolatry, (as it must be, if he were no more than a creature,) surely the apostle introduced his caution against idols in a very unaccountable manner! But if the triune Jehovah, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, three Persons in One undivided Godhead, be the Object, and the only Object, of divine adoration, nothing could be more proper and emphatical: for the Jews, rejecting the Son, and professing to worship God in one Person, (as the Mahometans, deists, socinians, and others in after ages have done,) had really charged the true Object of worship, the God of the Bible, for an imaginary Being, and could not easily be exculpated from the charge of idolatry; for they could not be discriminated from those, who worshipped the supreme being under the name of Jupiter, or Baal. So that Christians in our days, in other places besides the church of Rome, have more need to be warned to keep themselves from idols, than is generally supposed; and to be careful, that they adore the triune God, in whose name Christ commanded that his disciples should be baptized: and that, whilst they bow their knees to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus, they remember to honour the Son even as they honour the Father; in dependence on the omnipresent and divine Spirit, and under his guidance; that the grace of the Lord Jesus, the love of the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, may be with them at all times. Amen.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

True faith in Christ always springs from regeneration; and all, who are not born of God, are either mere infidels, or they have only a dead and unprofitable faith. True Christians show their faith by their works: they love God, and all whom they judge to be his children; and this is proved to be genuine, by the pleasure which they take in keeping their Father's commandments; for, instead of deeming them grievous, they seek liberty and happiness in obeying them. By a new and divine nature, and the grace of the Holy Spirit co-operating with it, and by the exercise of faith in the testimony, the promise, the power, and the love of God, they gradually acquire a victory over the world, and learn habitually to do the will of God, without being seduced, persuaded, or affrighted from it, by any persons or objects in the world around them. Indeed this victory cannot be acquired without conflict; and it is never *absolutely* perfect in this life: yet our faith prevails so far above what any other principle can do, that we may boldly say, "Who is he that overcometh the world, "but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" Let then all who profess to believe the Gospel inquire, whether they have obtained, or are contending for, this victory. For we must all, after Christ's example, overcome the world, or it will overcome us to our final ruin. A worldly carnalized Gospel is the peculiar danger of the present day, and gives infidels and heretics of every name their chief advantage against the truth of God's word. The Gospel, which is so abundantly attested by all the Persons in the Godhead, by miracles and prophecies, by the peculiar ordinances of the new dispensation, by the holy lives, patient sufferings, and joyful deaths of apostles, evangelists, and martyrs, relates especially to the Person of Emmanuel, to the efficacy of his atoning blood, and "the "sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience:" and as the miraculous powers communicated by the Holy Spirit bore witness to the apostle's doctrine, so his new-creating work, in our hearts, attests our interest in the great redemption of the Son of God; nor can this deceive us, "because the "Spirit is Truth." As Jesus, therefore, came not by water only, or by blood only, but by water and blood, let us never attempt to separate what God hath thus joined together: for the holy lives of all, who profess the doctrine of grace, is that testimony to the truth, which is at present principally wanting, in order to stop the mouths and silence the objections of all who oppose them.

V. 9—13.

Nothing can be more absurd than the claim of those men, who will be satisfied with nothing but *demonstration* in matters of religion; whilst, in the ordinary affairs of life, they hesitate not to proceed upon credible *human testimony*, and would deem him out of his senses, that refused to do so; whereas, "if we receive the witness of "men," surely "the witness of God is greater!" Indeed, it is impossible that the invisible things of God and the eternal world should be known, except by faith receiving the information of divine revelation: for in what other way can we know the inconceivable perfections of God, his inscrutable counsels, or the manner in which he will show mercy to his rebellious creatures? These are not subjects for man to discover or know, by speculation or abstract reasonings; but will always be best understood by those, who most simply believe the sure testimony of God respecting them. And indeed they, who believe in the Son of God, have an inward testimony to the truth, through the illumination, renewal and consolations of the Holy Spirit, and in their own happy experience: which, when possessed in a large degree, is a rational foundation of the most entire confidence that can possibly be had by those, who have not come to the immediate vision and enjoyment of God. But can it be expected, that this "Secret of the

"LORD" should be with those who do not believe his word, and who treat Him, who is Truth itself, as a liar and deceiver? This is the case of all who believe not "the record which God hath given of his Son;" and it does not become them to treat the steadfastness of experienced Christians as obstinacy, or their consolations as enthusiasm, when they are so fully warranted by the word of God. Disregarding then their self-wise reasonings, let us thankfully receive the record of Scripture, that "God "hath given us eternal life, and that this life is in his "Son;" he who hath the Son hath life, and he "who "hath not the Son of God, hath not life:" that we may give diligence to obtain an assurance of our interest in Christ, and know that we have eternal life; and may so grow stronger in faith, more steadfast in hope, "and al-"ways abounding in the work of the Lord; knowing that "our labour is not in vain in the Lord."

V. 14—21.

Confiding in the love of our heavenly Father, and coming to him through our great Advocate, we may be assured that he always heareth, accepteth, and answereth all such prayers, as accord with his will, and tend to our real benefit. We should, therefore, abound in supplication for our brethren, as well as for ourselves, especially seeking to the Lord to pardon and recover the fallen, as well as to relieve the tempted and afflicted: and as we cannot know who hath sinned unto death, we should not easily yield to discouragement, respecting those whom we once considered as brethren. We ought to be very thankful, that no sin is unto death, according to the Gospel, of which a man truly repents; and that God will enable all those, who are born of him, to keep themselves, that the wicked one may never prevail on them to sin, in the manner which they do who are given up to a reprobate mind. If we have so grown in faith and grace, as to "know that "we are of God;" we shall readily perceive that "the "whole world lieth in wickedness," and under the power of Satan: this will show us how vast our obligations are to redeeming love and special grace; and ought to excite our constant prayers and unremitting endeavours, to promote the preaching of the Gospel, and the conversion of sinners, by every means in our power. Happy are they, who know that the Son of God is come, and to whom God hath given an understanding to know, and a heart to rely on, him that is true! May this be our privilege; may we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us; may we be one with him, and he with us; for "*this* is the true God and eter-"nal life:" thus our fellowship will be with the Father and the Son, through the Spirit, and we shall be preserved from all idols and destructive heresies, and from the idolatrous love of worldly objects, and be "kept by "the power of God through faith unto eternal salvation."

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF

JOHN.

This short epistle, and that which follows, being written, as is probable, not long before the apostle's death, and neither to any church by name, nor to the churches at large, were not so generally and unanimously known and acknowledged, as written by him, in the earliest ages, as the preceding epistle was: but their coincidence with it, in sentiment, manner, and language, at an early period satisfied all concerned, that they were written by the same person. Mill observes, that of the thirteen verses in this epistle, eight may be found in the first, either in sense or in expression. (Marg. Ref.) *The word rendered, "The elder," might probably be applied to St. John, when all the other apostles were dead; as a title of honourable distinction; for he was the Senior of the whole church: or he might modestly, yet as claiming authority, assume it on this occasion. Some have conjectured, that the church of Jerusalem was figuratively meant, by "The elect lady;" and that of Ephesus, where John is supposed to have at this time resided, by "her elect sister:" but it hath more generally been thought, that an eminent and honourable Christian matron, well known in the church, was addressed by the title of "the elect lady," and that some other honourable Christian, nearly related to her, was intended by "her elect sister,"* (v. 13.) *On any supposition, however, the title of* catholic, *cannot properly belong to it:* (Preface to 1 Peter:) *as the writer's purpose of visiting, in a short time, those whom he addressed, is alone a sufficient proof. It is supposed, that the apostle especially intended, in this epistle, to put those to whom he wrote on their guard against such heretics, as affirmed that Jesus was not really a man, but only* appeared *to be one; and* appeared *to do and suffer those things which the apostles and evangelists recorded of him. This heresy was, in its consequences, subversive of Christianity; which accounts for the decision of the writer against those teachers who held it.* (Note, 7—11.) *The same decided conduct is, however, equally needful, reasonable, pious, nay, charitable, (in the true sense of the word,) in respect of those who propagate many other opinions, subversive of the Gospel; who yet exclaim against the bigotry of those, (however benevolent and beneficent in all other things,) who determine not to be partakers of their evil deeds.*

A. D. 90. *A. D.* 90.

The apostle addresses, with expressions of affectionate regard, and with salutations, "the elect lady and her children," declaring his joy in their good behaviour, 1—4. *He exhorts them to brotherly love and obedience,* 5, 6. *He warns them against deceivers, that neither they nor he may lose their full reward,* 7, 8; *and against giving the least countenance to those who did not bring the true doctrine of Christ,* 9—11. *He hopes to see them shortly, and concludes with salutations,* 12, 13.

THE [a] Elder unto [b] the elect lady and her children, [c] whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have [d] known the truth;

2 For [e] the truth's sake, [f] which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever.

3 [g] Grace * be with you, mercy, *and* peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, [h] the Son of the Father, [i] in truth and love.

4 I [k] rejoiced greatly, that I found of thy children [l] walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father.

5 And now I beseech thee, lady, [m] not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, [n] that we love one another.

6 And [o] this is love, that we walk after his commandments. [p] This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it

7 For [q] many deceivers are entered into the world, [r] who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

8 [s] Look to yourselves, [t] that we lose not those things we have † wrought, but [u] that we receive a full reward.

9 Whosoever transgresseth, [x] and abideth not in [y] the doctrine of Christ, [z] hath not God: [a] He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, [b] he hath both the Father and the Son.

10 If there [c] come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed:

11 For he that biddeth him God speed, is [d] partaker of his evil deeds.

a 1 Pet. v. 1. 3 John 1.
b 5. 13. Luke i 3. Eph. i. 4, 5. 1 Thes. i. 3, 4 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14. 1 Pet. i 2.
c 2, 3. 1 Pet. i. 22, 23. 1 John iii. 18. 3. John 1.
d John viii. 32. Gal. iii. 1 v 7. Col i. 5. 2 Thes ii. 13. 1 Tim. ii. 4. Heb. x. 26. 1 John ii. 21.
e 1 Cor ix. 23. 2 Cor iv. 5
f John xv. 7. Col. iii 16. 2 Tim. i. 5. 1 Pet. i. 23—25. 1 John ii. 14. 17.
g *See on*, Rom. i. 7. 1 Tim. i. 2
* Gr. *shall be.*
h 1 John ii. 23, 24. iv. 10.
i 1. Zech. viii. 19 Gal. v. 6. 1 Tim. i. 14. 2 Tim. i. 13.
k Phil. iv. 1. 1 Thes. ii. 19, 20. iii. 6—10. 3 John 3, 4.
l Hos. xiv. 9. Mal. ii. 6. Gal. ii. 14. Eph. v. 2. 8. 1 John i 6, 7. ii. 6.
m 1 John ii. 7, 8. iii. 11 ——n John xiii. 34, 35. xv. 12. Gal. v 22. Eph. v. 2. 1 Thes. iv. 9. Heb. xiii. 1. 1 Pet i 22, 23 iv. 8. 2 Pet. i. 7. 1 John iii. 14—18. 23. iv. 7—12. 20, 21.——o John xiv. 15. 21. xv. 10. 14. Rom. xiii. 8, 9. Gal. v. 13, 14. 1 John v. 3.
p *See on*, 5.
q *See on*. 2 Pet. ii. 1—3. 1 John ii. 18—22 iv. 1
r John i. 14. 1 Tim. iii. 16.—*See on*, 1 John iv. 2, 3.—Rev. xii. 9. xiii. 14
s Matt. xxiv. 4. 24, 25. Mark xiii. 5, 6. 9. 23. Luke xxi. 8. Heb xii. 15. Rev. iii. 11.
t Gal iv. 11. Phil. ii. 15, 16.
† Gr. *gained.* Some copies read, *which ye have gained, but that ye receive*, &c.
u Dan. xii. 3. John iv. 36. 1 Cor. iii. 8. 14 xv 58.
x *See on*, 1 John ii. 22—24.
y John vii. 16, 17. Acts ii. 42. Col. iii 16. Tit. ii. 10. Heb vi. 1.
z Matt. xi. 27 Luke x. 22. John v. 23. xiv. 6.
a Heb. iii. 14.
b 1 John i. 3.
c 11 Rom xvi 17, 18. 1 Cor v. 11. xvi. 22. Gal. i. 8. 9 2 Tim. iii. 5. 6 Tit. iii. 10.
c Gen xxiv. 12. Ps. cxxix. 8.
d Ps. l. 18 Eph. v. 11. 1 Tim. v. 22. Rev. xviii. 4.

NOTES.

V. 1—3. The aged apostle seems to have written this short letter about the same time with his general epistle; and he only styled himself "the Elder," (1 *Pet. v.* 1;) knowing that the honourable matron, whom he addressed, would be satisfied from whom she received it; and properly regard it, without a more explicit declaration of his authority. She seems to have been a person of superior rank; he did not scruple to give her the title of honour which custom had allotted to her; and his acquaintance with her "work of faith, her labour of love, and her patience of hope," satisfied him concerning her "election of God." He also addressed her children, who were trained up in religion, and some of them at least were partakers of her grace. He assured them, that "he loved them in the truth;" in sincerity, and as united by the bond of the truth of the Gospel, which they all believed. Nor was this peculiar to the aged apostle; for all those loved them, who had understood and known the truth; that is, all such as were acquainted with her and her family. This affection was borne to them "for the truth's sake, which dwelt" both in this matron and her children, and in those that loved them; and which would be with them for ever, as the incorruptible seed of eternal life. The same, or a similar benediction, has repeatedly been considered; except as the apostle added, "in truth and love;" which seems to refer to the cordiality and fervency with which he sought those spiritual blessings, in behalf of the persons to whom he wrote.

V. 4. The apostle had either met with the children of this honourable matron, in some place whither he had journeyed, and found that they "walked in truth;" and evinced their sincerity in professing the Gospel, by an habitual conduct consistent with it: or he had witnessed this when he was with them. It, however, gave great joy to his benevolent and pious mind, to see them tread in their honoured parent's steps, and likely to be instrumental in their turn to the support of the Gospel.

V. 5, 6. *I beseech*, &c. 'This sort of address suits 'a particular person, better than a whole church consist-'ing of many individuals.' (*Macknight.*) What follows accords to that which has already been considered. (1 *John* ii. 7—11. v. 1—5.)

V. 7—11. The influence of the false teachers tended to disunion among Christians, as well as to pervert and mislead the unstable. (*Notes*, 1 *John* ii. 18—29. iv. 1—6.) It therefore behooved those to whom this epistle was addressed, and all into whose hands it might come, to be upon their guard, and to take heed to themselves, to their principles, spirits, and conduct; lest the labour of their ministers should prove fruitless, and their expectations be disappointed; and lest even their own losses, self-denial, and diligence in the cause of the Gospel, should prove of no use to them. This would be wholly the case of apostates; and in some degree of those who were seduced into heretical opinions and an inconsistent conduct. Whereas the apostle's desire was, that he and they together might receive a full reward, which would be the case, if they were steadfast in the faith and obedience of the Gospel: as this would at present recompense him, by his joy in them, for all his labours on their account; and they would at last be his crown of rejoicing in the day of Christ. But whosoever transgressed, habitually and with allowance, the commandments before spoken of, or abode not in the doctrine of Christ, had not God for his Father and Portion; as he only, who abode in that doctrine, was interested in the special love of the Father, and the redemption of the Son. If therefore any persons came to the place where this elect lady and her family resided, to propagate their tenets, who brought not with them, in their profession and preaching, the doctrine of Christ, respecting his Person, as the incarnate Son of God, and his salvation

12 Having [e] many things to write unto you, [f] I would not *write* with paper and ink: but [g] I trust to come unto you, and speak [*] face to face, [h] that [†] our joy may be full.

13 The [i] children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen.

e John xvi 12

f 3 John 13

g Rom. xv. 24 1 Cor. xvi 6—7 Philem 22 Heb. xiii. 19. 23.

* Gr. *mouth to mouth.* Num. xii. 8.

h John xv 11. xvi. 24. xvii. 13. 2 Tim iv. 4. 1 John i. 4.

† Or, *your*

i *See on*, 1. 1 Pet v. 13.

from guilt and sin; they were warned not to entertain them in their house, nor "to wish them good success in the name of the Lord:" for by thus countenancing their ministry, they would partake in the guilt of their evil deeds, and be abetting to the destruction of men's souls and the dishonour of God. They might relieve such persons in sickness or distress, or show good-will to them in any way that gave no sanction to their pernicious doctrines: but they must stand aloof from them, and protest openly against them, in this respect, that they might prevent their mischievous success as much as possible. The heretics, especially intended, are supposed to be those who denied the real humanity of the divine Word; and explained all that was recorded of his actions and sufferings as mere delusive appearances.

V. 12, 13. The apostle expected much joy and comfort in visiting, and conversing with, this pious matron and her family, and to be a helper of their joy also; that so their consolation in Christ might be complete. We know nothing concerning "her elect sister," who sent salutations to them, to which the apostle joined his hearty Amen. But it is probable, that some well known and eminent family of believers, residing near to the place where the apostle was at this time, is meant.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

A consistent and fruitful profession of the Gospel is the principal honour, even of those few of the noble and exalted of the earth, who are thus distinguished: and that love is most cordial and permanent, which Christians bear to one another in the truth, and for the sake of it; for this will dwell in their souls to eternity, and be with them as the source of most perfect felicity. All, who know and love the Gospel, will love such as profess and adorn it; and will pray, that "grace may be with them, even mercy and peace, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love:" and it will greatly rejoice faithful and zealous ministers, to see the honourable of the earth employ their influence and improve their talents to promote true religion; to observe them educating their "children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" and to witness any of their descendants walking in the truth and obedience of the Gospel; as ready to support that good cause while they live, and to bequeath a regard towards it to the succeeding generation. Some few families of this kind are found among us: may the Lord bless them more and more, and their children after them; and raise up many others to copy their example! For, alas! most of the superior orders in the community are rapidly diffusing irreligion, infidelity, and vice, in their extensive circles; and preparing to leave them as a fatal legacy to their posterity. We should employ every argument and persuasion, to induce Christians to abound in love of their brethren, and to render obedience to all the Lord's commandments: for those "many deceivers, who confess not that Jesus Christ," the Son of God, "is come in the flesh," "to redeem us to God with his blood," will have great success among those professors of Christianity who are not rooted and grounded in love, and taught to delight in God's commandments. As such deceivers and antichrists multiply on every side, it behooves us to look to ourselves and to each other; especially ministers to their people, and parents to their children; that we may not lose the things which we have wrought, but receive a full reward. Let us then equally disregard those who transgress the commandments, and those who abide not in the doctrine of Christ; that, by maintaining and obeying the truth, we may have both the Father and the Son for our "Shield and exceeding great Reward." Let us protest against such teachers as do not bring with them the doctrine of Christ; not giving them any entertainment, and not seeming to "wish them God speed;" lest any should by our means be induced to hearken to their damnable heresies, and so we should be found partakers of their evil deeds, which are often a thousand times more mischievous to mankind, than those of profligates or even assassins, as they murder far more souls than the others can do bodies of men. In obeying this commandment of God, amidst the clamours which will be raised against our bigotry and uncharitableness, we should be careful to show great candour to those who differ from us in matters less essential, who hold the doctrine of Christ's Person, atonement, and holy salvation: and we ought to pray for those deluded men, who deny the fundamentals of Christianity, and show them kindness, in every way, and by every method, which implies no countenance of their heresies. Thus we shall stand at a distance from all appearance of persecution and intolerance, whilst we strenuously assert the difference between the Gospel of Christ and the doctrine of every antichrist: and between the love due to enemies and that which belongs to the saints, in whose communion we find much of our present joy, as an anticipation of our eternal felicity.

THE THIRD EPISTLE OF

JOHN.

'The writer of this epistle speaks with an authority, which the bishop of a particular church could not pretend to. For if Diotrephes was bishop of one of the churches of Asia, the bishop of Ephesus,' (that is, *if not an apostle also,*) *'had no right to say to him, "If I come, I will remember his deeds which he does."* '(Note 9, 10) *That language, and the visit made to the churches, denote a man who had a more general 'jurisdiction, than that of a bishop, and can only suit St. John the apostle.'* (Beausobre, and L'Enfant, in Macknight.) *All inquiries, whether Gaius, to whom the epistle is addressed, was, or was not, the same person, mentioned in the Acts of the apostles, and the epistles of St. Paul, have hitherto terminated in uncertainty. There can be no reasonable doubt, but that "the strangers," and those "who for his name's sake went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles," were evangelists, or missionaries.* (Notes.)

A. D. 90. *A. D.* 90.

The Apostle addresses Gaius with good wishes, commendations, and exhortations to persevere in his liberal and zealous support of those who went forth to preach the Gospel, 1—8. *He cautions him against the presumptuous and malicious designs of Diotrephes; and highly commends Demetrius,* 9—12. *Giving intimations of an intended visit, he concludes with salutations,* 13, 14.

1 THE [a] elder unto [b] the well-beloved Gaius, [c] whom I love * in the truth.

a *See on*, 2 John i.
b Acts xix 29. xx. 4. Rom. xvi. 23. 1 Cor. i. 14
c *See on*, 2 John 1.
* Or, *truly.*

2 Beloved, I † wish [d] above all things [e] that thou mayest prosper, and be in health, [f] even as thy soul prospereth.

3 For [g] I rejoiced greatly, [h] when the brethren came and testified of [i] the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth.

4 I have no greater joy than to hear that [k] my children [l] walk in truth.

5 Beloved, [m] thou doest faithfully

† Or, *pray.*
d Jam. v. 12. 1 Pet iv 8.
e Ps. xx. 1—5. Phil. ii. 4 27
f 3—6. Col. i. 4—6. 1 Thes. i. 3—10. ii. 13, 14. 19, 20. iii. 6—9. 2 Thes. i. 3. ii. 13, 14. Philem 5—7. 2. Pet. i. 3—9. iii. 18. Rev ii. 9.
g 4. *See on*, 2 John 4.—Phil. i. 4. 1 Thes. ii. 19, 20.
h Rom. i. 8, 9. 2 Cor. vii. 6, 7. Eph. i. 15, 16. Col. i. 7, 8. 1 Thes. iii. 6—9.——i *See on*, 2 John 2. 4. Ps. cxix. 11.——k Is. viii. 18. 1 Cor. iv. 15. Gal. iv. 19. Philem. 10——l 1 Kings ii. 4. iii. 6. 2 Kings xx. 3. Ps. xxvi. 1—3. Is. xxxviii. 3. John xii. 35, 36. Gal. ii. 14.——m Matt. xxiv. 45. Luke xii. 42. xvi. 10 12. 2 Cor. iv. 1—3. Col. iii, 17. 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11.

NOTES.

V. 1—4. (*Rom.* xvi. 23.) It hath been generally supposed, that the Gaius, to whom St. John wrote, was the same person, of whom frequent mention is made in the writings and history of Paul, and his character may seem to favour the opinion: but it is probable that John wrote his epistle many years after St. Paul's death. Gaius was a very common name; and the person here addressed appears to have been converted by John's ministry: so that no certainty can be attached to the opinion; nor is this of any consequence. After an address, couched in that affectionate and fervent language for which the apostle was remarkable, he added his earnest wish, "that concerning "all things," (for that seems to be the proper rendering,) "Gaius might prosper, and that he might be in health, "even as his soul prospered." Gaius was probably of a weak constitution, and had perhaps sustained heavy losses from the rapacity of persecutors; whilst at the same time "his soul prospered" exceedingly, as the apostle well knew: he therefore earnestly desired the confirmation of his health, that his valuable life might be prolonged: and that all his well-formed designs for usefulness might be prospered, and his ability for conducting them continued and increased. For the apostle had been greatly rejoiced, when certain brethren, (who seem to have been preachers of the Gospel,) had come from the residence of Gaius, "and had testified of the truth that was in him;" and of the consistency of his disposition, discourse, and conduct, with the truths which he had received and professed. The apostle indeed had no greater joy on earth, amidst all his labours, infirmities and sufferings, "than to hear that his "children," (either Christians in general, or such as had been converted by his ministry,) "walked in truth;" or showed the sincerity of their profession, by the effect of the truth upon their temper and conduct: for this would encourage his prayers, and hope in God, and animate him to fervent thanksgivings. Indeed it must have highly gratified the zeal and benevolence of his pious heart.

whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers;

6 Which [n] have borne witness of thy charity before the church: [o] whom if thou bring forward on their journey [*] after a godly sort, thou shalt [p] do well:

7 Because [q] that for his name's sake they went forth, [r] taking nothing of the Gentiles.

8 We therefore ought [s] to receive such, that we might be [t] fellow-helpers to the truth.

9 I wrote unto the church; but Diotrephes, [u] who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, [x] receiveth us not.

10 Wherefore, if I come, [y] I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words; and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, [z] and casteth *them* out of the church.

11 Beloved, [a] follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. [b] He that doeth good is of God: but [c] he that doeth evil, hath not seen God.

12 Demetrius hath [d] good report of all *men*, and of the truth itself: yea, [e] and we *also* bear record; and ye know that our record is true.

n 12 Philem 5—7

o Acts xv. 3 xxi 5. Rom. xv. 24 2 Cor. i. 16. Tit. iii 13.

* Or, *worthy of God.* 1 Thes ii. 12.

p Gen. iv 7 Jon. iv. 4. Matt. xxv. 21—23 Acts xv. 29 Phil. iv 14. 1 Pet. ii 20.

q Acts viii. 4. ix. 16. 2 Cor. iv. 5. Col. i. 24. Rev. ii. 3.

r 2 Kings v. 15, 16. 20—27. 1 Cor. ix 12—15. 2 Cor. xi. 7—9. xii. 13.

s 10 Matt. x. 14. Luke x. 7 2 Cor. vii 2, 3.

t 1 Cor. iii 5—9. xvi. 10. 11 2 Cor. vi. 1. viii 23. Phil. iv 3. Col. iv. 11. 1 Thes. iii. 2. Philem. 2 24.

u Matt. xx. 20—28. xxiii. 6. Mark ix. 34. x. 35—45. Luke xxii. 24—27. Rom. xii. 10. Phil ii. 3—5

x *See on*, 8 Matt. x. 40—42. Mark ix 37 Luke ix 48.

y 1 Cor. v 1—5. 2 Cor. x. 1—11. xiii. 2.

z Luke vi. 22. John ix. 22 34, 35

a Ex. xxiii 3. Ps. xxxvii. 27. Prov. xii 11. Is. i 16. 17. John x 27. xii 26. 1 Cor iv. 1 xi. 1. Ep. 1. Phil. iii. 17. 1 Thes. i. 6. ii. 14. 2 Tim. iii. 10. Heb vi. 12. 1 Pet. iii. 13.

b 1 Pet. iii 11— *See on*, 1 John ii. 29. iii. 6—9.

c John iii. 20.

d Acts x. 22. xxii. 12. 1 Thes. iv. 12 1 Tim. iii. 7.

e John xix 35. xxi. 24.

V. 5—8. The apostle thought it proper to commend his beloved Gaius as one who in all things acted in that manner which became a believer, and was faithful in the use of what had been committed to his stewardship: this appeared in whatever he did towards his fellow Christians and the ministers of the Gospel; and to the strangers, that were driven from home by persecution, or travelled abroad to preach the word of God. For these had borne testimony to his liberal and hospitable love, before the churches of Christ in different places, especially where St. John then resided: and in continuing to entertain such persons, and in aiding to defray their travelling expenses, from a regard to the will and glory of God, he would act in a manner becoming his character, and honourable to the Gospel.—Because, from love to Christ, and for the honour of his name, they had gone forth as evangelists, to preach among the Gentiles; determining to take nothing of them for their subsistence, to whatever straits they might be reduced; lest they should appear mercenary, and so prejudice the minds of men against their doctrine. It, therefore, became the duty of established Christians to entertain such zealous and disinterested ministers, and to contribute to their support, that they might be helpers, together with them, in propagating the truth of the Gospel, by enabling them to proceed in their work and labour of love. 'The 'apostle's sentiment in this precept is, that such of the 'brethren, as had not devoted themselves to the preaching 'of the Gospel, but followed their ordinary occupations at 'home, were bound to contribute, according to their ability, towards the maintenance of those who went about 'preaching the gospel.' (*Macknight.*) It is manifest, at the first glance, how exactly this accords to the case of those, in this commercial country, who cannot, or do not, become missionaries; and their conduct respecting those who are.

V. 9—12. Some expositors think, that the apostle here only meant, that he *should have written* to the church, had not the report which he had heard concerning Diotrephes determined him rather to address his letter to Gaius: but it does not appear that the words are capable of that construction. He seems to have written to the church, to induce them to help on their journey the persons before mentioned: but Diotrephes, (who probably was a pastor of the church, whose circumstances or abilities, concurring with his ambition of pre-eminence, had acquired him an undue influence over his brethren,) would not own his authority, nor pay any regard to his counsel. Wherefore the apostle observed, that if he came thither, as he intended to do shortly, he would publicly censure his conduct; or even enforce his decision by inflicting some miraculous punishment upon him, as he was not afraid nor ashamed to vent malicious or wicked invectives and slanders against him, in the most indecent manner. Nay, he did not think this a sufficient expression of his contempt and enmity; but refused to entertain, or countenance, those evangelists whom St. John recommended; and even forbade others to do it; and when they regarded the apostle's authority more than his prohibition, he proceeded to excommunicate them for so doing. It is indeed most wonderful, that a professed minister of Christ should thus pertinaciously oppose the aged apostle; and should acquire such authority over the affairs of any church, as to be supported in such a contest: yet this was most evidently the case. The apostle, therefore, warned his beloved Gaius not to be influenced by this ambitious man, or to imitate his conduct; let him not "follow the evil, but the good:" which was to be seen in the behaviour of professing Christians: for "the man who did good," and was kind, loving, and beneficent, from evangelical principles, was born of God, and belonged to him; whereas he who practised evil had no saving knowledge of him. But while the apostle cautioned him against Diotrephes, he pointed out to him another person of his acquaintance, that was well worthy of his imitation; as he had a good report of all Christians, and of men in general; yea, the very truth itself, as it were, bore testimony to his humble diligence, zeal, and honourable conduct: to which the apostle also added his testimony: which Gaius knew to be true and faithful: and he would therefore be sure to honour and imitate so excellent a man. 'Private offences against our'selves must be forgiven, and forgotten; but when the 'offence is an impediment to the faith, and very preju'dicial to the church, it is to be opposed and openly 'reproved.' (*Whitby.*)

13 I had [f] many things to write, but I will not with ink and pen write unto thee:
14 But I trust I shall shortly see thee, and we shall speak * face to face. [g] Peace *be* to thee. [h] *Our* friends salute thee. [i] Greet the friends by name.

f See on, 2 John 12.

* Gr. *mouth to mouth.*

g Gen. xliii. 23. Dan. iv. 1. Gal. vi. 16. Eph. vi. 23. 1 Pet. v. 14.

h Rom. xvi. 10, 11. *Marg.*—i *See on,* Rom. xvi. 1—16.

V. 13. 14. "The friends," as a term of mutual address among Christians, is found only in this place. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

How many professors of the Gospel are there, concerning whom the apostle's words may be reversed; so that we must earnestly wish and pray that their souls may prosper, as their health and outward circumstances do! For spiritual languor, and want of vigour and success in every thing conducive to the glory of God, may be observed in numbers, to bear proportion to their external prosperity. But there are a few, who are so eminent in grace, and zealous of good works, that the precarious state of their health gives concern to all who love the Gospel: and they earnestly desire the continuance of their lives, and the increase of their ability to do good, and that they may "prosper in all things even as their souls prosper." The conduct of such Christians gives a joy to faithful ministers, which counterbalances their grief on account of those who disgrace their profession: and every renewed testimony, which is borne to their walking in the truth, renews that inward satisfaction; for the rejoicing of such pastors over their children, and in their fruitfulness and consolation, differs widely from the selfish joy of prosperous hirelings: or that of such, as "love to have the pre-eminence." Parents and ministers should be as ready to commend what is well done, as to point out what is wrong, in the conduct of those whom they superintend; and indeed this is far more pleasing to a benevolent mind. The faithful stewards of Christ, whether they have been intrusted with "the mysteries of God," or with talents of another sort will at length obtain a good report: nor can multiplied charities, or "hospitality without grudging," be so concealed, as to remain unknown to the church. Applause properly introduces exhortations; and indeed it should be considered as an admonition to proceed in the same commendable behaviour. Ministers, who are constrained by the love of Christ, and of the souls of men, to go forth and encounter perils and hardships in spreading the Gospel, and who are content to struggle with poverty in their labour of love, rather than quit their stations, or do any thing to prevent their own success, are peculiarly entitled to the countenance and assistance of their fellow-christians. Every one, according to his ability, ought to assist such persons as circumstances require; that they may be fellow-helpers to the truth. Indeed that money must be well expended, which promotes the *faithful* preaching of the Gospel in any part of the world: and it is greatly to be wished, that all Christians would try to save, not only a little, but if practicable, *very much*, from their expenses, in order to create a fund for conducting such important designs. But, alas! we live too much to ourselves in these lukewarm days; and we need not wonder, if covetous and ambitious men, who love to have the pre-eminence in the church, disdain these admonitions from inferior ministers, when even the apostles were not secured from the presumptuous, insolent, and malicious opposition of persons of this description: but their deeds will one day be remembered against them, when "every One that exalteth "himself shall be abased, and they who humble themselves "shall be exalted." Let us then not follow that which is proud, selfish, malicious, slanderous, and wicked, though the example be given by eminent and distinguished persons; but let us be "followers of God, as "dear children, and walk in love," after the example of our Lord, and such as have most closely imitated him: for he who thus habitually doeth good, is of God; and he "that doeth evil hath not seen or known God," whatever his notions or gifts may be. We should therefore notice those "who by well-doing have put to silence the ignorance of foolish men," and who have good report of the truth itself, and of its most faithful and zealous friends: for by associating with such Christians, and copying their example, we shall have peace within, and live at peace with the brethren. Thus our communications with the Lord's people on earth will be very pleasant, and we shall be numbered with them in glory everlasting.

THE

EPISTLE GENERAL OF

JUDE.

The writer of this epistle so expressly describes himself as Jude, the brother of James, (Marg. Ref.) *that we must either allow him to have been Jude, the apostle, (called also Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus, who was brother, or near relation to our Lord,) or we must suppose the writer guilty of a direct forgery. Some hesitation, however, as to the authenticity of the epistle, seems for a time to have prevailed in the church, which was at length fully removed; though some learned moderns have, on frivolous pretences, as it seems to me, endeavoured to revive it. He calls himself, not an apostle, "but a servant of Jesus Christ;" and so does St. Paul.* (Phil. i. 1.) *He is also supposed to quote apocryphal books. Now St. Paul quoted heathen poets, when what was* true *in them might be adduced to good purpose; without at all sanctioning the fables which they contained. These are the chief objections; and they amount to nothing against the internal evidence, and the general current of antiquity. It is probable that St. Jude wrote to caution his brethren against the same deceivers, whom St. Peter, in his second epistle, had opposed; and nearly at the same time. Many think, that they both had access to some ancient book, which is now lost, and quoted from it; and likewise, that Jude had seen St. Peter's epistle; and, in order to add his testimony to the same effect, adopted several of his thoughts, and even expressions. This, however, is uncertain: for the same Spirit of prophecy might lead these two witnesses to oppose the corrupters of Christianity, by similar examples, arguments, and illustrations, without either of them knowing what the other wrote. There is no ground for the opinion that it was exclusively addressed to the Jewish converts: on the contrary, it seems to have been properly a catholic epistle, intended for all Christian Churches throughout the world. The exact time when, and the place from which, it was written are uncertain.*

A. D. 70. *A. D. 70.*

The address and salutation; and the writer's purpose in the epistle, namely, to establish Christians against certain false teachers of very bad character, 1—4. *The example of the Israelites, who perished in the wilderness; that of fallen angels, and that of Sodom, are adduced, as showing the danger to which they, who apostatized, or perverted the Gospel, were exposed,* 5—7. *The vile character of these seducers further stated, and their doom denounced; with reference to some traditions, concerning Michael contending with the devil about the body of Moses; and an ancient prediction delivered by Enoch, concerning "the day of judgment "and perdition of ungodly men,"* 8—16. *Warnings, counsels, and exhortations suited to the occasion; and a concluding ascription of glory to God,* 17—25.

[a] JUDE, [b] the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to [c] them that are sanctified by God the Father, and [d] preserved in Jesus Christ, [e] *and* called:

2 [f] Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.

3 Beloved, [g] when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the [h] common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you,* [i] that ye should earnestly contend for the faith [k] which was once delivered unto the [l] saints.

4 For there are certain men [m] crept in unawares, [n] who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; [o] ungodly men, [p] turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and [q] denying the [r] only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

a Matt. x. 3. *Lebbeus. Thaddeus.* Mark iii. 18. *Thaddeus.* Luke vi 16 John xiv. 22 Acts i. 13.
b John xii. 26 Acts xxvii. 23. Rom. i. 1. vi. 22. xvi 18. Jam. i. 1. 2 Pet i. 1.
c John xv. 16. xvii. 17. 19. 1 Cor. i. 2. vi 11. Eph. v 26. 1 Thes v 23. 1 Pet. i. 2
d John vi. 39. x. 28—30. xvii. 11. 12 2 Tim. iv 18. 1 Pet. i. 5.
e Rom. viii 30. ix 24. 1 Thes. ii. 12 2 Thes. ii 13, 14. 2 Tim. i. 9 Heb. iii. 1, 1 Pet. ii. 9. v. 10.——f *See on,* Rom. i. 7. 1 Pet. i 2. 2 Pet. i 2. Rev. i. 4—6.——g Rom xv 15, 16. Gal. vi. 11. Heb. xiii 22. 1 Pet. v. 12. 2 Pet. i. 12—15. iii. 1.——h Is. xlv. 17. 22. Acts iv. 12. xiii. 46, 47. xxviii. 28. Gal. iii. 28. Tit. i 4. 2 Pet. i. 1.
i Neh. xiii. 25. Jer. iv 3 Acts vi 8—10. ix 22 xv. i. 3. xviii. 4—6 28. Phil i 27. 1 Thes. ii 2 1 Tim. i. 18. vi. 12 2 Tim i. 13 iv. 7, 8. Rev. ii. 10 xii. 11.
k Deut. ix 10. xxxi 9 Acts xx. 27 1 Cor. xv. 3. 2 Pet. iii. 2.
l *See on,* Eph. i. 1. Phil. i. 1. Col i. 2.
m Matt. xiii 25. Acts xv. 24. Gal. ii. 4. Eph. iv. 14. 2 Tim. iii. 6. 2 Pet. ii 1, 2.——n Rom. ix. 21, 22. 1 Pet. ii. 8. 2 Pet. iii. 3.——o 15 2 Sam. xxii 5. Ps. i. 1. 1 Pet. iv. 18 2 Pet ii. 5, 6. iii 7——p Rom vi. 1, 2. Gal. v. 13. Tit. ii. 11, 12. Heb xii. 15, 16. 1 Pet ii 16. 2 Pet ii. 18—22.——q Tit. i. 16 2 Pet. ii. 1. 1 John ii. 22.——r Ps. lxii. 2. John xvii. 3. 1 Tim. vi 15, 16. Rev. xv. 4.

NOTES.

V. 1, 2. The apostle Jude, or Judas, (*John* xiv. 22.) seems to have written this short circular letter soon after Peter wrote his second epistle, with an intention of adding his protest also against the seducers whom Peter opposed. He styled himself "the servant of Jesus Christ, and the "brother of James," namely, of James the Less, the son of Alpheus, who was the author of the epistle bearing that name. The unusual ascription, (*Marg. Ref.*) of sanctification to God the Father, and the order of the words, have induced many expositors to explain "sanc"tified," of their being "set apart," or separated "in "the election of grace," by God the Father; in consequence of which they were given to Jesus Christ, and preserved, in and by him, from dying in their sins, or falling into fatal delusions, till called by the word and Spirit of God into a state of actual fellowship in the Gospel of Christ. Others suppose the order of the words to have been disregarded: and then the apostle's meaning is, that the persons addressed were regenerated and sanctified, by the grace communicated from God the Father; that they were thus brought home to the "good Shepherd, who "bought them with his blood," and were preserved by his watchful care; and, being "called according to his pur"pose," they would be "kept by the power of God "through faith unto salvation." In behalf of all these the apostle desired, that "mercy" to pardon their sins, to compassionate and relieve their miseries, and to supply their wants, "and peace," inward and outward, "and "love, might be multiplied unto them:" even the special love of God to them, with all its precious fruits, and their love to him, to one another, and to all men, for his sake. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3, 4. When the apostle applied himself, with all assiduity and care, to write to his fellow-christians, concerning that salvation, which was common to him and them, and every man who would accept of it, it appeared to him, upon mature consideration, most needful to address them upon the duty of "contending earnestly for the "faith," or doctrine, "once delivered to the saints," by the apostles and evangelists, who first preached the Gospel after the day of Pentecost. They could not but know the great fundamentals of that doctrine, respecting the person and salvation of the Lord Jesus, and his mediatorial authority over his redeemed subjects: and, as these were violently assaulted at that time, they ought to contend earnestly for them; patiently and constantly professing the faith, and adhering to the commands, of Christ, in the midst of hardships, opposition, and persecution, (ἐπαγωνίζεσθαι,) and diligently striving to disseminate the knowledge of uncorrupted Christianity in the world; refusing all countenance to those who opposed it; decidedly using all their influence to put others upon their guard, and to confirm them in the faith and practice of the Gospel; and to show them the falsehood and pernicious tendency of the heresies, which were propagated instead of them. Thus their example, profession, conversation, prayers, and improvement of talents, might be instrumental to impede the progress of fatal delusions, to establish the faith of the weak and wavering, and even to recover some of the fallen: and an earnest contending for the faith, with such weapons as these, would consist with meekness and benevolence; and differ widely from that controversy, which was conducted with acrimony, slander, invective, and reciprocal contempt. These vigorous measures were peculiarly proper at that time, as certain men had *glided* in like serpents, with subtlety and plausible pretences, unawares to the people and their pastors; for the enemy sows these tares while men sleep. But the Lord had foreseen them; for they "were of old ordained," or registered, "to this condemnation:" many predictions had from the beginning been delivered to this effect, (14, 15;) and it had been declared, that such persons should arise, and be left to themselves, and so invent and propagate pernicious errors; deceiving men, and exposing themselves to the righteous condemnation denounced against lying prophets. Nay, these predictions had been extracts, as it were, from the registers in heaven; even the secret and eternal decrees of God, "known unto whom are all his works "from the beginning of the world;" in which he had determined to leave them to their pride and lusts, till they merited and received this condemnation. Such were "un"godly men," who, professing Christianity, took encouragement from the abundant mercy of God, and the way of free salvation there revealed, to indulge without fear or shame in the grossest lasciviousness; thus perverting the most holy truths into an occasion of the vilest unholiness: in doing which they "denied the only Lord God," cast off the yoke of his authority, as their Creator, "and that "of our Lord Jesus Christ," by refusing to have him to rule over them, or to be the subjects of his mediatorial kingdom. (*Note,* 2 *Pet.* ii. 1—3.) Some have supposed, that these ungodly men denied the doctrine of the apostles, concerning the Person and atonement of Christ; (*Note,* 5 I will therefore [s] put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, [t] having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, [u] afterward destroyed them that believed not.

6 And the [x] angels which kept not their * first estate, but left their own habitation, [y] he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, [z] unto the judgment of the great day.

s Rom. xv 15. 2 Pet. i. 12, 13. iii. 1.
t *See on,* 1 Cor x. 1—12
u Num. xiv. 22—34. xxvi 64 65 Deut. ii 15, 16. Ps. cvi 26. Heb. iii. 17—19. iv. 1, 2.
x John viii 44.
* Or *principality.* Eph. vi. 12.
y Matt xxv. 41. *See on,* 2Pet ii.4.
z Matt viii. 29. Heb x 27. Rev. xx. 10.

7 Even [a] as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after † strange flesh, [b] are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of [c] eternal fire.

8 Likewise also [d] these *filthy* dreamers [e] defile the flesh, [f] despise dominion, [g] and speak evil of dignities.

a Gen. xiii. 13. xviii. 20 xix. 24—26 Deut. xxix. 23. Is. i. 9. xiii. 19. Jer. xx 16. l. 40. Lam. iv. 6. Ez. xvi. 49, 50. Hos. xi 8 Am. iv. 11. Luke xvii. 29.
† Gr *other* Gen. xix. 5. Rom. i. 26,27 1Cor. vi 9.
b Matt. xi. 24. *See on,* 2 Pet. ii. 6.
c Deut xxix 23. Is. xxxiii 14. Matt. xxv. 41. Mark ix. 43—49.——d Jer. xxiii. 25—28.——e 1 Cor. iii. 17. 1 Tim i. 10 *See on,* 2 Pet. ii 10—12.——f Gen iii. 5. Num. xvi. 3 12, 13. 1 Sam x. 27. Ps. ii 1—6 xii 3, 4. Luke xix. 14. Acts vii. 27. 39. 1 Thes. iv. 8 Heb. xiii. 17 ——g 9, 10. Ex xxii. 28. Prov. xxx. 11. 17. Ec. x. 20 Acts xxiii 5 1 Pet. ii. 17.

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1 *John* ii. 22, 23;) and they would therefore explain "turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness," of some attempts made by them to traduce the doctrines of grace, as tending to licentiousness. But this construction would be very unnatural; and the whole epistle shows that they were abominable antinomians, who "wrought all "uncleanness with greediness," under pretence of exalting free grace. Yet it is very probable that they also held some wild notions concerning the Person of Christ; for this was generally the case with the various descriptions of these primitive heretics; whose absurd and presumptuous reveries, concerning these points, would be wholly unworthy our notice, did they not illustrate the folly of man's wisdom in matters of religion; the perverse disposition of the human heart to prefer any senseless falsehood to the truths of revelation; and the artifice of Satan in suiting the delusions, which he propagates by his ministers, to the taste and capacities of those whom he means to ruin by them. The intellectual poison which he administers, in this age of proud reasoning and skepticism, is of a more plausible kind, and can be supported with more show of argument; or else it would not be so generally received. *Gave all,* &c. (3.) 'I was sedulously devising to write to you concerning the common faith, when the circumstances of the times rendered it *necessary,* and determined me to this subject.' *Once.* (3.) Once for all: so that no addition is to be made to the doctrine thus delivered, or alteration in it; and all that either human learning and wisdom, or human folly and ignorance, can do in this way, only tends to corrupt it. *Of old ordained,* &c. (4.) Not to commit these crimes by any constraint; but their wilful sin and impenitence being foreseen; and God, for wise reasons, determining to leave them to themselves, he "ordained them to this condemnation;" as he had done Judas, and those who crucified Christ. (*Marg, Ref.*)—Whatever objection lies against this view of the subject, lies at least equally against the whole system of prophecy, as far as the crimes and condemnation of men are expressly foretold. (*Marg. Ref.*) *The only Lord,* &c. These words may be differently rendered: but our translation seems to give the true meaning, preserving the distinction between the Father and the Son.

V. 8. (*Notes,* 1 *Cor.* x. 1—12. 2 *Pet.* ii. 4—11. 20—22.) External privileges, profession, and *apparent* conversion, could not secure from the severest vengeance of God, those who thus turned aside in unbelief and disobedience. To evince this, the apostle deemed it proper to remind his readers, though they had been taught and had understood it, that the Lord, having delivered the whole nation of Israel from Egyptian bondage, and made a national covenant with them as his people; yet afterwards destroyed with terrible judgments such of them, as believed not, and so would not obey him; though this involved a vast majority of the nation. (*Notes, Heb.* iii. 7—19. iv. 1, 2.) In like manner, they, who apostatized from Christianity, or manifested their unbelief by determined and habitual disobedience, instead of being secured by their external privileges, would be more deeply condemned on account of them. Even the angels, originally created holy, endued with noble powers, and exalted to great eminence in heaven itself; when, dissatisfied with their first estate, they ambitiously and rebelliously, left the station assigned them by the Creator, had been cast down from their holy habitation, and were reserved, as in chains of everlasting darkness, wickedness, misery, and despair, until the judgment of the great day; when their condemnation will be as distinguished, as the rank was from which they fell. Even as the inhabitants of Sodom and the adjacent cities, who were favoured with a most pleasant and fruitful country; when, after the manner of apostate angels, they daringly rebelled against God, (which appeared especially in their giving up themselves to abandoned lewdness, and the shameless indulgence of their unnatural lusts;) had been exhibited as an example of divine vengeance to the whole earth, in the destruction of their cities and all that was in them, by fire from heaven, and by the perpetual desolations of their fertile country; so that it became a visible emblem of the eternal fire of hell, into which that judgment swept the souls of such as died in their sins; and all the adults without exception seem thus to have perished. In like manner "the dream- "ers," of whom the apostle spake, vainly expecting liberty and impunity in sin, followed the example, and would share the doom of abominable Sodom: whilst they defiled their bodies, which ought to have been consecrated to God; despised all authority, divine and human; and reviled those, who were placed in dignity, or invested with power, in so insolent a manner, as would tend to exasperate them against Christians in general. In short they would not endure either authority or reproof; but disdained them as the inhabitants of Sodom did the gentle expostulation of Lot. (*Gen.* xix. 9.)—*Dreamers.* (8.) 'Per- 'fectly stupified, and destitute of reason, as if their senses 'had been locked up by a deep sleep, or an inveterate 'lethargy, from which no terrible example could awake 'them.' (*Beza.*)—The epithet *filthy,* added in our translation, implies that their very dreams were defiled, through the filthiness of their waking thoughts.

9 Yet [h] Michael the [i] archangel, when contending with the devil, (he disputed about [k] the body of Moses,) [l] durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, [m] The Lord rebuke thee.

10 But these [n] speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, [o] in those things they corrupt themselves.

11 [p] Wo unto them! [q] for they have gone in the way of Cain, [r] and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and [s] perished in the gainsaying of Core.

12 These [t] are spots in your [u] feasts of charity, when they feast with you, [x] feeding themselves without fear: [y] clouds *they are* without water, [z] carried about of winds; [a] trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, [b] twice dead, [c] plucked up by the roots;

13 [d] Raging waves of the sea, [e] foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, [f] to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

[h] Dan x. 13. 21. xii 1. Rev. xii, 7.
[i] 1 Thes iv. 16.
[k] Deut xxxiv. 6.
[l] Is. xxxvi. 13—21. Mark xv. 29. Luke xxiii 39, 40. 1 Pet. iii. 9. 2 Pet. ii. 11.
[m] 1 Chr. xii. 17 Is. xxxvii. 3. 4. 10—20 Zech iii. 2
[n] *See on*, 2 Pet. ii. 12.
[o] *See on*, Rom. i. 21, 22.
[p] Is. iii 9 11. Jer. xiii. 27. Ez xiii. 3. Zech xi. 17. Matt. xi. 21. xxiii. 12—16. Luke xi. 42—47.
[q] Gen. iv. 5—14. 1 John iii. 12
[r] Num. xxii—xxiv. xxxi 16. Deut. xxiii. 4. Josh. xxiv. 9—11. Mic. vi. 5. 2 Pet. ii. 15. Rev. ii. 14.
[s] Num. xvi. 1. &c. xxvi. 9, 10 *Korah*
[t] *See on*, 2 Pet. ii. 13. 14
[u] 1 Cor xi. 21, 22.
[x] Ps. lxxviii. 29—31. Is. lvi 10—12 Ez xxxiv 8 13. Luke xii. 19. 20. 45 xvi. 19 xxi. 34. Phil. iii 19. 1 Thes v. 6, 7 Jam v 5.
[y] Prov. xxv. 14. Hos vi. 4. 2 Pet. ii 17.
[z] Eph iv 14.
[a] Ps. i. 3. xxxvii. 2. Matt. xiii. 6. xxi 19, 20 Mark iv. 6 xi. 21. Luke viii. 6. John xv 6.
[b] 1 Tim v. 6. Heb. vi. 7, 8. *See on*, 2 Pet. ii. 18—20.—[c] 2 Chr. vii. 20 Ez. xvii 9. Matt. xv. 13 Mark xi 20—[d] Ps lxv. 7. xciii. 3, 4. Is. lvii. 20 Jer. v 22, 23.—[e] Phil iii. 19. 2 Tim. iii. 13.—[f] *See on*, 2 Pet. ii. 17. Rev. xiv. 10, 11. xx. 10. xxi. 8

V. 9, 10. (*Notes, 2 Pet.* ii. 11—19.) It is most probable, that the apostle took this account concerning Michael from ancient tradition, which was well known among the Jews; and by thus adducing it, he hath given sufficient attestation of its truth. (*Notes, Deut.* xxxiv. 6. *Dan.* x. 13. 21. xii. 1.) In some of the passages here referred to, Michael has been supposed to be the Son of God himself, as the great Ruler over all angels, and worshipped by them all. But we do not seem authorized to interpret this text of *him*, as spoken of in the tradition by the name of Michael; but rather of some created angel, invested with great authority over his fellows, perhaps as Messiah's peculiar vicegerent. This exalted arch-angel, however, had a contest with the devil about the body of Moses. It may be supposed that he wanted to make the place of his burial known to the Israelites, in order to tempt them to worship him, as the papists do the bodies of martyrs, real or supposed; but Michael would not suffer him to do it: and probably the devil expressed his rage in desperate blasphemy. Yet Michael durst not bring against him a railing accusation; he did not presume to denounce on him the judgment of blasphemy, or to retort his revilings; but merely said to him, "The LORD rebuke "thee." (*Zech.* iii. 2.) Though the hateful character and atrocious conduct of the devil must have excited the holy abhorrence and indignation of the arch-angel, he yet *dared* not to utter any reviling expression: not from fear of the devil, but because, even in those circumstances, it would not have been consistent with the perfection of his character. But these heretics, pretending superior eminence, as the favourites of heaven, *dared* to speak evil of dignities, whom God had commanded them to honour and obey. Thus they spake language concerning their lawful rulers, which Michael scrupled to use concerning the devil himself: and surely they would not pretend that they were more privileged than the arch-angel, or that their rulers were more execrable than that great enemy of God and man! But indeed they spake evil of such things as they understood not: for they were men of a base groveling mind, whose chief attention was paid to the indulgence of their appetites, in such things as they knew naturally, even like the brutes; and by their excessive and lawless gratification they wholly polluted themselves. To suppose, as some learned men have done, that "the body "of Moses" means the Jewish church after the captivity, because the true church is called "the body of Christ," and to refer the whole to the transaction recorded in the third of Zechariah, merely because "the LORD rebuke "thee, Satan," occurs there, may be *ingenious;* but it is ingenious trifling, which brings no instruction nor satisfaction to the mind. 'Michael, one of the principal 'angels, was contented to deliver up the devil, however 'execrable, to be coerced by the judgment of God: yet 'these perverse and insignificant men were not ashamed 'to reproach the powers ordained by God himself!' (*Beza.*) 'The angels have no disposition, and, I believe, 'they have no talent, or faculty, for railing: the cool con'sideration whereof should make all men, especially those 'who call themselves *divines,* and especially in contro'versies about religion, ashamed and afraid of this manner 'of disputing.' (*Arbp. Tillotson.*)

V. 11—13. The apostle denounced a wo upon these deceivers: for they had gone in the way of Cain, who, proudly disliking the humble obedience of faith, and the spiritual worship which God had appointed, failed of finding acceptance with him; and, being enraged by this, he murdered his righteous brother, and apostatized from the religion that he had professed: and these wicked men had turned aside from the pure doctrine of Christ, become haters of those who adhered to it, and were about to cast off all their profession of Christianity. They had also run with eagerness and greediness in the same way which Balaam had taken, in order to obtain the reward of unrighteousness: like him they had gone contrary to the commandment of the Lord, from love to filthy lucre; they had sought the ruin of the professing people of God; and they had seduced many of them into licentiousness, and thus exposed them to divine vengeance. Moreover, as Korah and his company opposed the authority of Moses and Aaron, and excited the people to rebel against them, so those wicked men had rejected the authority of Christ's apostles, and contradicted their doctrine; yea, they had induced many others to oppose them; and they were about to perish in their gainsaying, or rebellion, as Korah and his associates did. These were spots in their religious feasts, in which they met together as Christian brethren; for, feasting with Christians and indulging their appetites without fear, they would, by that and other scandalous practices, be a disgrace to the whole company. They were indeed "clouds without water," from whom no

14 And [g] Enoch also, the seventh from Adam prophesied of these, saying, [h] Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,

15 To [i] execute judgment upon all, and [k] to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, [l] and of all their hard *speeches* which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

16 These are [m] murmurers, complainers, [n] walking after their own lusts; [o] and their mouth speaketh great swelling *words*, [p] having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

17 But, beloved, [q] remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;

18 How that they told you [r] there should be mockers in the last time, [s] who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

19 These be they [t] who separate themselves, [u] sensual, [x] having not the Spirit.

g Gen. v. 18—24. 1 Chr. i. 1—3. Heb. xi. 5, 6.
h Deut. xxxiii. 2. Job xix. 25—27. Ps. l. 3—5. Dan. vii. 9, 10. Zech. xiv. 5. Matt. xvi. 27. xxiv. 30, 31. xxv. 31. 1 Thes. iii. 13. 2 Thes. i. 7, 8.
i Ps. ix. 7, 8. xxxvii. 6. l. 1—6. xcviii. 9. cxlix. 9. Ec. xi. 9. xii. 14. John v. 22, 23. 27. Acts xvii. 31. Rom. ii. 16. xiv. 10. 1 Cor. iv. 5. v. 13. Rev. xx. 12—15. xxii. 12.
k Rom. ii. 5. iii. 19, 20.
l 16. Ex. xvi. 8. 1 Sam. ii. 3. Ps. xxxi. 18. xciv. 4. Is. xxxvii. 22—35. Dan. vii. 20. xi. 26. Mal. iii. 13—15. Matt. xii. 31—37. Rev. xiii. 5, 6. 11.
m Num. xiv. 36. xvi. 11. Deut. i. 27. Ps. cvi. 25. Is. xxix. 24. Luke v. 30. xv. 2. xix. 7. John vi. 41. 61. 1 Cor. x. 10. Phil. ii. 14.
n 18. Gal. v. 16. 24. 1 Thes. iv. 5. 2 Tim. iv. 3. Jam. i. 14, 15. 1 Pet. i. 14. ii. 11. iv. 2. 2 Pet. ii. 10. iii. 3.
o *See on*, 15. Job xvii. 4, 5. Ps. xvii. 10. lxxiii. 9—11. 2 Pet. ii. 18.
p Lev. xix. 15. Job xxxxii. 21. xxxiv. 19. Ps. xv. 4. Prov. xxviii. 21. 1 Tim. vi. 5. Jam. ii. 1—9. 2 Pet. ii. 1—3.
q Mal. iv. 4. Acts xx. 35. Eph. ii. 20. iv. 11. 2 Pet. iii. 2. 1 John iv. 6.
r Acts xx. 29. 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2. 2 Tim. iii. 1—5. 13. iv. 3. 2 Pet. ii. 1. iii. 3.
s *See on*, n. 16. Ps. xiv. 1, 2.
t Is. lxv. 5. Ez. xiv. 7. Hos. iv. 14. ix. 10. Heb. x. 25.
u 1 Cor. ii. 14. Jam. iii. 15. *Gr.*
x John iii. 5, 6. Rom. viii. 9. 1 Cor. vi. 19.

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good could be expected: whilst their own lusts and Satan's temptations drove them from one folly and wickedness to another, as the clouds are driven about by the wind. They might also be compared to trees, that seemed to take root and to give hopes of fruit; but their *buddings* were withered, and they remained wholly unfruitful; so that they were "twice dead;" as the transient hope that had been given of their receiving life, and taking root, only made way for their being reduced to a more desperate state, from which they could not be expected to recover: for they were as barren trees torn up by the roots, that they might be cast into the fire. They might also be compared to "raging waves of the sea," in the turbulency, clamour, and violence of their conduct; whilst, by boasting, reviling, and filthy language, they foamed out their own shame; and proved to all, who judged by the word of God, what scandalous persons they were. They were like "wandering stars," whose irregular courses could not easily be described or understood; whilst their appearance, though luminous, foreboded mischief to mankind: and the blackness of darkness, despair, and misery, were reserved for their eternal portion; along with the devil and his angels, with whom they had united in opposing the authority and honour of Christ. (*Marg. Ref.*) The word rendered *spots*, primarily means the tops of the rocks appearing above the water, which give the sea the appearance of being spotted, and on which ships are wrecked. Thus the disgraceful appearance of these heretics, and the danger arising from them, may be at once exhibited. The word rendered "wandering stars," signifies *planets*: but it may be questioned, whether the apostle used it in the strict astronomical sense; or not rather according to the popular meaning of it, which best suited his purpose. The horrible enormities, ascribed to the heretics, who are supposed to be here intended, are almost incredible: but, if true, it is by no means proper to speak of them in the detail.

V. 14—16. In a prophecy, which had been delivered by Enoch to the Antediluvians, concerning the coming of the Lord to judgment, men of this character had been predicted and condemned. It had not pleased God, that this ancient prophecy should be committed to writing by Moses, or by any other inspired person; but it had been preserved by tradition; and it not only accorded to the general doctrine of revelation, but was authenticated as a part of it, when thus quoted by the apostle of Christ. Though Enoch lived so soon after the creation, as to be the seventh in descent from Adam, yet he foresaw and predicted the second coming of the Lord, even of the promised Messiah, to judge the world; of which the approaching deluge was an emblem. He, therefore, called on the men of that abandoned generation, to behold and take notice, that the Lord would come, and was even then coming, with ten thousands of his holy ones, his holy angels, in the most conspicuous manner, to execute judgment upon all wicked men; and to arraign, convict, and condemn all that were ungodly *among them*, both in respect of their profane, rebellious, and wicked works, which they had most impiously perpetrated, in contempt and defiance of him; and of all the hard speeches, the virulent, presumptuous, scornful, blasphemous, and malicious words, which they had dared to utter, from the proud and carnal enmity of their hearts against him. This conviction and condemnation, the false teachers of whom Jude wrote could not escape, seeing their works and words were exactly of the same kind. For they were murmurers; (after the example of the Israelites, who murmured against Moses and Aaron, and thus showed their enmity to JEHOVAH;) they quarrelled with the truths, precepts, and ministers of Christ; and complained of every restraint laid on them, or authority exercised over them; as well as expressed continual discontent with the Lord's providential dispensations respecting them. At the same time, they "walked after their own lusts," habitually making their ungovernable carnal inclinations the rule of their conduct, and disdaining all control. Yet "their mouths spake "great swelling words;" boasting extravagantly of their knowledge, liberty, and gifts, as if they were the only favourites of heaven: and they paid court, with abundant flatteries and professed admiration, to such persons, as were able and willing to promote their secular advantage, without any regard to their characters; by which partiality, and mercenary servility, they attached proud and worldly men to their party.

V. 17—19. (*Note*, 2 *Pet.* iii. 2, 3.) As the deceivers, of whom the sacred writer spake, were making destructive progress in the church, he deemed it requisite to exhort his beloved brethren to recollect the words which the

20 But ye, beloved, [y] building up yourselves on your [z] most holy faith, [a] praying in the Holy Ghost,

21 [b] Keep yourselves [c] in the love of God, [d] looking for [e] the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ [f] unto eternal life.

22 And [g] of some have compassion, making a difference:

23 And others, [h] save with fear, [i] pulling *them* out of the fire; [k] hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

24 Now unto him that is [l] able to keep you from falling, and to [m] present *you* [n] faultless before [o] the presence of his glory with [p] exceeding joy,

25 To [q] the only wise [r] God our Saviour, [s] *be* glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

y Acts ix. 31 Rom. xv. 2. 1 Cor. i. 8. x. 13 xiv. 4, 5. 26. Eph iv 12. 14 29 1 Thes v. 11. 1 Tim. i. 4. *Gr.*

z Acts xv. 9. xxvi. 18. 2 Tim. i. 5. Tit. i 1. Jam ii. 22. 2 Pet i. 1. 1 John v. 4. Rev. xiii. 10.

a Zech. xii. 10. Rom. viii. 15—26. 27. 1 Cor. xiv. 15. Gal. iv. 6. Eph. vi 18

b 24. John xiv 2. xv. 9, 10. Acts xi. 23 1 John iv. 16. v. 18. 21. Rev xii 11.——c Rom v. 5. viii. 39. 2 Thes. iii. 5 1 John iii 16, 17.——d Job xiv. 14. Lam. iii. 25, 26. Matt xxiv. 42—51 Luke xii 36—40 2 Tim iv. 8 Tit. ii. 13, 14. Heb. ix. 28. 2 Pet. iii 12.——e 2 John i. 17 1 Tim i. 2. 2 Tim. i 2 16. 18.——f Rom v. 21. vi 23. 1 John v. 10, 11.——g 4—13 Ez xxxiv. 17. Gal. v. 20 vi. 1. Heb. vi. 4—8. Jam. v. 19 20. 1 John v. 16—18.——h Rom. xi. 14. 1 Cor. v. 3—5. 2 Cor. vii. 10—12. 1 Tim iv. 16.——i Am iv. 11. Zech. iii. 2. 1 Cor. iii. 15

k Lev. xiii. 47—59 xiv 46. xv. 17. Is. lxiv. 6. Lam. iv. 14. Zech. iii 3, 4. 1 Cor v. 9—11. xv. 38. 2 Thes. iii. 14 Rev iii 4

l *See on*, 21. John x 29, 30. Rom. viii. 31. xiv. 4. xvi. 25. Eph. iii. 20

m 2 Cor. iv. 14 xi. 2. Eph v. 27. Col. i. 22 28 iii. 4. Heb. xiii. 20, 21.

n Rev xiv. 5.

o Matt. xvi 27. xix. 28. xxv. 31. Luke ix. 26 1 Thes. iv. 9, 10 1 Pet. iv. 13.——p Ps. xxi. 6. xliii. 4. Matt. v. 12 2 Cor iv. 17. 1 Pet. iv. 13——q Ps. civ. 24 cxlvii. 5. Rom. xi 33 xvi. 27. Eph. i. 8 iii. 10 1 Tim. i. 17.——r Ps. lxviii 20. Is. xii. 2 xlv 21. John iv 22 1 Tim. ii 3. Tit i 3, 4. 10 13 iii 4 2 Pet. i. 1.——s 1 Chr. xxix. 11. Ps. lxxii. 18, 19. Dan. iv. 37. *See on*, Matt. vi. 13 Eph. iii. 21. 1 Pet. iv. 12. v 10, 11. 2 Pet. iii. 18. Rev. i. 6. iv. 9—11. v. 13, 14

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other apostles of Christ had spoken, when they first preached the Gospel to them, as well as of what some of them had written to this effect; especially Paul, Peter, and James. For they had warned them, that under the Christian dispensation there would arise, within the visible church, mockers, who would treat the most sacred truths, and most important duties of Christianity, with profane contempt; and would be a scandal to that holy religion, by walking after their own ungodly lusts. (*Notes*, 2 *Tim.* iii. 1—9. iv. 3, 4.) These warnings and predictions related to those persons, who at that time separated from the apostolical churches to form heretical sects; being *sensual*, or *natural* men (ψυχικοι, *Notes*, 1 *Cor.* ii. 14. *Jam.* iii. 15;) who not having the Spirit of God dwelling in them, as the Author and Preserver of divine life and holy affections, were entirely actuated by pride, ambition, avarice, and licentious inclinations: it therefore behooved the disciples of Christ to remember their Lord's admonition on this subject, "By their fruits ye shall know "them." (*Note, Matt.* vii. 15—20.) A careful examination of the three places in which ψυχικοι occurs, will confirm the conclusion, that it signifies *natural*, that is, *unregenerate*. Without determining into what channel natural depravity was diverted by special circumstances, it is absurd to suppose, that the apostle would class with these abominable heretics all who had not miraculous gifts; but if that interpretation be set aside as inadmissible, " not having the Spirit" must mean being *unregenerate*.

V. 20, 21. Instead of listening to deceivers, the apostle exhorted his beloved brethren to be employed in "building "up themselves," and each other, "on their most holy "faith." The doctrine of faith is most holy in its nature and tendency, leading men to repent, and hate all sin, to love and obey God, and to lead a sober, righteous, and godly life; by which it may be distinguished from all false doctrines. The grace of faith is most holy, as it worketh by love, purifieth the heart, and overcometh the world; by which it is distinguishable from a false and dead faith. Adhering, therefore, to the Holy doctrine of the Gospel by a living obedient faith, Christians ought continually to be seeking an increase in their knowledge of the truths of God, and in the experience of the power of them on their hearts, that they may be more and more established in a realizing and efficacious belief of them, and in all those holy dispositions, and that obedient practice, which depend on it, as the superstructure rests upon the foundation. Thus the consistency, stability, and circumspection, of their conduct, will continually be advancing: and they will more effectually adorn the gospel, glorify God, and do good to men, as long as they live. In order to build up themselves and each other, on their most holy faith, the apostle directed them to continue, "praying in the Holy "Ghost," or in dependence on, and under the influence of his sacred teaching; as in this manner alone they could escape the snares and resist the temptations, which would be laid in their way. By such a conduct they ought "to "keep themselves in the love of God;" in the assurance, and comfort of his special love to them, which they could not enjoy if they were slothful; and in the exercise of filial love and gratitude towards him. Yet with all this assiduity, watchfulness, devotion, and conscientiousness, they must put no trust in themselves: but wait, expect, and be continually looking for, "the mercy," shown to sinners, by the Lord Jesus Christ; and preparing for the "completion of it, in eternal life," as the gift of God through him. Certainly, "praying in the Holy Ghost," does not mean extempore prayer, as distinguished from a liturgy: for, both they who pray without a form, and they who read words previously put together, often come short of "praying by the Holy Spirit." But how is the whole of this most beautiful passage enervated, by explaining the words in question, of inspiration, or miraculous gifts! Whether with a written form, or without, no man can pray spiritually, but by the teaching and assistance of the Holy Spirit, exciting, in the mind and heart, holy desires, affections, and expectations: and this is wholly independent of miracles, and inspiration, properly so called. All Christians are commanded to pray *in*, or *by*, the Holy Spirit: but, for at least fifteen hundred years, no Christians have had the Spirit of miracles and inspiration. Have none then, during this period, prayed according to the apostle's exhortation?

V. 22—25. It was peculiarly needful for Christians, in those perilous times, to know how to act respecting such of their brethren, as had been seduced by the deceivers, and might probably be recovered. Of some they ought to have compassion, and to treat them with gentleness, tenderness, and kindness; making a difference between those who had fallen through inadvertency, and appeared penitent, and others who were more hardened and profane. The latter they were directed "to save with fear;" being cautious, lest by attempting their recovery, they should be themselves entangled; (as if a man, being eager to rescue others from a fire, should fall in and be himself burned:)

and they should use alarming and terrifying methods, as they would do if they saw any persons in imminent danger of being consumed in the flames, whilst insensible of their situation, through sleep or intoxication. All endeavours in this case must also be joined with decided abhorrence of the crimes committed by the persons concerned, and care to avoid whatever led to "fellowship "with them in their works of darkness," even as a garment infected with the plague would be shunned by those who desired to keep clear of the malady. Thus ought they to hate "even the garment spotted with the "flesh," or whatever had the most remote alliance with the sensual practices and licentious doctrines of these deceivers. It hath been observed by some writers, that such ornamental clothing, as tends to tempt others to "fleshly lusts," or is purchased with the wages of licentiousness, may very properly be called "garments spotted "with the flesh;" and, as such, ought to be detested and loathed more than the vilest rags, (however rich, elegant, and *becoming* it may be,) by all those who would be thought Christians. But, whilst the apostle gave these warnings and counsels, he showed his readers where to place their whole dependence for preservation, by the form of his concluding doxology. For he addressed it "to him, that was able "to keep them from falling" into iniquity, heresy, or destruction, whatever their dangers and temptations might be, and who alone could do it, by his outward protection and his inward supports; and thus he would at length "present them faultless," fully justified, and perfected in holiness, "before the presence of his glory," when displayed at the day of judgment before the assembled world, "with exceeding joy," to each of them on his own account, and in the felicity of all the rest; to all the holy angels, yea, to the Lord himself, who would rejoice in and over them, to do them good for ever. To him therefore, as "the only wise God," who knew how to deliver the godly out of temptation, "even to the Saviour" of sinners, the apostle ascribed "glory and majesty, domi-"nion and power, both then, and for ever, Amen." He rejoiced that these belonged to him, and would for ever be possessed by him, who alone was worthy of them, and capable of exercising them in a suitable manner, for the good of his universal and everlasting kingdom. As the Lord Jesus alone will visibly appear at the day of judgment, to present his saints unto himself, so it hath been thought by some expositors that this doxology was addressed personally to him. (*Marg. Ref.*) But others suppose that the apostle had the "One true and living God" in his mind, without *exclusive* respect to any of the Persons in the sacred Trinity; as God is become our Saviour, in Jesus Christ, and the *glory* of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, in the salvation of believers, will be displayed at the day of judgment, though Christ alone will visibly and personally appear to judge the world.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

When the servants of Christ address those who are "sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus "Christ, and called;" and for whom they pray, "that "mercy, peace, and love, may be multiplied unto them," they must not only instruct them, with all diligence, in things pertaining to "the common salvation," but select such subjects as more especially suit the circumstances of the times, and tend to put them on their guard against prevailing delusions. A cordial attachment to the doctrines once delivered to the saints, and handed down to us in the scriptures, will render us earnest in contending for them, and against all innovations, by every means consistent with meekness and love; and a competent acquaintance with them will put us upon our guard against those ungodly men, who creep in unawares, amidst revivals of religion, and turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, by their perverse interpretations and scandalous crimes, through which they "deny the only Lord God, and our Lord "Jesus Christ," as if they were determined to be their own rulers in every sense, and to be subject to no authority, either human or divine; and thus they bring upon themselves that destruction, to which they were appointed. Whilst we contend earnestly for the truths, which relate to the Person and Salvation of Christ, we should guard with equal caution against every perversion of them: for though the infidel, or Pharisee, will as surely come short of salvation as the Antinomian, yet he does not so dishonour the Gospel, or do so much to set mankind against it. We ought therefore to remind the people, not to rest in any profession, knowledge, or experience, which doth not bring the soul into subjection to the obedience of Christ; for nothing but the renewal of our souls to the divine image by the Holy Spirit, can secure us from being destroyed among the enemies of God. We are continually warned of this: and the examples of his severity on unbelieving Israelites, on apostate angels, and on Sodom and Gomorrah, stand on record, for our admonition, that we should not presume on former favours and present privileges, or take occasion from thence to rebel, or to indulge our ungodly lusts, if we would not be "bound in chains "of darkness unto the judgment of the great day."

V. 9—16.

Whilst we are on our guard against "filthy dreamers, "who defile the flesh," let us also stand aloof from those, whether moral or immoral in other respects, "who despise "dominion, and speak evil of dignities," and give themselves the license to revile their rulers in language which an arch-angel would not dare to use, in reply to the blasphemies of the prince of darkness. When we deem any thing amiss in the conduct of our governors, and wish well to sober and regular plans of securing liberty, and redressing grievances, let us by no means lose sight of the meekness of wisdom, but leave every matter to the Lord in the use of proper means; nay, even if oppressed and persecuted, we should, without rendering evil for evil, "commit ourselves to him that judgeth righteously." There always have been numbers, who speak evil of things which they do not understand, and corrupt themselves in such as they know naturally like brute beasts. The way of Cain, of Balaam, and of Korah, hath ever been frequented; and enmity against God, concurring with avarice, ambition, and sensuality, drives men headlong in similar courses to their own destruction. But when persons of this character are admitted and continued in communion with the churches of Christ, they are disgraceful spots and blemishes in them; whilst they indulge their appetites and passions without fear or shame, and bear no good fruit, but disappoint all the expectations, which promising appearances once excited. Such persons, continuing unfruitful after hopeful convictions, and so becoming "twice "dead, and plucked up by the roots," often prove like "raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame," in virulent reproaches, arrogant boastings, and perhaps horrible blasphemies: they make a glare indeed for a short time, like meteors, and then they sink into the blackness of darkness for ever. The men of God, from the beginning of the world, have declared the doom which will be denounced on such persons, when Christ shall come, with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment on all the ungodly, for all their wicked works; and for all the impious words which they have spoken against him, by reviling his truths, servants, providential appointments, and holy commandments. We should therefore avoid those murmurers and complainers, who walk after their ungodly lusts, and want a religion to suit such a course of life: and we ought to disregard their "great swelling words of vanity;" whilst we mark how they have men's persons in admiration for their own secular advantage; especially such as are rich, and can buy flattery and power at a high rate.—

V. 17—25.

We should constantly remember the words of the apostles of Christ, and we shall find the Scriptures verified in the profane and licentious scoffers, who separate from those that adhere to the holy doctrine of Christ, and even dare thus to deride them; and who expect that the Lord will save them, though they remain carnal, and sensual, and destitute of his sanctifying Spirit. Let us also remember that the doctrine and faith of Christians are most holy; that we may build ourselves on them, in all spiritual and devoted obedience to God; praying for, and by, the Holy Spirit, to be preserved in the love of God; and thus waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. Whilst with tender compassion, or more solemn and awful warnings, (as the case may require,) we seek to recover our fallen brethren from dangerous heresies and falls, we should look to ourselves, and hate even the garment spotted with the flesh, as afraid of being infected with that most fatal pestilence; and still trusting in him, "who is able to keep us from falling, and to present us "faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceed-"ing joy," we should ascribe to him, even God our Saviour, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, all glory, majesty, dominion and power, now and for evermore. Amen.

THE REVELATION OF

JOHN THE DIVINE.

It is a singular circumstance, concerning this book, that its authenticity was very generally, if not universally, acknowledged, during the two first centuries; and yet in the third century, it began to be questioned! This seems to have arisen from some absurd opinions concerning the Millennium, which were grounded on this book, by those who maintained them; and, therefore, their opponents injudiciously, nay, presumptuously, endeavoured to discredit their tenets, by denying the authority of the book itself. But it was then too late; and its divine original and authority, have been fully established, by the clearest and most decisive evidence. Indeed, the prophecies contained in it have, in so many undeniable instances, been most circumstantially accomplished, through a long series of ages; that it stands as little in need of external evidence, as any book in the whole scripture. No doubt it was written by John, the apostle, to whose name the title of "*The Divine*" *(or the Theologian) was added some time after; either because of the deep and mysterious truths relative to the nature, decrees, and counsels of God, with which his writings abound; or because he spoke so much concerning the divine Person and glory of the Lord Jesus. The book is styled,* "The Apocalypse *or the Revelation;*" *as consisting of matters chiefly prophetical, which were immediately revealed to St. John from Jesus Christ: this took place, when he was in the isle of Patmos in the Egean Sea, whither he was banished, as is generally thought, by the emperor Domitian, A. D.* 94, *or* 95. *Some indeed, maintain that this happened during the persecution of Nero, A. D.* 67, *or* 68, *or even before that time: but the arguments adduced in support of their opinion are by no means conclusive; and as it stands last in the sacred canon, so it seems to have been written last, and to have been intended to occupy that place. The Revelation opens with the apostle's account of an extraordinary vision which he had of the Lord Jesus, appearing to him, in glory. Then follow seven short epistles from Christ himself, to the seven principal churches in Asia:* (Note, Acts xix. 8—12:) *and after them it contains a series of prophecies, some chiefly emblematical, relating to events, which would take place in the church and the nations of the earth, through all the subsequent generations of mankind, to the end of the world, the day of judgment, and the eternal state. This series is sometimes interrupted by explanatory digressions, which will be noted as we proceed: such predictions as are supposed to be already fulfilled, will be compendiously stated with the events to which they relate according to the judgment of the most approved writers: and an endeavour will be thus far made to render the great outlines of the book, as plain as may be to the unlearned reader, whose edification must principally be considered. But in respect of those things, which seem not to be yet fulfilled; a judgment must be formed, and an opinion ventured, with very great caution, and in a very general manner. Many indeed have objected to, and some called Christians, and ministers of the Gospel have even derided, every attempt to explain so mysterious a book; while no doubt many have wanted to be wise above what is written, and have applied general prophecies by a private interpretation, in a very unwarrantable manner.* (Note, 2 Pet. i. 20, 21;) *and this should teach others modesty, reverence, and a simple dependence on the teaching of the Holy Spirit in all their inquiries; whatever helps or advantages they may possess for such investigations. But, if we are enabled to study, write, and read in this manner; there can be no doubt, but we shall derive most abundant practical instruction, and obtain increasing vigour to our faith and holy affections, by attending carefully to every part of this most surprising discovery of the Lord's purposes, respecting his church and the world, which was made so many ages before they were accomplished.*

'*They who censure and dissuade the study of it, do it for the most part, because they have not* '*studied it themselves; and imagine the difficulties to be greater, than they are in reality. It is still* "*the sure word of prophecy;*" *and men of learning and leisure cannot better employ their time and* *'abilities, than in studying and explaining this book, provided they do it as Lord Bacon adviseth,* with great wisdom, sobriety, and reverence.' *The folly of interpreters has been, as 'Sir Isaac Newton observes, to foretel times and things by this prophecy, as if God designed to make them prophets. By this rashness they have not only exposed themselves, but brought the prophecy also into contempt. The design of God was much otherwise. He gave this, and the prophecies of the Old Testament, not to gratify men's curiosities, by enabling them to foreknow things; but that after they were fulfilled, they might be interpreted by the event; and his own providence,'* (or foresight,) *'not the interpreter's, might be manifest thereby to the world.'* (Bp. Newton.) *It should, however, be admitted, that to give the attentive and pious reader a general assurance, that the cause of truth and righteousness shall finally and gloriously prevail even on earth, for his encouragement, during the triumphs of superstition, idolatry, heresy, infidelity, and wickedness, which on every side are witnessed, or reported from every quarter, was one end for which this revelation was given. But when even the most learned and respectable men attempt, with particularity and exactness, to explain those predictions, which are not evidently fulfilled; it commonly happens, that others oppose their interpretation by some counter-scheme, supported also by plausible arguments: and while several are thus engaged, each in defending his own conclusions against those who combat them, their readers in general are perplexed, instead of convinced; the difference, between that part which is fulfilled, and may clearly be explained, and the unaccomplished predictions, seems to disappear; the evidence, arising from the fulfilment of prophecy, as demonstrating the divine inspiration of the scriptures, fails of producing its full effect; and not unfrequently, the whole is laid aside, as uncertain, or inexplicable, seeing the most learned writers advance such discordant opinions on the subject. In most other controverted topics, truth is generally supposed to lie on one side or the other, or to be divided between the disputants: but in this particular, the debates often produce a kind of skepticism in the minds of many readers; so that they begin to doubt about the whole and every part of it. In order to avoid this, great care should be taken, to mark* strongly *the difference between what is fulfilled, and what is not fulfilled; and to draw the line between these as exactly as may be; that the uncertainty, as to the grand outlines, may not appear to attach to those parts, which have already received their accomplishment; but be wholly confined to the other part. Even in respect of those predictions, which are supposed to be fulfilling in this eventful period, peculiar caution is necessary: for an unexpected turn in the affairs of nations, may, after a few years, confute some of the most plausible and confident assumptions of the expositors; and weaken the credibility in the minds of men, even of those interpretations which are well founded. It does not, indeed, appear probable, that the prophecies, fulfilling in any age, should be clearly understood by the contemporaries; any more than that impartial histories should be written by men of their own times. The events, in which our interests, and those of the country, or party, to which we belong are deeply concerned, must have such an effect upon our minds, as to deduct from that cool and impartial judgment, which is requisite in such an inquiry. It cannot so soon be known, how the successes and advancement of some and the subversion of other powers, may terminate: and till that be known, the application of the transaction, of our own age, to the events predicted in scripture, must be attended with a degree of uncertainty. Our* nearness *to the objects likewise tends to magnify them to* us: *and we are apt, too readily, to conclude, that such important transactions must have a* prominent *place in prophecy. But, I apprehend, that prophecy, (especially that contained in this book,) resembles a map of the world, on a small scale; in which only countries, and capital cities, and some very remarkable places, are noticed: so that they who dwell near considerable cities and large towns, are disappointed at not finding them in the map. Thus the events of a century, through a whole continent, or continents, being foretold in a few verses, or at most a single short chapter; we certainly shall look in vain for many transactions, which appear to us of very great importance. But they, who shall come after us, on reviewing the history of the century, or the continent, and comparing it with the prophecy, will doubtless perceive a sufficient coincidence, to enable them to say, "Thus it was written, and thus it must be." Though probably, they will find this accomplishment of prophecy, materially differing from what the most sagacious of us now suppose. Since the author first printed his thoughts on this book, above sixteen years ago; most extraordinary changes indeed have taken place, in the state of the nations, and of the visible church; which he doubts not will be found accomplishments of the predictions contained in it. Many books also have been written on the subject; several of which he has considered, and means further to consider; and to make such use of as he is able. But he purposes still to adhere to his former plan; and to be very cautious and general, in attempting to explain what has not hitherto allowedly*

been fulfilled: and merely supplying this deficiency, (if it be one,) *by a few quotations from those who have ventured to be more particular. He does not indeed write for the learned. These may and will consult the several authors, who have purposely and exclusively treated on this subject, and judge for themselves: nor has he the presumption to attempt the office of an umpire, between those who maintain different opinions respecting it. The plan and method, on which he proceeds, will appear to the best advantage, in the notes on the several parts of the prophecy: and a general analysis, or outline of the whole, will be more properly introduced towards the conclusion, than at the beginning, of the book. It is worthy of notice, in respect of the Revelation, that the views given in it of God and heavenly things; of the kingdom of providence and grace; of the Redeemer's glory; the happiness and character of his people; with the wickedness and ruin of his enemies, are set forth, in so striking and peculiar a manner; that, even they who do not at all understand the prophetical meaning, are uniformly interested and edified by reading it, in proportion to the degree of their humility, faith, and piety.*

* * *

A. D. 95. *A. D.* 95.

CHAP. I.

The origin and design of the book; with a blessing on those who duly attend to it, 1—3. *The apostle salutes the seven churches in Asia; ascribes glory to God; and predicts the coming of Christ to judgment, with the terror and distress of his enemies,* 4—7. *The Lord declares his own eternity and omnipotence,* 8. *The place, time, and circumstances of John's vision; with what he heard of the words, and saw of the glory, of Christ; and the commandment given to write these things to the churches,* 9—20.

THE [a] Revelation of Jesus Christ, [b] which God gave unto him, [c] to shew unto his servants things [d] which must shortly come to pass; [e] and he sent and signified *it* by his angel unto his servant [f] John:

2 Who [g] bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, [h] and of all things that he saw.

3 [i] Blessed *is* he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; [k] for the time *is* at hand.

a Dan. ii. Am. iii. 7. Rom. xvi. 25. Gal. i. 12. Eph. iii. 3.
b John iii. 32. viii. 26. xii. 49.
c xxii. 6. Ps. xxv. 14. John xv. 15.
d 3. 19. iv. 1. xxii. 10. 2 Pet. iii. 8.
e xxii. 6. 16. Dan. viii. 16. ix. 21—23.
f 4. 9. xxi. 2.
g 9. vi. 9. xii. 11. 17. John i. 32. xii. 17. xix. 35. xxi. 24. 1 Cor. i. 6. ii. 1. 1 John v. 7—11. 3 John 12.
h 19. John iii. 11. Acts iv. 20. xxii. 15. xxvi. 16. 1 John i. 1, iv. 14.
i xxii. 7. Prov. viii. 34. Dan. xii. 12, 13. Luke xi. 28.
k xxii. 6. 12. 20. Rom. xiii. 11. Jam. v. 8. 1 Pet. iv. 7. 2 Pet. iii. 8.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. The Lord Jesus, in his mediatorial character, is the great Prophet of the Church, the incarnate Word of God, by whom he reveals himself to men. In this sense some things were given to him, "as "his revelation," to be through him communicated to his servants, and others were not, (*Note, Mark* xiii. 32.) An infinity of the divine decrees remain impenetrably concealed in the mind of God, till the event discover them; but he hath seen good *previously* to make known some of his purposes respecting future ages, in order to confirm the faith, encourage the hope, and enlarge the views of his people; and that the accomplishment of them in after times might demonstrate the truth of the Scriptures to every diligent inquirer. (*Note, Deut.* xxix.) This book was therefore called "The Revelation of Jesus "Christ;" because its principal subject is, 'A previous discovery of the purposes of God respecting the affairs of the Church, and of the nations as connected with it, from the time when it was given, even to the end of the world.' This Revelation was given to Jesus Christ, that he might show to his servants those events, which would immediately begin to take place, and which would all *shortly* be accomplished; as the transient term of some thousands of years bears no proportion to eternity, in which the whole will at length be swallowed up. These things Christ sent his angel, one of his more illustrious servants in the world above, to signify and explain in order to John, who was his principal servant on earth at that time, as it is probable he was then the only surviving apostle. Thus future events were made known to him, as they had been to several of the ancient prophets, especially Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zechariah. Accordingly he faithfully testified, and exactly recorded the word of God, even the testimony of Christ, and all things which he saw in these visions of the Almighty.

V. 3. The apostle introduced his testimony, by solemnly pronouncing a blessing on all who should read, hear, remember, and obediently observe, the words of this prophecy; of which the accomplishment was at hand. This seems to have been prophetically intended to obviate, or answer, the objections, which would in after ages be made to the study of this mysterious book, and to all endeavours to bring others acquainted with it. Nothing tends more to fortify the mind against the cavils of infidels and skeptics, or the incursions of unbelief, or to produce patient hope amidst trials and difficulties, than the observation and experience of the fulfilment of the Scriptures, in

4 [l] JOHN [m] to the seven churches which are in Asia: [n] Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from [o] him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and [p] from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

5 And from Jesus Christ, [q] *who is* the faithful Witness, [r] *and* the First-begotten of the dead, [s] and the Prince of the kings of the earth. Unto [t] him that loved us, and [u] washed us from our sins in his own blood,

6 And hath [x] made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; [y] to him *be* glory and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.

[l] *See on.* i. 1.
[m] i. 11. 20. ii. 1. 8. 12. 18. iii. 1. 7. 14. Acts xix. 10. 1 Pet. i. 1.
[n] *See on,* Rom. i. 7. 1 Cor. i. 3. 2 Cor. 1. 2. 1 Pet. i. 2.
[o] 8. Ex. iii. 14. Ps xc 2. cii. 25–27 Is. xli. 4. lvii. 15. Mic. v. 2. Heb. i. 10–13. xiii 8. Jam. i. 17.
[p] iii. 1. iv. 6. v. 6. Zech. iv. 10. vi 5. 1 Cor. xii. 4–13
[q] iii. 14. Ps. lxxxix. 36. 37. Is lv. 4. John iii. 11. 32. viii. 14–16 xviii. 37. 1 Tim. vi. 13. John v. 7–10.
[r] Acts xxvi. 23. 1 Cor. xv. 23–26. Col. i. 18.
[s] xi. 15. xvii. 14. xix 16. Ps. lxxii. 11. lxxxix. 27. Prov. viii. 15. 16. Dan. ii. 44. vii. 14. Matt. xxviii. 18. Eph i. 20–22 1 Tim. vi. 15.
[t] Deut vii. 6. xxiii. 5. Rom viii. 35. Gal. ii. 20. Eph ii. 4. v 2 25–27 1 John iv 10
[u] vii. 14. Zech. xiii. 1. John xiii 8–10. Acts xviii. 28 1 Cor. vi. 11. Heb. ix 14 1 Pet i. 19. 1 John i. 7
[x] v. 10. xx 6. Ex. xix. 6. Is. lxi 6 Rom xii 1. 1 Pet. ii. 5 9.
[y] iv. 11. v. 12–14. Ps. lxxii. 18, 19. Dan. iv 34. Matt. vi. 13 John v. 23. Phil. ii. 11. 1 Tim. vi. 16. Heb. xiii 21 1 Pet. iv. 11. v. 11. 2 Pet. iii. 18. Jude 25

the events which take place around us: an acquaintance therefore with this Revelation, concerning the purposes of God respecting his Church to the end of time, when connected with humility, sobriety, and the obedience of faith, must greatly conduce to the Christian's stability, constancy, hope, peace, and patience: it must exceedingly enlarge his views of the great plan of the Lord's providential government of the world, as combined with the redemption of sinners; and direct or encourage his prayers for those prosperous days of the church, in which all her tribulations shall terminate: as well as reconcile his mind to those events which, though distressing in themselves, form a part of one vast design, in part accomplished, and evidently hastening to an entire completion, to the eternal glory of God our Saviour, the final victory of his cause over all opposition, and the endless felicity of all his faithful servants. Nay, the very mysteries and difficulties of this book are so wonderfully united, inseparably, with such grand and interesting discoveries of the glory of God, and the work and worship of heaven, as are peculiarly suited to solemnize, enliven, and purify the soul of the humble and attentive reader, even when he cannot discover the prophetic meaning of the passage. Nor is it any objection to say, that many have read it in another spirit, and got much harm by it: for this is the case with other scriptures, especially with those passages which may be called "strong meat," being peculiarly strengthening to the faith, hope, love, and gratitude, of such as can digest them, though not meet nourishment for babes; and even capable of being turned into a fatal poison by the vicious affections of a proud and carnal mind. (*Note,* 2 *Pet.* iii. 15, 16.) The reasons which induce infidels and profane mockers, who "walk according to their own ungodly "lusts," to deride all attempts to explain this prophecy, are obvious; for so much of it hath most manifestly been already fulfilled, as must for ever ruin their cause, could the attention of men be drawn to the subject described, in proportion to its vast importance; and no part of Scripture more awfully denounces the doom of all impenitent sinners and opposers of the Gospel. But pious men could never have been induced to object to the study of it, as some have done, in strong, nay, rather contemptuous, language, had not the misconduct of many in this respect filled them with prejudice, and formed an association of ideas in their minds, which have no necessary relation to each other. The Lord, however, grant that the writer, and the readers, of the present attempt to render this mysterious book more intelligible and instructive to Christians in general, may rely on, and pray for, the participation of the blessing here promised, in every part of their progress through it: that in faith, humility, reverence, and expectation of great advantage, they may read, hear, meditate on, and keep, the things which are written in it: for the time is at hand, when the further accomplishment of them will render them so plain, that they shall no longer be either neglected or misunderstood.

V. 4—6. The apostle addressed the seven churches of Asia, or that district of which Ephesus was the capital city. (*Acts* xix. 10.) The benediction which he used is similar to what hath been repeatedly considered in the epistolary part of the New Testament; but it is here expressed in more sublime and mysterious language, according to the nature of the book to which it is prefixed. He wished and prayed that "grace and peace" might be bestowed on them, "from Him, who is, and who was, and who is to "come:" that is, from the self-existent, eternal, and unchangeable JEHOVAH. The original is peculiar, perhaps unexampled, and almost, if not absolutely, incapable, of an exact translation; the preposition governing the genitive case of the article, and yet all the subsequent words being in the nominative. It is supposed to refer to the name of God, revealed to Moses, (*Ex.* iii, 14,) and with a similar disregard to the ordinary rules of grammar. This is here especially meant of the Person of the Father. As the One true and living God communicates blessings to sinful man, through the mediation of the incarnate Son, and by the agency of the eternal Spirit, so it is almost unavoidable, under such an economy, to speak of the Father in the absolute style of Deity, and of the Son and the Spirit with relation to their assumed characters and offices, though in language evidently implying a participation in all divine perfections, and co-equality with the Father, in their original and essential nature and dignity. "Grace and peace" were moreover sought for the Christians addressed, "from the seven Spirits, which are before "the throne." This is generally, and doubtless justly, interpreted of "the divine Spirit," with respect to the abundance, sufficiency, and variety of his gifts, graces, and operations; and in relation to the *seven* churches, with each of which, and all others, the One and self-same Spirit dwelt, as the Fountain of life, grace, and peace; being omnipresent and omnipotent, and one with the Father and the Son, "God over all, blessed for ever-"more." This manner of expression well accords with the enigmatical or emblematic style of this book; and it is absurd to suppose any created spirits to be joined in this solemn benediction with the eternal Father and Jesus Christ the Son of the Father; and indeed it would sanction the worship of created angels, (*Notes, Matt.* xxviii. 19. 2 *Cor.* xiii. 13.) Finally this grace and peace were sought

7 Behold, [z] he cometh with clouds; [a] and every eye shall see him, [b] and they *also* which pierced him: [c] and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him: [d] even so, Amen.

z xiv. 14—16. Ps. xcvii. 2. Is. xix. 1. Dan. vii. 13 Nah i 3. Matt. xxiv. 30. xxvi. 64. Mark xiii 26. xiv 62. Luke xxi 27 Acts i. 9—11. 1 Thes. iv. 17.
a xxii. 4. Num. xxiv. 17 Job xix. 26, 27. xxxiii. 26. 1 Thes. i 10 1 John iii. 2. Jude 14.
b Ps. xxii 16. Zech. xii. 10. John xix. 34 37. Heb. vi. 6. x 29.——c vi. 15—17. xviii. 15—19. Luke xxiii. 28—30.——d xviii. 20. xix. 1—3 xxii. 20 Judg. v. 31. Ps. lxviii. 1.

8 I am [e] Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, [f] which is, and which was, and which is to come, [g] the Almighty.

e 11. 17 ii. 8 xxi. 6. xxii. 13. Is. xli. 4. xliii. 10. xliv. 6. xlviii. 12.
f *See on*, v. 4.
g iv. 8. xi 17 xvi. 14. xix 15. xxi. 22. Gen. xvii. 1. xxviii 3. xxxv. 11. xliii. 14. xlviii. 3. xlix 25. Ex. vi 3. Num. xxiv. 4. 2 Cor. vi. 13.

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for in their behalf, "from Jesus Christ," as the appointed Mediator, through whom the eternal Spirit, with all his gifts, graces, and consolations, was given to sinners: and the Saviour was described as "the faithful Witness," who came into the world to bear witness to the perfections, counsels, truths, and will of God to men; and who fully revealed all that he had received of the Father for that purpose. He was, also, "the First-begotten from the "dead." Being the Only-begotten of the Father before all worlds, and "the Heir of all things," he had come on earth in that character, to tabernacle in human nature; and, having been put to death for declaring himself to be the Son of God, he arose from the dead, among other reasons to evince that he was what he professed to be. Thus he became the First-fruits of the resurrection, and appeared as the First-born of the children of God, in and through whom they shall all arise again, be manifested in their high and honourable character, and invested with their eternal inheritance. (*Notes, Luke* xx. 36. *Rom.* i. 4. *Col.* i. 15—19.) Being thus arisen from the dead, and exalted to the mediatorial throne, he is also "the Prince," or Sovereign, "of the kings of the earth;" by whom they reign, to whom they are accountable, whose glory they ought to seek, and by whom all will be terribly destroyed, who oppose, despise, or neglect him. This declaration of the Redeemer's sovereignty over all the kings of the earth was a proper introduction to the prophecies which were about to be delivered, of the opposition which would be made to his cause, and his final triumph over all his enemies.—Animated with a view of the glory of his beloved Lord, and contrasting it with the vastness of his condescension, and the depth of his self-abasement, the inspired writer broke out in adoring praises "to him, who," great and glorious as he was, "had loved them," when defiled with the loathsome stains of guilt and sin, and when deserving the final wrath of God; and whose love had been so immense, that he had "washed them from their "sins in his own blood," which he had willingly shed upon the cross, to make satisfaction to divine justice, and to procure all the blessings of salvation for them. And having, in consequence of this atonement, "quickened "them" by his Holy Spirit, he had taught them, in penitent and obedient faith, to purge their consciences from guilt by the application of his blood; and their hearts from the pollution of sin, by the grace promised through his mediation. In this manner he had not only delivered them from the wrath to come, but had also exalted and ennobled them as kings, to reign with him in eternal glory; and consecrated them as priests, to be accepted worshippers, and to offer spiritual sacrifices unto "God, "even his Father," (*Notes*, 1 *Pet.* ii. 5—9.) On these accounts, the apostle ascribed unto Christ *personally* the glory and dominion for ever and ever: (*Note, Phil.* ii. 11. 2 *Pet.* iii. 18:) and in thus honouring the Son, he especially honoured the Father that sent him; as all do, who cordially say, Amen to it.—Some indeed apply the doxology to the Father; but the construction is by no means so obvious and natural.

V. 7. The prophecy of this book principally relates to the opposition, which, in one form or other, would be made to the cause of Christ; the temporary success of his enemies, and his final triumph over them all: and, therefore, at the very opening of it, the reader's attention is called to that great day, when these scenes will be closed, and all will see the wisdom and happiness of the friends of Christ, and the madness and misery of his enemies. For "behold," with attention and solemn awe, the Saviour, who "loved his people and washed them from their sins "in his own blood,," was "coming with clouds," or in the clouds of heaven, in his own glory as Mediator, and in the glory of the Father, to be the Judge of the world! The intervening space would soon pass away, and it might even then be said "He cometh!" (*Jude* 14, 15.) Then all nations, being raised from the dead, will be gathered before his tribunal, and every eye shall see Him, in human nature, exercise omnipotence, omniscience, and all divine perfections, who once lay prostrate in unknown agony at Gethsemane, and was numbered with malefactors on mount Calvary! Then they, especially, who pierced him, shall be compelled to witness his glory, as well as to feel the power of his avenging indignation. Caiaphas and the chief priests, Pilate and his soldiers, with all concerned in his condemnation and crucifixion, and those in every age, who by their infidelity, apostacy, persecutions, heresies, and daring crimes, have crucified him afresh and put him to open shame, shall then behold him, with unutterable terror, preparing to pronounce and execute the righteous sentence of their eternal condemnation. And as all the kindreds of the earth, through successive generations, have combined in opposing, despising, abusing, or neglecting him and his great salvation, with the exception only of a very small remnant, so will they at that time wail because of him, in horror and despair; as neither their numbers nor their power can defend them from his omnipotent vengeance. The apostle, therefore, assured of the justice of these awful proceedings, and knowing that then the redemption of all true Christians would be completed, subjoined to this declaration, "Even so, Amen." "Thus let "all thine" implacable "enemies perish, O Lord."

V. 8. As the Lord Jesus was evidently spoken of in the preceding verse, so it is obvious to conclude that "the "Lord," who speaks in this, is the same Person: nor can the least appearance of a reason be assigned, why it should be understood of "the Father," personally; except that men are reluctant "to honour the Son," even as they ought to "honour the Father that sent him." The whole vision related to Christ, from whom immediately the revelation was given: most of the expressions here used, or

9 I, [h] John, who also am your brother, [i] and companion in tribulation, and in [k] the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, [l] for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

10 I was [m] in the Spirit [n] on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, [o] as of a trumpet,

11 Saying, [p] I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last: and, [q] What thou seest, write in a book, and send *it* unto [r] the seven churches which are in Asia; unto [s] Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto [t] Laodicea.

12 And I turned to [u] see the voice that spake with me. And, being turned, [x] I saw seven golden candlesticks;

13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks, *one* [y] like unto the Son of man, [z] clothed with a garment down to the foot, [a] and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

14 His head [b] and *his* hairs *were* white like wool, as white as snow; [c] and his eyes *were* as a flame of fire;

15 And [d] his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; [e] and his voice as the sound of many waters.

16 And [f] he had in his right hand seven stars: [g] and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword; [h] and his countenance *was* as the sun shineth in his strength.

17 And when I saw him, [i] I fell at his feet as dead. [k] And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, [l] Fear not; [m] I am the First and the Last:

[h] *See on*, 4.

[i] ii. 9, 10. vii. 14. John xvi. 33. Acts xiv. 22 Rom. viii. 17. 1 Cor. iv. 9—12 Phil i. 7. iv. 14 2 Tim. i. 8, ii. 3—12

[k] iii. 10. xiii. 10. xiv. 12 Rom ii. 7, 8 v. 3, 4. viii. 25 2 Thes. i. 4, 5 iii. 5. Heb x. 36 Jam v. 7, 8.

[l] 2. vi 9. xi. 7 xii. 11. 17 xix. 10.

[m] iv. 2 xvii 3. xxi. 10 Matt xxii. 43. Acts x. 10, &c 2 Cor. xii. 2—4.

[n] John xx. 19 26 Acts xx. 7. 1 Cor. xvi. 2.

[o] iv 1. x. 3—8

[p] *See on*, 8.

[q] 19. ii. 1. x 4. xiv. 13. xix. 9. xxi. 5. Deut. xxxi. 19 Is. xxx. 8. Jer. xxx 2 Hab. ii 2.

[r] *See on*, 4. ii 1. 8. 12, 18 iii 1. 7 14.

[s] Acts xviii. 19—21. 24. xix xx. 17. 1 Cor. xv. 32. xvi. 8. Eph. i 1. 1 Tim. i 3.

[t] Col iv 15. 16

[u] Ez. xliii. 5, 6. Mic vi. 9.

[x] 13. 20. ii. 1. Ex. xxv. 37. Zech. iv. 2.

[y] xiv. 14. Ez i. 26 Dan. vii 13. x. 16. Phil ii. 7, 8 Heb. ii. 14—17. iv. 15.

[z] Dan x. 5.

[a] xv 6. Ex. xxviii. 6—8. xxxix. 5. Lev. viii. 7. Is. xi. 5.

[b] Dan vii. 9 Matt. xxviii 3

[c] ii 18. xix. 12. Dan. x. 6.

[d] ii. 18 Ez. i 7. xl. 3. Dan x 6.

[e] xiv. 2. xix. 6. Ps. xciii. 4. Is. xvii. 13. Ez. xliii 2.

[f] 20 ii 1 iii. 1. xii. 1. Job xxxviii 7. Dan viii. 10. xii 3.

[g] ii. 12. 16. xix. 15 21. Is. xi. 4. xlix. 2. Eph. vi. 17 Heb. iv. 12.

[h] x. 1. Is. xxiv. 23 lx. 19, 20. Mal. iv 2 Acts xxvi. 13.

[i] Ez. i. 28. Dan. viii. 18. x. 8, 9. 17—19. Hab. iii. 16 Matt. xvii. 2—6. John xiii. 23 xxi. 20.

[k] Dan. viii. 18. x. 10.

[l] Gen. xv. 1. Ex xiv 13 xx. 20 Is. xli. 10 Dan. x. 12. Matt. xxviii. 4, 5. Mark xvi. 5, 6 Luke xxiv. 37—39.

[m] *See on*, 8. 11.

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others equivalent to them, are afterwards spoken by him, and concerning himself, and the construction and arrangement of this passage, and the context, would be very intricate, if we were to suppose the Father to be the Speaker. The Lord Jesus, therefore, here declared, "that He was "the Alpha and Omega," which are the names of the first and the last letters in the Greek alphabet, the language in which the apostle wrote; this implies, that he is the first Cause and the last End, the Author and Finisher of all things, in creation, providence, and redemption; "the Beginning and the Ending," the Source of existence, of life, of holiness, and of felicity, and the Completion of them, in every sense, and in all respects.—"Who is, and who was, and who is to come," as One with the eternal Father, (4.) "The Almighty," the Omnipotent, and Sovereign Ruler of all worlds, by, and for, whom all things were made, and by whom all things consist. No words can more strongly express eternal power and Godhead than these do.

V. 9—11. The apostle next proceeded to relate the manner in which he received the revelation that he was about to deliver; and he merely called himself the brother of believers, without mentioning his apostolical authority, though the only surviving apostle. He was also "their "companion in tribulation," being a persecuted servant of Christ, and exposed to the same sufferings in his cause as they were, a fellow-subject with them of the Saviour's kingdom on earth, and a fellow-heir of his heavenly kingdom. These sufferings he endured, as they did, with that submission, constancy, composure, and perseverance, which Christ required and exemplified, through which he experienced present consolations, and expected a happy event of his tribulations. He was, at the time when he had these visions, in the Isle of Patmos, whither he had been banished for preaching the word of God and bearing testimony to Christ; and it is recorded that he was confined to the mines, and compelled to labour in them, notwithstanding the infirmities of his extreme old age. But none of these things moved him! His soul was serene, and at liberty, amidst his sufferings; he had far sweeter comforts, than the emperor or any of his prosperous persecutors could obtain; and he expressed no dissatisfaction or emotion, on account of the injustice and cruelty with which he had been used. Whilst in this situation, "he "was in the Spirit," or brought under the immediate impulse of the Spirit of prophecy, as Ezekiel, Daniel, and others had been, when favoured with visions of the Almighty. This was "on the Lord's day," which can be meant of no other than the day on which the Lord Jesus arose from the dead, even the first day of the week; and this is a conclusive proof that it was set apart and kept holy, by the primitive Christians, in commemoration of that great event; for on what other account could it have been thus mentioned? Being thus cast into a trance, or ecstacy, he heard behind him a voice, loud and clear as the sound of a trumpet, saying some of the same words which have been already considered, or to the same effect. (*Marg. Ref.*) They must here be understood of Christ, and this is an additional reason for interpreting the others of him. But if any should still be disposed to understand the foregoing passage of the Father, they cannot but admit that Christ and the Father are One; for otherwise how can it be conceived, that Christ would have used the same words of himself, which had just been spoken by the Father, as descriptive of his eternal Godhead? So that, on either interpretation, they are conclusive in respect to Christ's Deity. The voice then ordered John to write what he saw, in a book, and send it to the seven churches in Asia, on which we shall have occasion afterwards to make some observations, but shall in this place only take notice, that this seems to confirm the ancient tradition of John's having resided and laboured at Ephesus, and in that vicinity, for a considerable time before his banishment to Patmos.

18 *I am* he [n] that liveth, and [o] was dead; and, behold, [p] I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have [q] the keys of hell and of death.

19 Write [r] the things which thou hast seen, [s] and the things which are, [t] and the things which shall be hereafter;

20 The [u] mystery of [x] the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. [y] The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches; [z] and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest, are the seven churches.

n Job xix. 25. Ps. v i.46 John xiv. 19. Rom. vi. 9. 2 Cor. xiii. 4 Gal. ii. 20. Col iii 3. Heb. vii 25
o Rom. xiv.8, 9. 2 Cor. x. 14. 15 Heb i 3 xii.2.3.
p iv.9 v 14. Heb. vii. 16 25.
q iii. 7. ix 1. xx. 1 14. Ps. lxviii. 20 Is. xxii 22. Matt. xvi. 19.
r *See on*, 11, 12
s ii iii.
t iv—xxii.
u *See on*, Mat. xiii. 11. Luke viii 10.
x *See on*, 13. 16
y ii. 1. 8. 12 18, i.i. 1. 7. 14. Mal. ii. 7.
z Zech iv 2, Matt. v 15. 16. Phil. ii. 15, 16 1 Tim. iii. 14—16.

V. 12—20. When the apostle had distinctly heard these words, he turned to see from whom the voice proceeded, and he then had a vision of seven golden candlesticks, in allusion to the golden candlestick with seven branches, which was made for the tabernacle, (*Notes, Ex.* xxv. 31—40. *Marg. Ref.*) and in the midst of them, as presiding over and taking care of them, he saw One like unto the Son of man. The apostle had been well acquainted with Jesus, when he was on earth a man of sorrows: but though he perceived him in human form, and with some resemblance of his former appearance, yet he now saw him in such resplendent glory, that he seemed another person: "He was clothed," after the manner of the priests, "with a garment down to his foot," perhaps representing his perfect mediatorial righteousness and royal priesthood; this vesture was girt around his breasts with a golden girdle, which may denote the preciousness of his love, and the cordiality with which he maintains the cause of his people. His hairs like wool, or snow, may signify his majesty, purity, and eternity. (*Notes, Dan.* vii. 9, 10. 13, 14, 22.) His eyes as a flame of fire, may represent his omniscient acquaintance with the secrets of all hearts, and with the most distant events. His feet, like fine brass burning in a furnace, may denote the stability of his appointments, and the transcendent excellency of all his proceedings. His "voice, as the sound of many "waters," may represent the energy of his word, to astonish and terrify, or its invincible efficacy to convert, or destroy, as he sees good; the seven stars in his right hand were emblematical of the presiding ministers of the seven churches, which the apostle addressed, whom Christ upheld, directed, governed, and managed, by his power and according to his will. The sharp two-edged sword out of his mouth seems to represent his awful and irresistible justice, in cutting down his enemies on every side, and slaying them by the breath of his mouth. (*Is.* xi. 4.) Moreover, his countenance was like the sun at noon day, when it shines most clearly and powerfully, so that "nothing can be hid from the heat thereof." Upon this display of the Redeemer's glory, even his beloved apostle, who had not only leaned on his breast at table, but had seen his glory on the holy mount, (*Matt.* xvii. 2.) was utterly overwhelmed with the effulgency of his majesty! (*Dan.* x. 5—9.) But the divine Redeemer graciously supported him and dispelled his fears, again declaring himself to be the "First and the last," (*Notes*, 8—11.) and adding, "I am he that liveth;" the ever-living, self-existent God, to whom, as Mediator, it was given to have life in himself, and to be the life of men, and who had also been obedient to death for sinners; but behold, he was alive, as the first-fruits of the resurrection, to die no more, to which the apostle seems to have added, Amen, as expressive of his unspeakable satisfaction; nay, so absolute was his conquest over the king of terrors, that he had possession of "the keys of hell and of death." He possesses the absolute sovereignty, as dwelling in human nature, over the invisible world, the state of separate spirits, and over death and the grave; so that he removes men out of this life, and consigns their bodies to the grave and corruption, when and as he pleases; he then fixes their souls in happiness or misery with absolute authority, and he will soon raise all their dead bodies, and either receive them into heaven, or shut them up for ever in hell, as he sees good. None, therefore, of his friends can have aught to fear from any creature, either during life, or at the approach of death, as every circumstance will certainly be ordered in that manner, which may best subserve their everlasting advantage. The Lord Jesus, therefore, ordered his apostle, to write, 1st. The things which he had seen, namely, the circumstances of that vision; 2dly. The things which then were, or what related to the state of the churches at that time; and 3dly. The things which should be hereafter, even the prophecies which he was about to receive; and this seems to mark out to us the contents of the book. This mysterious and emblematical vision of the seven stars was then explained to him, to signify the seven *angels*, or presiding ministers of the churches, who were the *messengers* of Christ to them; and the seven golden candlesticks were shown to represent the seven churches themselves, as enlightened by the word and Spirit of the Lord, and holding forth that light to others, by the profession and preaching of the word, the administration of holy ordinances, and their Christian conversation and behaviour.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

The revelations of God, by Jesus Christ, were intended to inform his servants about as much of his designs, respecting them and others, through the short period of time and the countless ages of eternity, as it was good for them to know. They that are intrusted with the word of God and the testimony of Christ, must bear record of all things which they know, and "declare the whole counsel "of God," as far as it is profitable for those to whom they speak. Whilst it becomes us to leave secret things to God, we ought carefully to read, hear, keep, and obey, whatever he reveals; for "every word of God is pure," and "doeth good to him that walketh uprightly." Even difficult and mysterious passages, will be useful to the humble believer, though he cannot fathom the depth of them, and the time may speedily arrive, when the dispensations of Providence shall fully illustrate the meaning of obscure prophecies to the most unlearned readers.—The grace and peace, which come from the everlasting

CHAP. II.

The epistle of Christ to the angel of the church of Ephesus; consisting of commendation and reproof, a call to repentance, a solemn warning, and a gracious promise to those that overcame, 1—7. That to Smyrna, replete with commendation, and encouraging exhortations to faithfulness under tribulation, 8—11. That to Pergamos; in which are warnings against the Nicolaitans, threatenings of judgments on the impenitent, and promises to the victorious, 12—17. That to Thyatira, nearly of similar import, 18—29.

UNTO [a] the angel of the [b] church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that [c] holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who [d] walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;

[a] 8. 12. 18. iii 1.7. 14.
[b] *See on,* i. 11.
[c] i. 16. 20 viii 10—12 xii. 1.John v. 35.
[d] *See on,* i 12, 13 Ez. xxviii. 13, 14. Matt xviii. 20. xxviii. 20.

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and unchangeable love of the Father, by the communion of the omnipresent spirit, who dwells in all believers, and through Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the First-born from the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth, belong to all those, and to those only, whom he hath washed from their sins in his own blood; nor can they sufficiently admire his love, which passeth knowledge, or rejoice in the dignity and felicity to which he hath advanced them, or devote themselves too much to the sacred duties of their royal priesthood, or ascribe too great honour to their divine Redeemer, "to whom be glory and "dominion for ever and ever." This will soon appear; for "behold he cometh in the clouds," and every human eye, however averse to the sight, shall see him placed upon the dread tribunal, from which there can be no appeal. What then will be the terror, dismay, and anguish of his crucifiers, and of all in every age who have been of their judgment and disposition! and how will "all the kindreds of the earth wail because of him!" Whilst all his faithful followers shall rejoice, and say, even so let it be, Lord Jesus; Amen, Amen. If we would be 'numbered with his saints in glory everlasting,' we must now willingly submit to him, receive him, and honour him, as a Saviour, who (we profess to believe,) will come to be our judge, for he is the First and the Last, the Beginning and the Ending, the unchangeable, eternal, and omnipotent Lord, to whom all must be subject, or perish for ever; and they, who will not believe him to be the great I AM, and who refuse to honour him as co-equal with the Father, will discover their awful mistake, when made to feel the weight of his anger, and the power of that eternal vengeance, which they now despise.

V. 9—20.

They who are brethren to the apostles and ancient servants of Christ, must expect to be companions with them in tribulation, and in the patience, as well as the kingdom of their Lord; though few of them are called to suffer so much as *they* endured in this good cause. A peaceful conscience, however, and the consolations of the Holy Spirit, will enable the afflicted Christian to be more joyful in communion with God, when immured in a prison, than ungodly men can be in the most prosperous circumstances. If believers are confined, even on the Lord's holy day, from public ordinances and the communion of saints, by necessity and not by choice, they may expect great comfort in meditation and secret duties, from the influences of the Spirit, and by hearing the voice and contemplating the glory of their beloved Saviour, of whose gracious visits nor confinement nor circumstances can deprive them. But we may well be satisfied to walk by faith, during our continuance here on earth; for could we now see the Lord as he is, the displays of his glory, even as dwelling in human nature, would overwhelm us; and we must be totally changed in body and soul, before we can bear the effulgency of his majesty, and find unalloyed happiness in that beatific vision. Let us then at present hearken to his voice, lean on his arm, and receive the encouragements of his love to obviate our fears; for what can he, "the First and the Last," even the eternal Son of the Father, withhold from those for whom he became incarnate, that he might die for their sins? and what can be too hard for him, who has the keys of death and hell, and liveth as our almighty Friend for evermore? May we then obey his word, and walk in his light; may our light, as derived from him, shine before men for their conviction and edification; thus may we expect the time of our departure hence, which, with every thing relative to it, will be appointed by his unerring wisdom and love, who will come to receive our souls to his presence, and who will at length raise and change the bodies of our humiliation also, "that they may be made like unto his glorious body, ac-"cording to the mighty power by which he is able to sub-"due all things unto himself."

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1. Many expositors have imagined that these epistles to the seven churches, were mystical prophecies of seven distinct periods, into which the whole term, from the apostles' days to the end of the world, would be divided. But there is no proof from scripture, that seven such periods, and no more, were to be expected in the state of the church, unless the epistles themselves be admitted as proofs of it; nor are there any distinct traces in ecclesiastical history, in respect of such as are supposed to be already past, though a lively imagination and a prompt invention may advance plausible things on the subject. It cannot be conceived, if the concluding part of this book itself be recollected, that the last period of the church will be worse than any that has gone before, as the Laodicean church was far more corrupt than any of the rest. Nor can it be true in fact, that a more flourishing period succeeded that of the church in the apostles' days, or that immediately subsequent to their death; yet the state of the church of Smyrna was far purer and more excellent than that of Ephesus, nay, perhaps than that of Philadelphia, which on this hypothesis must accord to

2 I [e] know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and [f] how thou canst not bear them which are evil : and [g] thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars;

3 And [h] hast borne, and [i] hast patience, and for my name's sake [k] hast laboured, [l] and hast not fainted.

e 9 13. 19. ii 1. 8. 15. Ps i 6. Matt. vii. 23 1 Thes. i. 3. 2 Tim ii 19. Heb. vi 10.
f 6 14, 15. 20, 21 Gal i. 7 Eph. iv. 14. 1 Thes. v. 21 2 Pet ii 1–3. 1 John iv. 1.
g 2 Cor. xi 13–15. 1 John ii. 21, 22.
h Ps lxix 7 Mic vii 9. Mark xv. 21. Luke xiv. 27. 1 Cor xiii 7. Gal vi. 2 Heb. xiii. 13 ——i i. 9 iii. 10. Ps xxxvii. 7. Luke viii. 15. xxi. 19. Rom. ii 7. v. 3, 4 viii 25. xii 12 xv. 4, 5. Col. i. 11. 2 Thes. iii. 5. Heb. vi. 12. 15. x. 36. xii. 1. Jam. i. 3, 4. v. 7–11. 2 Pet i. 6.——k Rom. xvi. 12. 1 Cor xvi. 16 2 Cor. v. 9. vi. 5 x. 15. xi. 23. Phil. ii. 16 iv 3. 1 Thes. i. 3 ii. 9. v 12. 2 Thes. iii. 8. 1 Tim. iv 10. v. 17. Heb. vi. 10 ——l Luke xviii. 1. 2 Cor. iv. 1. 16. Gal. vi. 9. 2 Thes. iii 13 Heb. xii 3–5

4 Nevertheless, [m] I have *somewhat* against thee, [n] because thou hast left thy first love.

5 [o] Remember therefore, from whence [p] thou art fallen, [q] and repent, [r] and do the first works; or [s] else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

m 14. 20.
n iii. 14–17 Jer. ii. 2–5. Matt. xxiv 12, 13 Phil. i. 9 iii. 13–16. 1 Thes. iv. 9, 10. 2 Thes. i. 3 Heb. vi. 10, 11.
o iii 3, 19. Ez xvi. 61–63. xx 43. xxxvi. 31 2 Pet. i. 12, 13.
p Is xiv 12. Hos. xiv. 1. Gal v. 4. Jude 24.
q 16 21, 22 iii. 3. 19. ix 20, 21. xvi. 9. Acts xvii. 30, 31.——r 19. iii 2, 3. Is i. 26 Hos. ix. 10 Mal iii. 4. iv. 6. Luke i. 17.——s 16. iii. 3. Matt xxi. 41–43. xxiv. 48–51. Mark xii. 9. Luke xii 45, 46. xx. 16.

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the Millennium. So that there seems no ground at all for this sentiment, though it has been sanctioned by many respectable names. But the churches, here addressed, were in such different states, in respect of purity of doctrine and the power of godliness, that the words of Christ to them will always be suitable to the case of other churches, and professors of Christianity, in all ages and places, to the end of the world; and some of them contain the proper message or instruction to those of one character, and others to those of another, in all the variety which they contain. The Lord Jesus himself, appearing in vision to John, directed him what to write to each of these seven churches; and to address it to the *angel* of the church, his stated messenger or resident ambassador among them. It seems more natural to understand this of one presiding minister, than of several elders or pastors spoken of collectively, because one in office; and thus it countenances the opinion which has been advanced, concerning the introduction of a moderate kind of episcopacy in the primitive church. (*Notes*, *Acts* xx. 28. 1 *Tim*. v. 21—25. *Tit*. i. 5.) It is also undeniable, that there were several elders, or pastors, in the church at Ephesus, before this time, so that some ruler or minister, presiding over the other pastors, must be intended. The address to "the "angel of the church," doubtless implied commendation, reproof, instruction, or encouragement to him, and to the pastors in general, yet the church was principally intended. That of Ephesus was planted by St. Paul. There is no proof that Timothy ever statedly resided there; and as nearly thirty years seem to have elapsed since the second epistle to him was written, various changes had doubtless taken place in that time. John himself is also recorded to have abode at Ephesus, and to have superintended that and the neighbouring churches for several years. Ephesus was the capital of the province called Asia, (*Acts* xix. 8—12.) and the apostle was directed to write the first epistle to the church in that city, as a message from "him, that held "the seven stars in his right hand, and walked amidst the "seven golden candlesticks," (*Notes*, i. 12. 16. 20.) This intimated the absolute authority of Christ over his ministers, with their entire dependence on him, and his constant, though invisible, presence with his churches, in which he had fixed the light of his word and ordinances, his attention to their whole conduct, his readiness to help and bless them, whilst they made a proper use of their light, and his power and purpose to remove it, if provoked by their abuse or neglect of it.

V. 2—5. Our Lord reminded the presiding minister at Ephesus, and by him all the church, that he knew, or observed and accepted, their works of faith and love; the labour, which they bestowed in his service; their patient continuance in well-doing, under heavy trials and afflictions; and their decided abhorrence of false teachers and evil workers, whom they would not on any account endure in their communion. Moreover, he had noticed with approbation the trial which they had made of certain persons, who confidently claimed apostolical authority, as if immediately commissioned by Christ himself, and had thus attempted to draw them off from the faith once delivered to the saints; and how they had found them out to be hypocrites and impostors. (*Notes*, 1 *John* iv. 1—4. 2 *John* 10, 11.) They had repeatedly been enabled to endure affliction, and to exercise patience in his cause; and he repeatedly took a kind notice of it, and of their persevering labours, without wearying or fainting, from a regard to his name. Nevertheless, he had somewhat to allege against them, because the fervency of their love to him and their zeal for his glory had sensibly declined since they first embraced Christianity, and they had become more negligent and formal than they used to be. This abatement of holy affection naturally tended to still more apparent evil; the Lord therefore called on them to recollect how lively, zealous, fervent, united, and active, they had been, and to compare their present fallen condition with it, that thus they might be excited to repent, and do their first works, else he would come, by his providence, in a short time and an unexpected manner, and remove their candlestick out of its place, or deprive them of the light of the Gospel, and the advantage of its ordinances; nor could this judgment be averted, without repentance and works meet for repentance. This sentence was after a time most awfully executed; and at this day, Ephesus, which was so renowned a city, is an inconsiderable village, in which there are no persons that bear the Christian name.—There is some difficulty in conceiving how the persevering diligence and patience of this church could consist with that abatement in love with which it is charged. But observation and experience combine to prove, that in many instances, while the affections are lively and fervent, men engage zealously in services, and form habits of exertion, self-denial, patience, and courageous disregard to the opposition and reproaches of men, in which, as to the outward conduct at least, they persevere, from various motives, and often conscientiously, though it is lamentably true, and they know it, that their hearts are not so thoroughly engaged in what they do as they once were. Many are well aware, that this is their case; they have zeal enough to retain them in their former course of

6 But this thou hast, [t] that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

7 He [u] that hath an ear, [x] let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; [y] To him that overcometh will I give to eat of [z] the Tree of life, which is in the midst of [a] the paradise of God.

[t] 14, 15. 2 Chr. xix. 2. Ps. xxvi. 5. ci. 3. cxxxix 21, 22. 2 John 9, 10

[u] ii. 17. 29 iii 6. 13. 22 xiii. 9. Matt. xi. 15 xiii. 9 Mark vii. 16.

[x] xiv. 13. xxii. 17. 1 Cor. ii. 10. xii 4—12.

[y] 11. 17 26—28 iii. 5. 12 21. xii 10, 11. xv. 2. xxi. 7. John xvi. 23. 1 John v. 4, 5

[z] xxii 2. 14. Gen ii. 9. iii. 22—24 Prov. iii. 18. xi. 30. xiii. 12. xv. 4.

[a] Luke xxiii. 43. 2 Cor. xii. 4.

8 ¶ And unto [b] the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith [c] the First and the Last, which was dead, and is alive;

9 I [d] know thy works, [e] and tribulation, [f] and poverty, (but [g] thou art rich,) and *I know* [h] the blasphemy of them [i] which say they are Jews, and are not, but *are* [k] the synagogue of Satan.

[b] See on, 1.

[c] See on, i. 8. 11. 17 18.

[d] See on, 2.

[e] vii. 14 John xvi 33 Acts xiv. 22. Rom. v. 3. viii. 35 xii. 12. 1 Thes iii. 4. 2 Thes. i. 6, 7.

[f] Luke iv. 18. vi. 20. 2 Cor. viii 2. 9. Jam. ii. 5, 6.

[g] iii. 17, 18. Luke xii. 21 2 Cor. vi. 10. 1 Tim. vi. 18. Jam. ii. 5, 6.

[h] Luke xxii. 65. Acts xxvi. 11 1 Tim. i. 13

[i] Rom ii. 28, 29. ix. 6.

[k] iii. 9.

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active service, which is become habitual, and in some circles creditable, to them; but had they not been more "fervent in spirit serving the Lord," in former days, those habits would never have been formed, those services had never been engaged in. Perhaps most Christians are too apt to take encouragement from such diligence, and to silence the remonstrances of their consciences by it; but it is plain, that our Saviour and Judge considers this as a very criminal state of heart and conduct.

V. 6, 7. The Ephesian church, however, had one thing favourable in its case; though declined in love, it was not corrupted with licentious principles or immoral practices, but hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which Christ also abhorred; we shall see hereafter that this was a sect of avowed and most abominable Antinomians. (*Notes*, 16, 17.) But, whilst these things were immediately addressed to the rulers, pastors, and church at Ephesus, every person, that had an ear, and could perceive the meaning of the words, was concerned to attend to them, and to all those things, which the Holy Spirit, (by whose agency the apostle had this vision of Christ speaking to him,) thus declared unto the churches. For the Lord Jesus promised to every man, that by faith in him should overcome the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and especially those to which his peculiar disposition or circumstances most exposed him, that he would give him "to eat of the Tree of life." This is a figurative expression taken from the account of the garden of Eden, (*Notes, Gen.* ii. 9. iii. 22--24,) and denoting the pure, satisfactory, and eternal joys of heaven, and the anticipation of them in this world, by faith, communion with Christ, and the consolations of his Holy Spirit. Every victory over sharp temptation would be graciously rewarded with foretastes of this fruit, and the final victory, with the eternal fruition of the happiness intended by it, in heaven itself, and the presence and love of God.

V. 8, 9. Smyrna was a large city to the north of Ephesus. The epistle sent to the angel of the Church, established there, was the message of him, who is, "the "First and the Last." (*Notes*, i. 8. 11. 17, 18.) These words were spoken by Jehovah of himself, when declaring his own eternal Deity, and asserting "that beside him there "was no God, yea, he knew not any," (*Note, Is.* xliv. 6—8.) so that the repeated use of them by the Lord Jesus must be allowed to be a full proof, that he is the self-existent and eternal God; and as the distinction between the Father and the Son is every where established, whilst it is declared that there is but one God, so we may assert, and could easily prove in form, that there can be no *consistent* alternative, between rejecting the Bible, or denying it to be the *unerring* word of God, and the acknowledging a plurality of Persons in the Unity of the Godhead. For the same has been, and may be, shown concerning the Holy Spirit, in respect of the attributes and operations peculiar to Deity, and his distinct personal subsistence. So that the doctrine of the Trinity is fixed on the firm basis of divine revelation; and it will always be found, that no contrary scheme, however modified, can be supported by any learning, ingenuity, or diligence of man, except with a proportionable disregard to the oracles of God; and the full establishment of any such doctrine must be the effect of a total disbelief of the scriptures, in respect of *the nature, subsistence, and perfections, of* the Godhead, for all attempts at a coalition must in this case be abortive. The Church, indeed, as built on the Person of Christ, cannot be subverted by the gates of hell; and though we may well be concerned for our children, and the cause of the Gospel in these lands, and should therefore use every proper method of "earnestly contending for "the truth once delivered to the saints;" yet we may be free from anxiety about the event of the contest, and predict, that the triumphing of those, who strive against "the First and the Last," will assuredly be short. He, who thus asserted his own essential Deity, in the same place gave an intimation of his incarnation, death, resurrection, and everlasting intercession; and, in the character of the omnipotent Friend and Saviour of his people, he assured the Christians at Smyrna, that he noticed and accepted their works, and was well acquainted with their trials and poverty; for though Smyrna was a rich, and populous city, either the poorest of the inhabitants alone had been converted, or the Christians there had been impoverished by persecution. They were indeed poor in the world, as well as poor in spirit, yet Christ declared, "that "they were rich," in faith, and by an interest in his unsearchable riches, and the precious promises of the new covenant, in wisdom, grace, and good works, and as heirs of an unfailing treasure in heaven; for they were in a very flourishing state in respect of their souls, though greatly reduced in their outward circumstances. Moreover, he knew the blasphemy of certain persons, that said they were Jews, and reviled both them and him. Some think that these men professed Christianity; but in their zeal for the Mosaic law, they spake such things of the Person and righteousness of Christ, as amounted to constructive blasphemy; but it is more obvious to conclude, that they were virulent opposers and persecutors, who contradicted and blasphemed, as the Asiatic Jews had

10 Fear none of those things which thou [l] shalt suffer: behold, [m] the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and [n] ye shall have tribulation [o] ten days: [p] be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee [q] a crown of life.

11 He [r] that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of [s] the second death.

12 ¶ And [t] to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he [u] which hath the sharp sword with two edges;

13 I [x] know thy works, and where thou dwellest, *even* where [y] Satan's seat *is:* and [z] thou holdest fast [a] my name, and hast not [b] denied my faith, even in those days, wherein Antipas [c] *was* my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

14 But [d] I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of [e] Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to [g] eat things sacrificed unto idols, and [h] to commit fornication.

15 So hast thou also them that hold [i] the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

16 [k] Repent; or [l] else I will come unto thee quickly, and [m] will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

l Dan iii 16—18. Matt x 28. Luke xii. 4—7.
m xii. 9—11. xii. 2 7. 15—17. Luke xxi. 12 John xvi 2. 27. Eph. ii. 2. vi 12. 1 Pet. v. 8.
n *See on*, 9.
o Hab ii. 3. 1 Pet. i. 6, 7.
p xii. 11. Matt x. 22. xxiv. 13 Mark viii 35. xiii. 13. Luke xxi. 16—19. John xii. 25. Acts xx. 24. xxi. 13 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.
q iii. 11. Jam i. 12. 1 Pet v 4.
r *See on*, 7.
s xx. 6. 14 xxi 8.
t *See on*, 1. i. 11.
u 16 i. 16. xix. 15. 21. Is. xi. 4. Heb. iv. 12, 13
x *See on*. 2. 9.
y 9, 10 24. iii. 9.
z 25. iii. 3. 11 1 Thes. v. 21. 2 Tim. i 13. Heb. iii 6 x. 23
a iii. 8 Matt. xxiv. 9. Luke xxi. 17. Acts ix. 14. Jam. ii. 7.
b Matt. x. 23. 1 Tim v. 8. 2 Tim. ii. 12. Jude 3, 4
c Acts xxii. 20.
d *See on*, 4 20.
e Num xxv. 1—3. xxxi. 8. 16. xxxiv 14 2 Pet. ii 15 Jude 11.
f Is lvii 14 Jer. vi 21 Ez iii. 20. xliv 12. Matt. xvii. 7. Rom ix. 32 xi. 9. xiv. 13. 21. 1 Cor. i. 23. viii 9 1 Pet. ii. 8.
g Acts xv 20, 21. 29. xxi. 25. 1 Cor viii. 4—13. x. 18—31.
h xxi 8 xxii 15 1 Cor. vi 13—18. vii. 2. Heb. xiii. 4.
i *See on*, 6.
k *See on*, q r 5—21, 22 iii 19 xvi. 9 Acts xvi. 30, 31.
l *See on*. s. 5.
m *See on*. 12 Is xi. 4 xlix. 2 Eph. vi 17 2 Thes. ii 8.

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done in the time when St. Paul preached among them.—They professed to be Jews, and the people and worshippers of God; but they were not what they pretended to be. Whether they were of the Jewish nation or not, God allowed them not as his congregation; the rites for which they contended were no longer of any validity; their worship was carnal and hypocritical; they violently opposed the truth and cause of God; and they were in fact "the "synagogue of Satan," a company of people, bearing the image, copying the example, doing the works, and combined together to support the kingdom, of the devil.

V. 10, 11. These concluding verses show, that the persons above mentioned were fierce persecutors, and not subtle deceivers; for Christ did not warn his people to beware of false doctrine, but to prepare for the cross.—He exhorted them "to fear none of those things, which "they should suffer;" for he, "the First and the Last," was able to protect, support, comfort, uphold, and deliver them; yet, behold, he saw good to permit the devil to prevail so far, that he would cast some of them into prison, by means of his synagogue of pretended Jews, who probably stirred up the people and magistrates against them. Their enemies meant that they should thus be destroyed, but their Lord and Saviour permitted it, that they might be tried, and proved, and purified, (*Note*, 1 *Pet*. i. 6, 7.) and for this end they would have tribulation *ten days*. This may either mean ten years, which is recorded to have been the duration of Domitian's persecution; or a considerable time; during which space many of them might be called to suffer martyrdom for the truth. The Lord therefore exhorted them to be "faithful unto death," maintaining their allegiance to him inviolable, fighting valiantly as his soldiers, and adhering to his truth and will, even if called to suffer death for his sake, or in any case till the close of their lives; and then he, "who had "been dead, and was alive," would recompense them, as no other prince or captain could do his faithful adherents, for he would give them "a crown of life," or eternal glory and felicity. This epistle also concerned all that could hear and understand, as no one, that conquered in this spiritual warfare, should be hurt by the second death, though he might die in winning the battle. But he, "that hath the keys of hell and of death," engaged to secure the souls of his servants, at the time of their dissolution, and their bodies at the resurrection, that they should not be finally separated from God, or sent away into the everlasting punishment prepared for all wicked men, which is emphatically called "the second death;" (xx. 14.) on the contrary, they would be preserved from every degree of this misery, and receive the gift of eternal felicity after their transient sufferings in this world.—Nothing of reproof or warning is contained in this epistle; and it is remarkable, that there are more Christians at this day in Smyrna, than at any other place in all that part of the world; the candlestick hath not *wholly* been removed from them, but some glimmerings of light are still continued to the harassed remnant of this Church.

V. 12, 13. This epistle to the angel of the church in Pergamos, (a city to the north of Smyrna,) contains both reproof and threatenings, and, therefore, it was sent as from him, "who hath the sharp sword with two edges."—(i. 16.) Christ took favourable notice of the works of the Christians in this city, as far as they were obedient to his commandments, and he reminded them, that he knew their habitation to be in a place, where Satan had especially established his throne and taken up his abode. This must denote, that Pergamos was not only a very wicked city, but also, as it were, the head-quarters of both persecution and heresy, the two principal engines of the devil, in opposing the pure Gospel of Christ, and that from thence they diffused their baleful influence to other cities. Yet, even in this perilous situation, the church in general held fast and professed the truth of the Gospel, and a zealous regard to the honour and authority of Christ; so that they had not denied the faith, either by open apostacy, or by temporizing, to avoid the cross, not even in those trying days, wherein Antipas, (who probably was a pastor of the church,) had been a faithful *witness* to the truth of Christ, and had been slain for his testimony, by those among whom Satan dwelt.

n *See on*, 7
o Ps. xxv. 14 xxxvi. 8. Prov. iii. 32 xiv. 10. Is lxv. 13 Matt. xiii. 11. John iv 32. vi. 48—58 Col. iii. 3.

17 He [n] that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches: To him that overcometh will I give [o] to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone [p] a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth *it*.

p iii. 12. xix. 12. Is. lxv. 15

V. 14—16. The Lord had, however, a few things to allege against this church; because they permitted in their communion, or otherwise connived at, some of those licentious teachers, against whom his apostles had protested, (*Notes*, 2 *Pet*. ii. *Jude*,) even such as held the doctrine of Balaam. For that wicked man, though really favoured with prophetic visions, had yet, for filthy lucre's sake, plotted mischief against Israel, by teaching Balak to seduce them into idolatry and fornication, (*Notes*, *Num*. xxv.) and thus to throw in their way an occasion of falling into sin, and under the wrath of God; and in like manner the church at Pergamos contained persons who held the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which Christ hated. Hence it is evident, that the teachers of this sect sought "the wages of unrighteousness," in their endeavours to corrupt and pervert professed Christians; and that, in order to obtain them, they laid stumbling blocks in their way, and, on some pretence or other, encouraged and enticed them to join in the idolatrous feasts of their neighbours, and on those occasions, and at other times, to commit fornication. They might, perhaps, inculcate the lawfulness of dissembling their religion, to escape persecution, which is an occasion of falling to numbers in such circumstances, and joining in the idolatry and excess of the heathen worship would effectually answer this end; but they certainly grafted this prevarication on more general principles, and an erroneous view of the doctrines of free grace and Christian liberty constituted the root of bitterness, from which their evil practices naturally grew. In short, they turned the grace of God into lasciviousness, and taught others to do the same, and were the Antinomians of the primitive church; a heresy, which, in one form or other, hath always hitherto sprung up when the pure Gospel of Christ hath been successfully preached, being a kind of tares, which the enemy will ever sow among the good seed, as far as he is permitted.—Many have supposed, that this sect derived its name from Nicolas, one of the primitive deacons; (*Marg. Ref.*) and such a tradition prevailed early in the church. Yet the name was then so common, and might be given them on so many other accounts, that there is no certainty in it; we read nothing of Nicolas in scripture to warrant so unfavourable an opinion of him; neither Peter nor Jude, who opposed heretics of the same stamp, called them by this name, and it may thence be supposed to have been afterwards given them. Some have noted that *Nicolaus*, in Greek, signifies the same as *Balaam* does in Hebrew, namely, "the conqueror of the people," and have thence inferred, that they were so called from the influence which they obtained over men's minds, and the fatal use which they made of it, as Balaam had done before them.—The Lord, however, commanded the church of Pergamos to repent of, and forsake, these corrupt practices and principles, to exclude such scandalous and pernicious persons from their communion, and by every means to show a decided abhorrence of their tenets; otherwise, he would quickly visit them in judgment, and fight against these deceivers with the sword of his mouth, inflict threatened vengeance on them and their adherents, and even deprive the church of their abused privileges.—This city is at present in a very ruinous condition, very few professors of Christianity are found in it, and they are wholly dependent on the church at Smyrna, being in a most abject state, and having scarcely any thing of their religion except the empty name.

V. 17. What the Spirit spake by John, to the church at Pergamos, was meant for the instruction of all who could hear or read it; for whilst judgments impended over the head of the impenitent, blessings were prepared for those who overcame the multiplied temptations to which they were exposed. To each person, who thus adhered to the truth and precepts of Christ, he promised to give "the "hidden manna," or those invigorating and satisfying consolations, which spring from the lively exercise of faith in a crucified Saviour, a steadfast contemplation of the glory of God in him, and communion with the Father and the Son, by the influences of the Holy Spirit. (*Notes*, *John* vi. 47—58.) This manna from Heaven, (*Notes*, *Ex*. xvi.) is ***hidden*** from carnal men, who see neither the source, the nature, the communication, nor the excellency of it; it is placed out of the reach of every enemy, nor can the supplies of it be intercepted: so that it is "the *secret* "of the LORD, which is with them that fear him."—He also promised to give to every conqueror in this holy war "a white stone." In those times, when any person, accused of crimes against the state, was tried by the suffrage of the citizens, they voted for his acquittal by a white stone, and for his condemnation by a black one; so that Christ, the sole Judge of his people, in promising to give them "a white stone," assured them of their full justification at the great day of account, and of the present comfortable sense that they were pardoned and accepted in him. The name written upon it, is probably that of "children of God," and it represents the inseparable connexion of adoption into his family with forgiveness of sins. This name would be, as it were, inscribed upon the pardon given them, and made legible to the soul by the spirit of adoption. (*Note*, *Rom*. viii. 14—17.) But "no "man knoweth it, saving he that receiveth it;" for the ground of this knowledge is laid in his inward consciousness and experience; it arises from "a witness in himself;" the world knoweth not the children of God, (1 *John* iii. 1, 2.) and even their brethren cannot exactly distinguish them, but sometimes suspect or condemn the upright and think well of specious hypocrites. But when the Holy Spirit illuminates his own work in the believer's soul, this new name, and its real import, become legible and intelligible to him, and he knows himself to be a child and heir of God. The expression may also signify, that the felicity which awaits the children of God, when they shall have obtained a complete victory over all their enemies, can never be understood, but by the enjoyment of it; yet I apprehend that present consolations, as

18 ¶ And [q] unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith [r] the Son of God, [s] who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet *are* like fine brass;

19 I [t] know thy works, [u] and charity, and service, and faith, and thy [x] patience, and thy works; and [y] the last *to be* more than the first.

20 Notwithstanding, [z] I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest [a] that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach, [b] and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

[q] See on, i. 11
[r] Ps. ii. 7. Matt. iii 17 iv 3 6. xvii 5 xxvii 54. Luke i 35. John i. 14 49 iii. 16 18. 35, 36 v. 25 x 36 Acts viii 37. Rom i 4 viii. 32
[s] See on, i. 14, 15
[t] See on, 2 9. 13.
[u] 1 Cor xiii 1—8. 13 Col. iii. 14. 1 Thes iii. 6. 2 Thes. i. 3. 1 Tim i. 5. 1 Pet. iv. 8. 2 Pet i 7.
[x] See on, 2. 3
[y] See on, 4. Job xvii 9. Ps. xcii. 14 Prov. iv. 18. John xv. 2. 2 Pet. iii. 18
[z] See on. 4 14.
[a] 1 Kings xvi. 31. xviii. 4 13. xix 1, 2 xxi 7—15. 23—25. 2 Kings ix. 7. 10. 30—37
[b] See on, 14. Ex. xxxiv. 15. Num. xxv 1, 2. Acts xv. 20. 29. 1 Cor. viii. 10—12. x. 18—21. 28.

21 And I gave her [c] space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not

22 Behold, I will cast her into a bed, [d] and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, [e] except they repent of their deeds.

23 And I will kill her children [f] with death; [g] and all the churches shall know that [h] I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: [i] and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

24 But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, As many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known [k] the depths of Satan, as they speak; [l] I

[c] ix. 20, 21. Jer. viii. 4—6. Rom. ii. 4, 5 ix. 22. 1 Pet. iii. 20. 2 Pet iii. 9. 15.
[d] xvii 2. xviii. 3. 9. xix. 18—21. Ez xvi. 37—41. xxiii. 45—48.
[e] Jer xxxvi 3. Ez. xviii. 30—32. xxxiii. 11. Zeph. iii. 7. Luke xiii. 3. 5 2 Cor xii. 21. 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26.
[f] vi 8.
[g] 7. 11 Deut. xiii. 11 xvii 13. xix. 20 xxi. 21.
[h] 1 Sam xvi. 7. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. xxix. 17 2 Chr. vi. 30 Ps vii 9. xliv. 21. Jer. xi. 20 xvii. 10. xx. 12. John ii. 24, 25 xxi. 17. Acts i. 24. Rom. viii. 27. Heb. iv. 13.
[i] xx 12. Ps lxii. 12 Is iii 10. 11. Matt. xvi. 27. Rom. ii. 5—11. 2 Cor v. 10 Gal vi. 5. 1 Pet. i. 17 ——[k] xii. 9. xiii. 14. 2 Cor. ii. 11. xi 3. 13—15. Eph vi. 11, 12. 2 Thes. ii 9—12.——[l] Acts xv. 28.

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the gracious recompense of victory over particular urgent temptations, were principally, though not exclusively, intended in this passage.

V. 18, 19. Thyatira lay to the south-east of Pergamos, and the epistle, to the church established in that city, was sent in the name of the "Son of God, who hath his eyes "as a flame of fire, &c." (i. 14, 15.) which represented his authority and omniscience, and the steadfastness and righteousness of his appointments and decisions. He also reminded the ruler, pastors, and Christians, at Thyatira, that he knew their works, and observed with approbation their brotherly love and general benevolence, their diligent attention to the various duties by which they were called to serve him and each other in the church and the community, their bold and steadfast profession of his doctrine in genuine faith, the patience with which they endured afflictions and persecutions, and especially that their last works were more abundant than those which they had at first performed.

V. 20—23. Thus far the church seemed in a flourishing condition; yet there was a worm at the root of this prosperity, which would destroy it unless it were removed, but of which they were not sufficiently aware. Notwithstanding all this cause of commendation, Christ had a few things to allege against them; especially their allowance of such as taught those abominable tenets, and perpetrated those evils which Christ hated, for the same heresy is here opposed as in the foregoing epistle. It is not agreed, whether the expression, "that woman Jezebel," is to be understood literally, or figuratively. From the reading in some manuscripts it hath been thought, that the wife of the presiding minister was meant, that she had obtained great influence in the affairs of the church, and made a bad use of it, that she pretended to prophetic gifts, and under that sanction propagated abominable principles, and though her conduct was disapproved by the sounder part of the church, yet no proper decision was used in censuring her, or preventing the mischiefs which she occasioned.—The figurative meaning, however, seems more suited to the style and manner of this book, and in this sense we may understand it to denote a company of persons, of the spirit and character of Jezebel, within the church, under one principal deceiver, as the Roman antichrist is represented by the emblem of an abandoned harlot. Jezebel, a zealous idolater, being married to the king of Israel, contrary to the divine law, used all her influence to seduce the Israelites from the worship of JEHOVAH into idolatry, with which the vilest licentiousness was connected, and this served to increase the temptation. Thus these persons, having, perhaps, through the fault of the pastors and members of the church, found admission among them, and by their artifices and blandishments attached a party to their cause, employed their whole influence to draw men from the pure religion of Christ, into carnal and spiritual fornication and adultery, and to poison their minds with abominable doctrines; yet they had not been duly censured and opposed; and it is probable, that neither the fatal tendency of their opinions, nor the atrociousness of their conduct, had been fully understood, till this epistle was sent. This evil had long been working; and the Lord had, in his long-suffering, given space for repentance to the ringleader, and those that abetted the delusion, but they still persisted in their wickedness. He therefore declared that he would cast the principal offender "into a bed," as visited with some painful and incurable disease, at length to terminate in death, whilst such as had been seduced to join in these abominations, would, unless they repented of their deeds, be thrown into the most grievous afflictions. (*Note*, 1 *Cor.* xi. 30—32.) Moreover, Christ purposed to destroy by pestilence, or other tremendous judgments, the whole progeny of these seducers, in order that all the churches might be assured, by the detection and exemplary punishment of such offenders, that he was that glorious Being, who claimed it as his peculiar prerogative to search the reins and hearts of men, to discern all their secret imaginations, purposes, and inclinations, and to render to every one of them according to his works. Here again the peculiar style of Deity is employed by "the Son of God." (*Marg. Ref.*) It is far more expressive to say, *I am he who searcheth the heart*, than "I search;" nor can such language be accounted for, on any other ground than the trinitarian doctrine, whatever pains and ingenuity may be employed in the attempt.

will put upon you none other burden:

25 But [m] that which ye have *already*, hold fast [n] till I come.

26 And [o] he that overcometh, [p] and keepeth my works unto the end, [q] to him will I give power over the nations:

27 And [r] he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: [s] even as I received of my Father.

28 And I [t] will give him the morning-star.

29 He [u] that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

m iii. 3. 11. Acts xv 23 Rom. xii. 9 1 Thes. v. 21. Heb iii 6. iv.14. x. 23.
n i. 7. xxii. 7 20 John xiv 3 xxi. 22, 23 1 Cor iv 5 xi. 26 2 Pet iii 10.
o *See on*, 7. 11 17. Rom. viii 37. 1 John v. 5
p Matt xxiv 13. Luke viii. 13-15 John viii. 31, 32. Rom. ii. 7. 1 Thes. iii. 5 Heb. x 38, 39. 1 John ii 19.——q iii 21. xx. 4 xxii 5. Ps xlix. 14 Dan vii 18. 22. 27 Matt. xix 28. Luke xxii. 29, 30. 1 Cor. vi. 3. 4.——r xii 5. xix. 15. Ps ii. 8, 9.
s Matt. xi. 27. Luke xxii. 29 John xvii. 24.
t xxii 16. Luke i. 78, 79. 2 Pet i. 19
u *See on*, 7.

V. 24—28. To those who repented, and separated from the evils before-mentioned, and to the rest, who had never received that doctrine, and had no acquaintance with those *depths*, as they called them, (perhaps avowing that they were peculiarly "the deep things of "God," but which Christ declared to be "the depths of "Satan," the most sagacious, and covert devices of that enemy to dishonour Christ and destroy men's souls,) to such as had kept clear, or had got free, from these mysteries of iniquity, he would give no other command, or injunction, than what they had already received from his ministers; but he exhorted them to hold fast those truths and precepts, till he came to remove them by death, or to judge the world. He also promised to every man, who overcame these perilous temptations, and kept his words in the obedience of faith, that he would grant him the privilege of sharing his victories, and the authority connected with them, as far as this could add to his true honour or felicity; so that he should be an assessor with him in judgment, and concur in the sentence, by which all the nations of his enemies will be dashed in pieces, as the potter's fragile vessel by the blow of an iron rod, (*Notes, Ps.* ii.) to which all other judgments executed on the nations are preparatory. Thus the victorious believer will receive from Christ, glory, honour, immortality, and an immoveable kingdom, even as he hath received of the Father. Moreover, he promised to give him "the morning-star," which may either mean the earnests of the Spirit, as introductory to the felicity of heaven, as the morning-star to the rising of the sun; (*Note*, 2 *Pet.* i. 19.) or the ineffable glory, with which he will invest his victorious disciples, in the presence and enjoyment of him their Lord and Saviour, and in conformity to his glory. (xxii. 16.)

V. 29. This concerned all persons, as much as those to whom it was immediately written. This church is at present wholly extinct, and the city is in a very desolate condition.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1.

The Lord Jesus alone can uphold and prosper his ministers, their light is wholly derived from him and maintained by him, he supports them by his powerful right hand, and disposeth of them in his sovereign wisdom. It therefore behooves all those who are favoured with able and faithful teachers to be thankful for them, to walk in the light thus vouchsafed them, and to be careful not to provoke the Lord to remove it; and all, who sustain that office, should remember their dependence on Christ and their accountableness to him; and be careful that their doctrine and practice be such, as may give them a confidence that he will make their cause his own.—The manifold evils, which abound in every part of the church, in a considerable degree, arise from the misconduct of its rulers and pastors, who ought especially to weigh the import of these epistles of Christ; and frequently they ought to take to themselves a great part of the reproof and warning which they contain. Our Lord is "like a "man, who is gone into a far country, having given to "every servant his work:" but faith realizes him, as "walking in the midst of the golden candlesticks," both in respect of his omnipotent Deity, and his omnipresent and all-pervading Spirit. He observes the conduct of those who have the light of his word and ordinances, and maintains that light, so long as a good use is made of it: but he will not fail to rebuke and correct those that walk inconsistently; and he continues his golden candlestick in one place, and removes it from another, as he sees good; for all second causes are wholly subservient to his will.

V. 2—7.

Our gracious Lord seeth in secret, and is not backward to commend "the work of faith, and labour of love, and "patience of hope" of his servants: he marks and approves their abhorrence of that which is evil, and their separation from the company, and protestation against the misconduct, of those who profess the gospel, but disgrace it by their crimes. (*Notes*, 2 *Thes.* iii. 6. 14, 15. 1 *Tim.* vi. 5. 2 *Tim.* iii. 5.) Nor does he less approve their conduct in examining the pretensions of such as speak in his name, or claim attention, as immediately inspired by him; that they may detect and condemn those as liars, who contradict the doctrine of his holy word. He also kindly notices the trials and hardships, which his people bear, and the patience with which they endure them; and how for his name's sake they labour, and have not fainted. Thus he sets ministers, parents, masters, and seniors, an example of commending what is right, in those placed under their care; and of thus introducing needful reproof. But he will by no means connive at what is evil, in any kind or degree. Even when believers and churches steadily profess his truth, attend on his ordinances, and outwardly obey his precepts; yet he hath somewhat against them, if they decline from the fervour of their first love; nay, he not only reproves them for those abatements in affection and zeal; but threatens, that unless they remember whence they are fallen, and repent, and do their first works, he will quickly remove their candlestick out of his place.—Not only are the churches of

CHAP. III.

The epistle of Christ to the church of Sardis; consisting of reproofs, exhortations, warnings, and promises to the pious remnant, 1—6. *That to Philadelphia, replete with encouragement,* 7—13. *That to Laodicea; comprising severe rebukes of their luke-warmness and pride; connected with instruction, counsels, calls to repentance, invitations, and promises,* 14—22.

Asia alarming instances of his truth and justice in this respect, but in every age he calls on all, who have eyes to see, and ears to hear, to observe the truth of what the Spirit on this occasion said unto the churches. The state of religion in most places where a reformation from popery took place, and with several descriptions of Christians among us, where once spiritual religion shone most illustriously, manifestly proves, that he still removes the candlestick from those who forsake their first love, and do not repent at his call, even though they hate the deeds of Nicolaitans and Antinomians, which he hateth. This should teach those, who now have the light, to "be zealous "and repent," lest they too should be left in the dark. And surely this single mention in Scripture, of Christians "forsaking their first love," when the context and consequences are well considered, most awfully reproves those numbers who speak of this as a common case; who excuse lukewarmness and sloth, in themselves and others, as a thing of course, by words to this effect, and who, speaking of Christians as "in their first love," mean that this is a low attainment, and that they will grow "less "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," as they get above the infancy of Christianity! When the majority in any church adopt such notions, it is a certain sign that they will soon provoke Christ to remove their candlestick, unless they repent; nay, it is the natural language of stony-ground hearers, whose joy and affection have subsided, and who, having no root in themselves, are gradually withering away. For, though the aged flourishing Christian may *feel* less vigour of affection, than he did at some times soon after his conversion, in which novelty and self-love had no small share, yet there is far more constancy and energy in his love, to influence him to habitual self-denying obedience, apart from all selfish motives, than there was before. The former resembles the transient noisy flame of thorns, the latter is like the constant, vehement, penetrating, and efficacious heat of a fire made by substantial fuel. But in the midst of all the stratagems and open assaults of the enemy, which the traitor in the camp so often renders successful, there are some, who, through *faith*, obtain the victory, and to them Christ will "give to eat of the Tree of life, which is in the "midst of the Paradise of God."

V. 8—17.

As "the First and the Last, who was dead and is "alive," is the believer's Brother and Friend, he must be rich in the deepest poverty, honourable amidst the lowest abasement, and happy under the heaviest tribulations. Indeed, the disciples must expect to be reviled by those who blaspheme their divine Lord, and say that they are Christians, but are not, and whom Christ will one day show to have been "the synagogue of Satan," being combined together by every means to oppose his truth, and vilify and injure his faithful servants. The devil may also prevail to cast them into prison, or otherwise to try them, and they may have tribulation many days; but with such a Friend and Comforter, they ought not to "fear any of "those things which they may suffer;" their trials will only be for a limited season, and for gracious purposes; they will not be hurt by the second death, for their enemies can only kill their bodies; and if they are enabled to be faithful till that event, the Captain of their salvation, who conquered by dying, will give them a crown of eternal life. The Christian, who thus holds fast the Lord's name, and denies not his truth, in those places where Satan peculiarly erects his throne, and at those times when his faithful witnesses are liable to be martyred in his cause, need not fear his sharp sword with two edges, even as the beloved wife is not alarmed at the sword in the hand of her affectionate husband, but would tremble and faint to see it in the hand of an assassin. But this confidence cannot be supported, without steady obedience; for the Lord not only hates the principles and conduct of those who indulge their avarice or sensuality, under the pretence of abounding grace and Christian liberty, and seduce others into the same abominations; but he will come quickly, and fight with the sword of his mouth against those pastors and churches, who countenance them, unless they repent of their connexion with, and sanction to, the most abhorred of his enemies.

V. 18—29.

Even when the Lord knoweth the works of his people to be wrought in love, zeal, faith, and patience, and the last to be more than the first, yet, if his eyes, which are as a flame of fire, observe that they allow among them such as teach licentiousness, and seduce his servants to commit wickedness, or to turn aside to any false worship, he will rebuke, correct, or punish them, without respect of persons, man or woman, high or low, whatever influence they may possess, or however they may be gifted or distinguished. He gives them indeed time to repent; but if they do not avail themselves of his long-suffering, he will surely cast them into great tribulation; and frequently the remarkable sufferings, with the discoveries of the secret wickedness of the actors in such corruptions of the Gospel in this world, show the churches, that Christ is "He who searcheth the "reins and hearts," and establisheth his counsels in wisdom and justice; at least this will be evident, when he shall come to judgment, to give unto every one of us according to our works. Let us then avoid and protest against such perversions of Christianity, and beware of these depths of Satan, of which they that know the least are the most happy. Let us remember, that the yoke of Christ

AND [a] unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith [b] he that hath the seven Spirits of God, [c] and the seven stars; [d] I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, [e] and art dead.

2 Be [f] watchful, and [g] strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works [h] perfect before God.

3 [i] Remember therefore, how thou hast received and heard, [k] and hold fast, and [l] repent. If therefore, thou shalt not watch, [m] I will come on thee as a thief, and [n] thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

4 Thou hast a few [o] names [p] even in Sardis, [q] which have not defiled their garments; and they shall [r] walk with me in white: [s] for they are worthy.

5 He [t] that overcometh, [u] the same shall be clothed in white raiment; [x] and I will not blot out his name out of [y] the book of life, but I will [z] confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

6 He [a] that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

a *See on*, i. 11. 20.
b *See on*, i. 4. iv 5. John i. 16 33 iii. 34. vii. 37 39. xv. 26, 27. xx 22. Acts ii. 33 1 Pet i 11.
c i. 16 20. ii. 1.
d *See on*, ii. 2. 9. 13. 19.
e Luke xv. 24 32. Eph ii. 1 5. Col. ii. 13. 1 Tim. v. 6 Jam. [illegible] Jude 12.
f xvi. 15. [illegible] 10 Is. lvi. 6 7. [illegible] xxxiv. 8–10 [illegible] Zech xi. [illegible] Matt. xxiv. 42 [illegible] 51 xxv 13. Mark xiii. 33 37. Acts xx. 28–31. 2 Tim. iv. 1–4. 1 Pet. iv. 7. v. 8.
g Deut. iii. 28. Job iv 4, 5. [illegible] Is. xxxv. 3 Luke xxii 31, 32. Acts xviii. 23.——h 1 Kings xi. 4 xv 3 2 Chr xxv. 2 Is. lviii 12 Matt vi. 2–4 xxiii 5 25–28.——i *See on*, ii. 5 Ez xvi. 61–63. xx. 43 xxxvi 31 2 Pet. i. 13 iii 1.——k 11. *See on*, ii. 25 1 Tim. vi. 20. 2 Tim i. 13.——l 19. *See on*, ii. 5. 21, 22.
m xvi. 15. Matt. xxiv 42, 43. Luke xii. 39, 40. 1 Thes v. 4, 5
n Matt xxv 13. Mark xiii. 33 36.
o xi 13. *Gr.* Acts i 15.
p 1 Kings xix. 18. Is. i. 9 Rom. xi. 4—6.
q vii 14 xix 8. Is. lii. 1 lix 6. lxi 3. 10. lxiv. 6. Zech. iii. 3—6 Jude 23.
r 5 18. iv. 4. vi. 11. vii 9 13. xix 14. Esth. viii. 15 Ps. lxviii. 14. Ec. ix. 8. Zech. iii 7. Mark xvi. 5
s Matt. x. 11. Luke xx. 35 xxi. 36. 2 Thes i 5
t *See on*, ii 7. 1 Sam. xvii 25
u *See on*, iv. 4.——x Ex xxxii 32, 33 Deut. ix. 14. Ps. lxix 28. cix 13.——y xiii. 8 xvii. 8 xx 12. 15. xxi. 27 xxii 19. Phil iv. 3——z Mal. iii. 17 Matt. x 32. Luke xii 8 Jude 25——a *See on*, ii. 7.

"is easy and his burden light," that he lays nothing on his servants but what is for their good, and authorizes none to add to it, and that he calls upon us to hold fast what we have received until he come. When we are tempted to sin, let us recollect what consolations he hath promised to the victorious combatant; and, looking to him for help, let us aspire to "the hidden manna," "the joy "that a stranger intermeddleth not with," the assurance of acceptance, the Spirit of adoption, and the earnest of eternal glory. And after every victory, may we follow up our advantage against the enemy, that we may overcome, and keep the works of Christ unto the end, and at last have glory, honour, and felicity, beyond all our present conceptions. This should often only be thought of under the animating idea of receiving power and authority from the Son of God, according to what he hath received from the Father, as the fruit of his conflicts and victories, being made partakers of his felicity, abiding for ever in his presence, and having him for our everlasting Light and Glory. Let then every one, who hath ears, attend to what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1—3. Sardis lay to the south of Thyatira, and was once the renowned capital of Lydia, the kingdom of Crœsus. The epistle to the presiding pastor, and to the church in that city, was sent, as a message from him "that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven "stars," (i. 4.) that is, the divine Saviour, through whom the Holy Spirit, in the variety and abundance of his precious gifts and graces, was communicated to all the churches, and to the seven here mentioned in particular, and who was their sovereign Proprietor and Ruler. This reminded them from whom they must seek grace, for those things to which he called them, and it implied a command to their ministers to "take heed to themselves "and to their doctrine," and to be active and zealous in promoting a revival in the church, especially to the angel, or presiding minister, who, it is probable, had by his misconduct, aided in reducing the church to a very low estate. For Christ "knew their works" not to be such as he could approve. They had indeed "a name to live;" they professed the truth, possessed gifts, and had the ordinances of God regularly administered among them; they were considered by others, and by themselves, as vitally united to Christ; but he knew "that they were dead," numbers of them were wholly hypocrites, and dead in sin, others were in a very torpid, disordered, and lifeless state, and the church in general was rather a dead corpse, or a statue resembling a Christian congregation, than a company of living members of Christ's mystical body. The Lord therefore called on them to awake and look about them, to be vigilant in guarding against the stratagems and assaults of their enemies, to be active and earnest in the duties of their several stations, and to examine carefully into the state of their souls, and into that of the church; that so they might use proper means of "strengthening the things that remained, and were ready "to die," and endeavour, in dependence on the grace of the Holy Spirit, to revive and invigorate the faith, hope, love, and spiritual affections of those who were alive to God, though in a declining state, to bring formalists to repentance and conversion, and to purge out such as were scandalous, and infectious to others. In this manner the lamp that was ready to expire, might be made again to burn more bright, and their church, which seemed like a dying man, might revive, and be restored to a state of spiritual health and vigour. For their heart-searching Lord had "not found their works *perfect* before "God," or *complete*, or full. They were radically defective; most of them were formal and hypocritical, and the rest languid, partial, and corrupted by sinister motives and purposes. He could not, therefore, commend them, as he had done the more hearty and complete obedience and services of flourishing Christians; because they were not such before God, whatever they might appear to be in the sight of men. He therefore called on them to remember the favours which they had received, and the truths, precepts, and exhortations which they had heard; that they might hold fast pure and undefiled religion, and repent of their inconsistent and negligent conduct. But if, after this warning, they did not become more vigilant, sober, zealous, and diligent, he assured them that he would come, with some unexpected, surprising, and terrible judgments, on them, without any further intimation of his purpose, till they were suddenly overwhelmed by it. (*Marg. Ref. and notes on them.*)

7 ¶ And [b] to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith [c] he that is holy, [d] he that is true, he that hath [e] the key of David, [f] he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;

8 [g] I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee [h] an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast [i] a little strength, [k] and hast kept my word, [l] and hast not denied my name.

9 Behold, I will make them of [m] the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, [n] I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

b See on, i. 11. ii. 1.
c iv 8 vi 10. Ps. xvi. 10 lxxxix 18. cxlv. 17. Is. vi. 3. xxx 11. xli 14. 16. 20. xlvii. 4 xlviii 17 xlix. 7. liv 5 lv. 5. Mark i. 24 Luke iv. 34. Acts iii. 14
d 14. i 5. vi. 10. xv 3 xvi. 7 xix. 2. 11. xxi. 5. Matt. xxiv. 35. John xiv. 6. 1 John v. 20.——e i. 18. Is xxii 22 Luke i 32 ——f v. 3–5. 9. Job. xi. 10. xii. 14. Matt. xvi 19.
g i. 15 See on, ii. 2.——h 7. 1 Cor. xvi. 9 2 Cor. ii. 12. Col. iv. 3.

i Dan. xi. 34. 2 Cor. xii. 8–10. Phil iv. 13.
k 10. xxii 7. John xiv. 21–24. xv. 20. xvii. 6. 2 Tim. iv 7.
l See on, ii. 13. Prov. xxx 9. Matt. xxvi. 70–72 Luke xii 9. Acts iii 13, 14. 1 Tim v 8. 1 John ii. 22, 23. Jude 4.
m See on, ii. 9.
n Esth. viii. 17. Job xlii. 8–10. Is. xlix. 23. lx 14 Zech. viii. 20–23.

V. 4—6. Even at Sardis there were a few Christians, whose names would be at length mentioned with distinguished honour, on account of their holy singularity: as they had not "defiled their garments," or disgraced their profession by the worldly lusts and sinful practices, to which the rest were addicted; and Christ assured them, that they "should walk with him in white," the emblem of perfect purity, triumph, and joy, and so be his accepted, holy, and honoured companions in heavenly felicity: "for they were worthy," or meet and proper persons to be admitted to that glorious and happy state, having approved themselves to be his faithful friends and servants whilst they lived on earth. (*Notes*, vii. 9. 13—17.) In short, to every conqueror in the spiritual warfare, at a place especially where temptations and bad examples so much abounded, the Lord promised "that he should be clothed "in white raiment," as completely and eternally justified, sanctified, and made glorious in the presence and favour of God. Neither would "he blot the name" of any such person "out of the book of life," in which his chosen and accepted servants are registered, even though the corrupt church to which he belonged should be given up; though numbers of those, who had a name to live, and were deemed heirs of heaven, were left to apostatize, or to be rejected as hypocrites, and though he might often have fears of this kind amidst his conflicts and temptations. On the contrary, Christ would surely confess his name, as one of his friends and brethren, at the last day, before his eternal Father and all his holy angels. All this related to others also, who were placed in similar circumstances. This once flourishing city now lies in ruins; a few persons called Christians are found there, but they are reduced to the most abject slavery, and have neither church nor minister among them.

V. 7. Philadelphia lay to the south-east of Sardis. The epistle to the angel of the church in that city was sent in the name of "Him that is holy," and "that is true," or of "the Holy One, and the true One;" which words contain a very conclusive proof of the Deity of Christ; for what mere creature can with propriety speak of himself in this language? (*Is.* xxx. 11, 12. 15. lvii. 15.) It was also sent in the name of him "that hath the key of "David." (*Notes*, *Is.* xxii. 20—25.) Being the promised Son of David according to the flesh, and the King of the true Israel to all generations, he hath the absolute power to open the gate of mercy to whom he pleaseth; to open the kingdom of heaven to the souls of his people, when removed by death, and to open their graves, and bring forth their bodies glorious and immortal, that they may be re-united to their souls in everlasting felicity; and on the other hand to shut out and exclude from mercy, and from heaven, whom he will, and to shut them up in hell, nor can any resistance be made to his power, or any appeal from his decision. He hath likewise power to open the understanding and the heart, or judicially to close them; to open a door for the preaching of his Gospel, or for the deliverance of his servants out of trouble; and when in these, or any other instances, he opens, no one, either man or angel, can shut; when he shuts, no creature can possibly open.

V. 8, 9. The almighty Sovereign, above described, knew the works of his ministers and disciples at Philadelphia, and they were such as he graciously approved; they might, therefore, observe, for their encouragement, that by his Gospel, and the means of grace afforded them, he had set before them an open door of access into the family and kingdom of God, and to all the present and everlasting privileges of his people, which no creature could shut against them; or, as some explain it, he had set before them an open door of usefulness, in spreading his Gospel, nor could any one prevent the success of their work and labour of love for that purpose. For though they were not so eminent as some other churches, for numbers, and gifts, and ability of every kind, yet they had a little strength, they were upright in their profession of the Gospel, they had some vigour of faith and holy affection, and were using their little influence to promote the success of Christianity. They had also kept the word of Christ, his truths, commands, and institutions, in faith, obedience, and steadfastness; neither had they denied their relations and obligations to him, or acted to the dishonour of his name, notwithstanding fears and dangers. (*Note*, ii. 9, 10.) For they too were exposed to persecution, from some that professed to be the people of God, but whom he disowned, and declared to be liars and the synagogue of Satan, and whom he promised that he would at length constrain to come and pay court to them in the most submissive manner, prostrating themselves at their feet, and supplicating their favour, as convinced of the Lord's love to them. Perhaps the unexpected success of the Gospel, in Philadelphia, rendered the Christians so powerful, that the Jews and their adherents were glad to seek their protection from the rage of the multitude, by which vast numbers of them were frequently massacred in those turbulent times, and the language leads us to conclude that many of them were converted to Christianity, by means of those events. Some, indeed, think that *Judaizing Christians* were meant, but it is more natural to understand the word *Jews* in its ordinary sense, and to consider them as open opposers, rather than as false professors of the Gospel.

10 Because thou hast kept [o] the word of my patience, [p] I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon [q] all the world, [r] to try them that dwell upon the earth.

11 Behold, [s] I come quickly: [t] hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take [u] thy crown.

12 Him that [x] overcometh will I make a [y] pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: [z] and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of [a] the city of my God, *which is* new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and *I will write upon him* [b] my new name.

13 He [c] that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

[o] i. 9. xiii. 10 xiv. 12.
[p] Matt. vi. 13 xxvi. 41. 1 Cor. x 13. Eph vi 13 2 Pet ii 9.
[q] Matt. xxiv 14. Mark xiv. 9. Luke ii. 1 Rom. i 8.
[r] Dan. xii. 10 Zech xiii 9. Jam. i. 3 12. 1 Pet. iv. 12.
[s] i. 3. xxii. 7. 12 20. Phil iv. 5. Jam. v. 9.
[t] *See on,* ii 13.
[u] ii 10 iv. 4. 10. 1 Cor. ix 25. 2 Tim ii 5. iv. 8. Jam. i. 12. 1 Pet. v 3, 4.——[x] *See on,* ii. 7. xvii 14. 1 John ii. 13, 14 iv. 4
[y] 1 Kings vii 21 Jer i. 18. Gal. ii. 9
[z] ii. 17 xiv. 1 xxii. 4.
[a] xxi. 2. 10–27 Ps. xlviii. 8. lxxxvii 3 Gal. iv. 26, 27. Heb. xii 22
[b] xxii. 4 Is. lxv 15 Eph iii. 15.
[c] *See on,* ii. 7.

V. 10, 11. As the Philadelphians had kept the word of Christ, in that constancy and patience which he had commanded and exemplified, and which he bestowed on his people, who could not stand their ground, unless thus enabled to "deny themselves, take up their cross, and "follow him," he promised to keep them "from the "hour of temptation," or some remarkable season of persecution, heresy, or apostacy, which was about to come on all the churches in the world, especially through the whole Roman empire, to try and prove the sincerity and strength of their faith and love. He would on this occasion shelter them from the fury of the storm, and not let them be so sharply tried or tempted as other churches were, which might in some respects have more strength, but had also more need of correction, and of being proved and purified. This is generally supposed to refer to Trajan's persecution, which was more general and violent than those under Nero and Domitian. But, as this city was the last of all the seven which was taken by the Mahometans, and as there has been a succession of Christians there, in every generation to this time, so some have applied this to their preservation from that delusion, which almost extirpated Christianity in those regions. It is indeed to be feared, that they have at present but little of the power of godliness among them; yet we may hope that Christ hath had a few real disciples in every age, and hath some, even at present, in this city. The Lord next called their attention to the assurance, that he was coming quickly to try his professed people, to deliver such as were faithful, to destroy their enemies, or to judge the world; and he, therefore, commanded them to hold fast the truth which they had received, and to maintain the ground which they had got, that no one might, through any temptation or terror, deprive them of the victor's crown, for which they were contending, or take away that distinguished honour, which this commendation conferred on them, for this could not be preserved without vigilance, diligence, and persevering courage.—'The captivity or ruin of the *seven* churches of Asia was consummated,' (viz. by the Ottomans, A. D. 1312.) 'and the barbarous lords of Ionia and Lydia still trample on the monuments of classic and Christian antiquity. In the loss of Ephesus, the Christians deplored the fall of the first angel, the extinction of the first candlestick of the revelations; the desolation is complete, and the temple of Diana, or the church of Mary, will equally elude the search of the curious traveller. The circus, and three stately theatres of Laodicea, are now peopled with wolves and foxes; Sardis is reduced to a miserable village; the god of Mahomet, without a rival,—is invoked in the mosques of Thyatira and Pergamos; and the populousness of Smyrna is supported by the foreign trade of the Franks and Armenians. *Philadelphia alone has been saved by prophecy, or courage.*' (Such is the insidious language of this infidel writer, who sneers at the prophecy, while he records its accomplishment.) 'At a distance from the sea, forgotten by the emperors, encompassed on all sides by the Turks, her valiant sons defended their religion and freedom above fourscore years, and at length capitulated with the proudest of the Ottomans. Among the Greek colonies, and churches of Asia, *Philadelphia is still erect, a column in a scene of ruins*, a pleasing example that the paths of honour and safety may sometimes be the same.' (*Gibbon.*)

V. 12, 13. To animate the Christians at Philadelphia, and all others, to the spiritual conflict, our Lord next promised to make every conqueror "a pillar in the temple "of his God," to establish him as an ornamental part of the spiritual edifice, which he, as Mediator, was building to the glory of his God and Father; that being consecrated to him, and placed in the sanctuary above, he might conduce to the beauty, proportion, and magnificence of the whole, and be for ever most honourable and blessed, as "an habitation of God through the Spirit," without any fear of being separated from him, or deprived of his favour and presence. Upon this pillar he promised "to "write the name of his God," that all might know to whom it belonged, and to whose glory it was erected, according to the custom of inscribing, on stately columns, the name and exploits of the person, to whose memory they were dedicated. He would also write on it, "the "name of the city of his God," (whom he, in human nature, worshipped and served,) this is called the new Jerusalem, is of heavenly original, and derives its glory from the presence of God in it. (*Notes*, xxi.) Thus all would know to what city the Victor belonged, and that he was entitled to all its privileges for evermore. The Lord promised also to write upon him "his own new name," even that of Emmanuel, Jesus, the Redeemer of sinners, which he hath assumed in addition to his former titles, of Creator, Upholder, and Lord of all worlds. Thus he would own him as one of his chosen people, a trophy of his victory over the world, sin, Satan, and death, and a monument erected to the power of his arm, the truth of his word, the efficacy of his atonement and mediation, and the unsearchable riches of his grace.—In these declarations all others are interested, according to the difficulty and completeness of their victory.

14 ¶ And unto [d] the angel of the church * of the Laodiceans write; These things saith [e] the Amen, [f] the faithful and true Witness, [g] the beginning of the creation of God:

15 [h] I know thy works, [i] that thou art neither cold nor hot: [k] I would [l] thou wert cold or hot.

16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, [m] I will spue thee out of my mouth.

d *See on*, i. 11. ii 1. * Or, in *Laodicea* Col ii 1. iv. 16 e Is lxv 16. 2 Cor. i 20 f 7. i 5 xiv. 11. xxii. 6. Is lv. 4 Jer. xlvi 5. g Col i. 15. h *See on*, ii 2. i ii 4. Matt xxiv. 12. Phil. i. 9 2 Thes i. 3. 1 Pet. i 22. k Deut. v. 29. Ps. lxxxi. 11—13 2 Cor xii 20. l Josh. xxiv. 15—24. 1 Kings xviii. 21. Prov. xxiii. 26. Hos vii 8. x 2. Zeph i 5, 6. Matt vi. 24 x 37. Luke xiv. 26. 27. 1 Cor. xvi. 22. Jam. i 8.——m ii. 5. Jer. xiv. 19. xv. 1—4 Zech. xi. 8, 9.

17 Because thou sayest, [n] I am rich, and increased with goods, and [o] have need of nothing; and [p] knowest not that thou art [q] wretched, and miserable, and poor, [r] and blind, and [s] naked:

18 I [t] counsel thee to [u] buy of me [x] gold tried in the fire, [y] that thou mayest be rich; and [z] white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* [a] the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; [b] and

n ii. 9 Prov xiii. 7 Hos. xii 8. Zech. xi. 5. Luke i 53. vi. 24. xviii 11. 12. Rom. xi. 20 28. xii 3. 1 Cor iv. 8—10 o Deut. viii. 12—14. Prov xxx 9. Jer. ii. 31. Matt. ix. 12. p Rom. ii. 17—23. q Matt. v. 3. Rom. vii. 24. r Is. xlii. 19 John ix. 40, 41. 2 Pet. i 9 s xvi. 15. Gen iii. 7 10, 11. Ex. xxxii. 25 ——t Ps xvi. 7. xxxii. 8 *Marg.* lxxiii. 24. cvii. 11 Prov. i. 25. 30 xix. 20. Ec. viii. 2 ——u Prov xxiii. 23 Is lv. 1. Matt xiii. 44. xxv. 9.——x [illegible]al. iii 3. 1 Cor. iii 12, 13. 1 Pet. i 7.——y ii 9. Luke xii. 21. 2 Cor. viii 9 1 Tim. [illegible] 18 Jam. ii. 5. z *See on*, 4, 5. Ps li. 7.——a xvi 15. Is xlvii. 3. Jer. xiii 26. Dan. [illegible] 2. Mic. i. 11. Nah. iii 5 ——b John ix 6—11. 1 John ii. 20. 27.

V. 14—16. Laodicea lay to the south of Philadelphia, and in the road to Ephesus; for the seven churches were situated in a kind of circle, and the progress from one to the other of them, in rotation, might be made in the order of these epistles.—A flourishing church had been planted here in the time of the apostle Paul; (*Marg. Ref.*) but it had greatly declined before this epistle was sent thither, in the name of "The AMEN," of Him who is Truth in himself, and who will surely confirm and ratify all his words, which are established, and unchangeable as his own nature. For he is the true and faithful Witness, most exactly testifying the nature, truths, purposes, and will of God to man, and bearing witness most impartially for, or against, the conduct and characters of his professed servants, and of all his creatures. He sent to the Laodiceans also, under the title of "the Beginning of "the creation of God," or the *Origin, Author*, and *Ruler*, of the whole universe, who hath authority and power to dispose of all things as he sees good. This glorious Lord of all knew their works to be such, as were utterly unworthy of his approbation; for these manifested, that they were "neither cold nor hot;" they neither wholly cast off all regard to the Gospel, nor yet were they zealous, fervent, and diligent in religion. He therefore declared, "that he would they were cold or hot; he desired that they would either renounce their profession, and cease from the worthless form of attending on his ordinances, or that they would show a becoming earnestness in those things which pertained to his service and glory. For whilst they were called by his name, and reluctantly performed a scanty measure of external duties, with an evident indifference and weariness in them, their evil tempers, unholy actions, and carnal attachment to the world, and to its pleasures, company, and interests, dishonoured him more than their apostacy could do, and in the event it would be equally fatal to their own souls. For, in this manner they would give numbers an unfavourable opinion of Christianity, as if it had been an unholy religion; whilst others would conclude that it could afford no real satisfaction, or its professors would not have been so heartless in it, or so ready to borrow a little pleasure from the world: or that it was not worth much, as they would not give up any thing of supposed value for the sake of it.—In short, such professed Christians are traitors in the camp, who are always more dangerous than open enemies; or wicked servants, who disgrace and rob their masters more than they can do when turned out of the family.—Unless, therefore, they became more "fervent in spirit, "serving the Lord," he was determined to show his contempt and abhorrence of them, by rejecting them, even as a man, whose stomach nauseates water that is lukewarm, will cast it out of his mouth with loathing and disgust.

V. 17. While the state of this church was so lamentably declined, that very few real Christians, and those of small proficiency, remained in it, their spiritual pride and self-confidence had proportionably increased; this gave occasion to the following reproof, instruction, and counsel. They were ready to say within themselves, to each other, and even in a boasting manner to their neighbours, that "they were rich" in spiritual gifts and attainments, that they were "increased in goods," and had obtained a larger measure of every spiritual gift and endowment than they formerly had, when the apostles were with them; (*Notes* 1 *Cor.* iv. 8—10. v. 2.) so that they thought they had need of nothing, but were complete in knowledge, wisdom, goodness, strength, and establishment in the privileges and liberty of the Gospel: like poor lunatics, who fancy every house and estate which they see, or hear of, to be their own. Thus they preferred themselves to others, and, being proud in spirit, instead of "poor in "spirit," they could only pray in the Pharisee's manner; (*Note, Luke* xviii. 10—14.) and were utterly incapable of the life of faith in Christ for all things pertaining to salvation. For they "knew not that they were wretched "and miserable," in a most abject, perilous, and perishing condition, and utterly destitute of wisdom and grace; not only poor, as all natural men are, but poor as professors of the Gospel, being Pharisees upon evangelical principles, and proud of their attainments in Christianity, when in fact they were wholly unconverted. This delusion took place because they were "blind;" they had only that "knowledge which puffeth up," but they had never seen the real glory of God in Christ, the evil of sin, their own vileness, the deceitfulness of their hearts, or the excellency of the Gospel; they, therefore, continued "naked," though they knew it not, being neither covered with the justifying righteousness of Christ, nor adorned by his grace. The original expressions are peculiarly emphatical; for the article is prefixed to the epithets employed, so that the passage may be thus rendered, "Thou art the wretched one, the miserable one, &c;" and they were thus distinguished from all the other churches.

anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see.

19 As [c] many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: [d] be zealous therefore, [e] and repent.

20 Behold, [f] I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, [g] I will come in to him, and [h] will sup with him, and he with me.

21 To [i] him that overcometh will I grant [k] to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, [l] and am set down with my Father in his throne.

22 [m] He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

c Deut. viii. 5. 2 Sam vii. 14. Job v. 17. Ps. vi. 1. xxxix 11 xciv 10. Prov. iii. 11, 12 xv 10. 32. xxii 15 Is xxvi. 16. Jer. ii. 30. vii. 28. x. 24 xxx 11. xxxi. 18. Zeph. iii. 2. 1 Cor xi. 32. 2 Cor. vi 9. Heb. xii. 5—11. Jam. i. 12.
d Num. xxv. 11—13. Ps lxix 9. John ii. 17. Rom. xii. 11. 2 Cor. vii 11 Gal. iv. 18. Tit. ii. 14.——e *See on*, ii. 5. 21, 22
f Cant. v. 2—4. Luke xii. 36 ——g John xiv. 21—23.

h xix. 9. Luke xii. 37. xvii.

i *See on*, ii. 7.
k i 6. ii 26, 27. Matt. xix. 28. Luke xxii 30. 1 Cor. vi. 2. 3. 2 Tim. ii. 12
l v. 6—8. vii. 17. Dan vii. 13, 14. Matt xxviii. 18. John v. 22, 23. Eph i. 20—23. Phil. ii. 9—11.
m 6. 13 *See on*, ii. 7. 11. 17.

V. 18, 19. The case described in the preceding verse was that of the church in general, and of its pastors and members in particular, by the testimony of Christ himself; and he counselled them "to buy of him," those things, of which they were in such urgent need. They could have them from no other person in the world; and he sold them to the poorest who applied for them, "without money, and without price." (*Note, Is.* lv. 1—3.) But though even such wretched and indigent sinners as they were might obtain them, yet, as much of what they valued, though worthless in itself, must be renounced, in order to appropriate them, it might properly be called buying them. (*Notes, Matt.* xiii. 44—46. *Phil.* iii. 7—9.) They were, therefore, counselled, (and the counsels of Christ are commands, invitations, and promises,) to apply to him for "gold tried in the fire, that they might "be rich." This denotes that true and precious faith and grace, which had in numberless instances endured the hottest fire of persecution without being consumed, and had been rendered more resplendent by the flames, and which would be most advantageous in affliction, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment. These would make them rich in reality, as they would ensure and evidence their interest in the unsearchable riches of Christ, and in all the promises given through him to his people. He advised them also to buy of him "white raiment, "that they might be clothed, and that the shame of their "nakedness might not appear;" for as their own righteousness was as filthy rags, and their profession of Christianity hypocritical, so they must soon be exposed and put to shame before men and angels, unless they had his righteousness put on them for a robe of salvation, and were made holy by his sanctifying Spirit. (4, 5.) But as their pride and self-confidence had blinded them to the truth of their case and character, and consequently to the value of these blessings, so he directed them to "anoint "their eyes with eye-salve, that they might see;" let them examine themselves by the rule of his word, and seek for the teaching of his Holy Spirit to purge away their pride, prejudices, and worldly lusts; that they might see the nature and preciousness of his salvation, and value it in a more suitable manner. These warnings and exhortations were not given them in indignation, but in mercy, for it was the general rule of his conduct to rebuke and chasten those whom he loved; (*Notes, Heb.* xii. 5—12.) and they might consider these rebukes as tokens of his favour, for such they would prove, if properly attended to. It behooved them, therefore, to be zealous and earnest, in these most important concerns, especially in repenting, renouncing, cleansing away, and seeking forgiveness of the evils into which they had fallen.

V. 20—22. To encourage the repentance, and excite the earnestness, of the lukewarm Laodiceans, the Lord called on them to notice, with admiration, his condescension, patience, and grace; that whilst they were so wanting in love to him, he stood waiting at the door, and seeking to be re-admitted into the church, and into their hearts, from whence their sins had driven him. He stood without, knocking, by the dispensations of his providence, the warnings and instructions of his word, and the convincing influences of his Spirit, and thus requiring them to receive and entertain him. (*Notes, Cant.* v. 2—8.) So that, though the church should not admit him, yet, if any individual was willing to open, and give up his heart and affections to him, in order that he might destroy his enemies and rivals, cast out idols, subdue his iniquities, and make all things new, he would certainly enter in, and take such delight in the work of his grace, and communicate such blessings and consolations to the soul of that man, that it might be said, "he supped with him, and "he with him;" such intimate communion should be thenceforth maintained between the redeemed sinner and his most gracious Saviour! In short, to every conqueror, over such temptations as the Laodiceans were exposed to, the Lord promised a blessing proportioned to the difficulty of the conflict, for he engaged to "grant him to sit with "him in his throne," and by an inconceivable union and fellowship with him in all his glory, and an interest in all the benefits of his mediatorial authority and power, to possess an honour and felicity, which can never be explained or conceived, except by those who experience it. For as these victors would be first conformed to Christ in conflict, self-denial, and suffering, so would they at last be conformed to him in victory and exaltation; being seated with him in his throne, even "as he overcame and "hath set down with his Father in his throne." The same inexpressible dignity would also be bestowed on other conquerors in like difficult circumstances; as the warnings and instructions were intended for the benefit of all who heard them, in every age. The ruins of this city show that it once was most magnificent, but at present no human creature dwells there. So that the state of these seven cities, both respecting Christianity and their outward prosperity, exactly accords to the commendation, or rebuke, which were given the churches established there, by the Spirit of prophecy so many centuries ago! which remarkable coincidence contains an instructive lesson, and a solemn warning to all other cities and nations favoured with the Gospel, not to neglect or trifle with so great a blessing. Nothing, in these short epistles, is said, concerning distinct congregations in any of the cities mentioned; though, some time before, there were several

CHAP. IV.

John, in vision, beholds heaven opened, and the glory of God, as seated on an exalted throne, 1—3; *surrounded by twenty-four elders, and four living creatures, who united in adoring Him as the Creator and Lord of all,* 4—11.

elders, (πρεσϐυτεροι, or επισκοποι,) at Ephesus; on the other hand, nothing is introduced, respecting any dependent churches in the neighbouring towns, or villages, as under the authority of the angel, or presiding minister in each of these churches. Hence it appears, that men of discordant sentiments, on the subject of ecclesiastical government, in vain attempt to support their opinions by this part of scripture.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

When he, who hath the fulness of the Spirit, and who rules over all means and instruments, reproves, counsels, or commands; his words imply the promise of all needful assistance to those who obediently attend to them. But how many professed Christians does that heart-searching Judge, who knoweth our works, behold, that have a name to live, and perhaps much celebrity in the church, and yet are dead in trespasses and sins! Alas! it is to be feared, that many religious societies, who have exact forms and notions, and who profess the truths of the Gospel with some reputation, consist almost entirely of such persons, and have very little vital godliness among them. We should, therefore, be very diligent and impartial in examining ourselves by the rules of scripture, very earnest in prayer to the Lord to show us what we are, and very careful not to rest in the opinion of men respecting us. When it is evident that we, or the society to which we belong, have declined, we should spare no pains, and neglect no means, which may "strengthen the things that remain, and yet "are ready to die; for Christ often judges those works, not to be sound and upright before God, which men admire and applaud; and our great concern is with our Judge, not with our fellow-criminals. In seeking a revival in our own souls, or in those of others, it is incumbent on us to remember what we have received and heard, that, by comparing our advantages and profession with our proficiency, we may be humbled and quickened, and so excited to hold fast what we retain, and to repent and do our first works. But if men will despise warnings to watch and pray, Christ will surely come when they do not expect him, and appoint such slothful servants their portion among his enemies. Yet, even in very corrupt churches, he hath commonly a few names, who have not defiled their garments; and if our lot be cast in such a situation, we should be ambitious of this true honour, that, amidst many bad examples and temptations, we may be found "a peculiar people, zealous of good works." At present we may indeed be hated, or derided, for such singularity of conduct, but the Lord will admit us to the honour of walking with him in white, as graciously accounted worthy of so great a felicity, when all unbelievers and formal professors shall have their portion in the *blackness* of eternal darkness. For whether few, or many, overcome the peculiar temptations of their situation, they, and they only, will be accepted and triumphant at the last, not one of them shall have his name blotted out of the book of life, nor will the divine Saviour refuse to confess the meanest of their names before his Father and all his holy angels.

V. 7—13.

It is incumbent on us to attend to him, who is Holy and True, who hateth sin, yet performeth his largest promises to believing sinners; he reigneth on the throne of David, he openeth the gates of life and death, of heaven and hell, and none can shut them; he shutteth, and none can open. Whether, therefore, he set before us an open door of access to his mercy-seat, or afford us an opportunity of usefulness; no created being can shut us out from them. Even if we have but "little strength," yet, if we have kept his word, and have not denied him, amidst our fears and discouragements, he will not let any enemy prevail against us; and as he hath all hearts in his hands, so he often disposes the opposers of his people to show them respect, to desire their friendship, to own that he has loved them, or gladly to receive the truth from them. (*Gen.* l. 15—18.) If we would escape those severe corrections and violent temptations, which, from time to time, are permitted to try the churches throughout the earth, we must patiently adhere to the truth and will of Christ, and shrink from no cross that we meet with, when following his example; for an unwatchful conduct makes way for temptation, and unfits men to resist it. Whilst, therefore, we wait for him who "cometh quickly," we should "hold fast the beginning of our confidence "steadfast unto the end," that none may rob us of our crown, or even of the comfortable assurance of obtaining it. For those who overcome in the strength and after the example of Christ, shall be placed by him as pillars in the temple above, to go no more out; and they shall for ever enjoy all the privileges and felicity of the city of God, to the glory of the Father, and that of the eternal Son, who hath redeemed them with his precious blood, that they may for ever show forth his praise, and enjoy his love.

V. 14—22.

While we bow our ear to the encouraging topics of the Gospel, let us advert also to the language of "the "Amen, the true and faithful Witness," the Ruler of "the creation of God," whilst he speaks of the character, and doom, of lukewarm Christians. Alas! how many are there of the Laodicean stamp in every place! Did we suppose these epistles to be prophetical as to the church in general, we might be induced to conclude that the end of the world was nigh; for amidst the abounding of iniquity and infidelity, the love of many waxes cold, and the state of religion, in this highly favoured nation, too much resembles that of this seventh church. The Lord knoweth, that professors at present are "neither cold nor hot," except as their indifference in essential matters is strangely counter-

AFTER this I looked, and behold, [b] a door *was* opened in heaven: and [c] the first voice which I heard *was* as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, [d] Come up hither, [e] and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.

2 And immediately [f] I was in the Spirit: and, behold, [g] a throne was set in heaven, [h] and *one* sat on the throne.

3 And he that sat, was to lock upon [i] like a jasper and a sardine-stone: and *there was* [k] a rainbow round about the throne, in sight [l] like unto an emerald.

a i—iii.
b Ez. i. 1. Matt. iii 16 Mark i. 10 Luke iii 21 Acts vii 16. x 11.
c i 16. xvi. 17.
d xi. 12. Ex. xix 24. xxiv. 12. xxxiv. 2, 3.
e i. 19. xxii. 6. John xvi 13.
f *See on*, i. 10 xvii. 3 xxi. 10. Ez iii 12—14
g 5. xx. 11. Ez. i 26 x. 1.
h 9. iii. 21. v. 1. 6, 7. 13. vi 16. vii. 9—17. xii 5. xix. 4. xxi. 5. xxii 1—3. Is. vi 1. Dan. vii. 9 Heb. viii 1.
i xxi 11. 19, 20. Ex xxiv. 10. Ez. i 27 xxviii. 13.
k x 1. Gen ix. 13—16. Is. liv. 9, 10 Ez i 28.
l xxi. 19. Ex. xxviii. 18. xxxix. 11. Ez. xxviii 13.

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poised, by a hot and fiery spirit of disputation, about things of far inferior moment! No doubt the Laodicean state of the Christian churches, in most parts of the world, is one grand hinderance to the propagation of the Gospel among the nations, who can scarcely conceive that religion to be from heaven, the professors of which are so "earthly, "sensual, and devilish;" and certainly the state of those who hold the truth too often in unrighteousness, and generally in a lukewarm manner, forms one grand objection and prejudice against the Gospel, in the minds of numbers in this land, and gives *moral* and *decent* Infidels, Socinians, and Arians, their chief advantage against us. Yet the persons who are chiefly reprehensible, are least likely to regard such admonitions: for whilst the Lord is saying "I would thou wert cold or hot; but because thou "art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue "thee out of my mouth," they are boasting "that they "are rich, and increased with goods, and have need of "nothing!" It is indeed a general rule, that professors of religion grow *proud*, in proportion as they become *carnal* and *formal*; for, like glow-worms, they shine most in the dark, according to their apprehensions of themselves, and their commendations of one another. The Pharisaical spirit is indeed always odious and dangerous; whilst it renders men ignorant of their wretchedness, poverty, nakedness, and blindness, and insensible of the preciousness of Christ and his salvation, yet the legal Pharisee is a hopeful character, compared with those who graft the Pharisee on an evangelical profession, and connect it with an Antinomian laxity of morals. Christ, however, continues to declare to all men their lost estate; and he mercifully counsels even lukewarm and proud professors, as well as others, to come and buy of him unsearchable and never failing treasures, unfading robes of righteousness, and that heavenly unction, which renders the most ignorant wise unto eternal salvation. Happy are they, who take his counsel! for all others must perish in their sins. Even when he enforces his neglected counsels and invitations with sharp rebukes and painful corrections, (which he will do in respect of as many as he loves,) if we are thus made zealous and penitent, we shall deem them additional and most precious favours. May we then hear the voice of his word and his rod, whilst, with infinite compassion and condescension, he continues to stand waiting and knocking at the door of our hearts, that he may enter in, and bring salvation with him. Let us earnestly beseech him to put forth his almighty power, and thus break down all obstacles to his admission, and take entire possession of our whole souls, that we may be ashamed of our folly and ingratitude in allowing any creature to rival him in our affections, or attempting to divide our hearts between him and worldly objects. Then we may hope that he will shed abroad his love in our hearts, and communicate his joy to them; that he will delight over us to do us good, and cause us to glory and rejoice in him; and that, by his help, and under his banner, we shall conquer every enemy, till our blessed experience explains to us that which we cannot possibly before understand, what is meant by our "sitting down with him on his "throne, even as he overcame and is set down with the "Father upon his throne."

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1—3. When the Lord Jesus had dictated to his apostle the preceding epistles, and thus instructed him to write the things which then were; there seems to have been a short interruption of his vision. But afterwards, looking and waiting for further discoveries, he beheld, as it were, a door opened into heaven, the holy habitation of God, and then another vision was introduced, which made way for his being shown "the things which "must be hereafter;" (i. 19.) for this and the following chapter constitute an introduction to the prophetical part of the book, especially to the opening of the seals in the seventh chapter. Whilst he was contemplating the door opened in heaven, he heard a voice, as before, calling him to come up thither, (i. 10.) and immediately he was "in "the Spirit." It hath been heretofore observed, that no external objects seem to have been presented to the senses of the prophets on such occasions; but, the natural use of all their faculties being suspended, their minds were supernaturally impressed with the ideas of such things as were particularly suited to illustrate the subjects which they were employed to reveal. We ought not, therefore, to suppose that the objects afterwards mentioned, have a real existence in heaven; but they were visionary emblems, suited to give proper instructions to the apostle and to his readers, and our chief business is to develope their meaning, and, as it were, to decipher the hieroglyphics. Being in the Spirit, and cast into an ecstacy or trance, we may suppose that John did not well know "whether he "was in the body, or out of the body;" (*Notes, 2 Cor.* xii. 1—3.) he was, however, as to his own apprehension, admitted into the immediate presence of God, and had the vision of a glorious throne, on which One sat, whom he did not attempt particularly to describe. This was emblematical of the universal, absolute, and eternal dominion of JEHOVAH; and of his exaltation far above all creatures, as their great Creator and sovereign Lord. The visible glory, (which seems to have referred to that above the mercy-seat in the holy of holies, as there is throughout these visions an allusion to the temple, its furniture and services,) being resplendent, like the transparent jasper, might be emblematical of the perfect purity and excellency of the divine nature, and its colour, like the *red* sardine stone, might represent his awful justice and fiery indignation. The rainbow was a well known emblem of

4 And round about the throne [m] *were* four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw [n] four and twenty elders sitting [o] clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads [p] crowns of gold.

5 And out of the throne [q] proceeded lightnings, and thunderings, and voices: and *there were* [r] seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are [s] the seven Spirits of God.

6 And before the throne *there was* [t] a sea of glass like unto [u] crystal: and in [x] the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, *were* [y] four beasts [z] full of eyes before and behind.

7 And [a] the first beast *was* like a lion, and the second beast [b] like a calf, and the third beast had a face [c] as a man, and the fourth beast *was* like [d] a flying eagle.

8 And the four beasts had each of them [e] six wings about *him;* and *they were* [f] full of eyes within: [g] and they * rest not day and night, saying, [h] Holy, holy, holy, [i] Lord God almighty, [k] which was, and is, and is to come.

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[m] xi. 16. xx. 4. Matt. xix. 28. Luke xxii. 30.
[n] 10. v. 8. 14. vii. 11. xix. 4.
[o] *See on*, iii. 4, 5. vi. 11.
[p] 10. *See on* ii. 10. ix. 7. Esth. viii. 15. Ps. xxi. 3. 2 Tim. iv. 3.
[q] viii. 5. xi. 19. xvi. 17, 18. Ex. xix. 16. xx. 18. Ps. xviii. 13, 14. lxviii. 35. Joel iii. 16. Heb. xii. 18—29.
[r] Ex. xxxvii. 23. 2 Chr. iv. 20. Ez. i. 13. Zech. iv. 2. 11—14.
[s] i. 4. iii. 1. v. 6. Matt. iii. 11. Acts ii. 3. 1 Cor. xii. 4—11.
[t] xv. 2. Ex. xxxviii. 8. 1 Kings vii. 23.——[u] xxi. 11. xxii. 1. Job xxviii. 17. Ez. i. 22.——[x] v. 6. vii. 17. Ez. i. 4, 5.
[y] 8, 9. v. 6. 14. vi. 1. vii. 11. xiv. 3. xv. 7. xix. 4.
[z] 8. Ez. i. 18. x. 12.
[a] 5. Gen. xlix. 9. Num. xxiii. 24. xxiv. 9. Prov. xxviii. 1. Ez. i. 10. x. 14. 21.
[b] Ez. i. 10. 1 Cor. ix. 9, 10.
[c] 1 Cor. xiv. 20.
[d] Deut. xxviii. 49. 2 Sam. i. 23. Is. xl. 31. Ez. i. 8. 10. x. 14. Dan. vii. 4. Ob. 4.
[e] Is. vi. 2. Ez. i. 6. x. 21, 22. 2 Tim. iv. 2.
[f] *See on*, 6. 1 Tim. iv. 16.
[g] vii. 15. Is. lxii. 1. 6, 7. Acts xx. 31. 1 Thes. ii. 9. 2 Thes. iii. 8, 9.——* Gr. *have no rest.*——[h] iii. 7. Ex. xv. 11. *See on*, Is. vi. 3.——[i] i. 8. xi. 17. xv. 3. xvi. 7. 14. xix. 15. xxi. 22. Gen. xvii. 1. Ps. xci. 1. Is. xiii. 6. Joel i. 15. 2 Cor. vi. 18.——[k] *See on*, i. 4. Heb. xiii. 8.

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the covenant of grace, and its surrounding the throne denoted, that the holiness and justice of God, and all his dispensations as the Sovereign of all worlds, had respect to his covenant of peace and engagements of love, which he had ratified to his believing people, and harmonized with them. In this rainbow the soft green of the emerald was predominant, which perhaps might imply, that as the green relieves the eye, which some other colours fatigue and dazzle, so the discovery made of the mercy of God, in the covenant of grace, refreshes the believer's mind, which the display of his glorious power, holiness, and justice, would dismay and confound.

V. 4, 5. Round about, at some distance from the exalted throne of God, were placed twenty-four *thrones* of an inferior order, on which were seated as many elders. These are generally allowed to have been the emblematic representatives of the whole church of God, both under the old and the new dispensation. The thrones on which they sat, their white raiment, and their crowns of gold, implied their acceptance, sanctification, and royal priesthood. For though the church militant was thus represented, as well as the church triumphant, yet the whole was described with relation to the security of their state, their glorious privileges, and the honour to which the Lord purposed to advance them. The number of these elders may refer to the twenty-four courses, into which the priests were divided, or to the twelve patriarchs, and twelve apostles, as the heads of the old and the new Testament-churches. The lightnings, thunders, and voices, which proceeded from the throne, according to the scene exhibited on mount Sinai, might imply, that God was as terrible as ever to the impenitent and unbelieving. The seven lamps of fire, burning before the throne, were emblematical of the seven Spirits of God, or the manifold gifts and graces, communicated to all Christians by the baptism of the Holy Spirit and of fire; (*Note, Matt.* iii. 11. *Marg. Ref.*) and the sea of glass, clear as crystal, being perfectly pure and transparent, (perhaps in allusion to the molten sea of brass in the court of the temple,) seems to refer to the "Fountain opened for sin and un-"cleanness," in which all the spiritual priesthood must wash, previously to their acceptable spiritual sacrifices.

V. 6—8. Various opinions have been held concerning "the four beasts," or *living creatures*, as it ought to have been translated, in order to adhere to the exact meaning of the original, and to preserve the truth of the emblem. The unaccountable notion, that the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead was represented by them, whilst two emblems were given of the Son, because of his incarnation and sacrifice, can have no other support than the names which have sanctioned it; for this plain reason, that these living creatures are throughout represented as the principal worshippers, not as the object of worship. Nor can the more general and plausible opinion, that they were representatives of the angels, as the cherubims in Ezekiel's vision seem to have been, be supported by any sufficient proof, (*Note*, ***Ez.*** **i. 10.**) not only because angels are personally introduced in the subsequent part of this vision, but especially because these living creatures are spoken of as adoring "the lamb that was slain, who had redeemed "them to God with his blood." (v. 8, 9.) They must therefore undeniably represent some part of the church of redeemed sinners of the human race. Perceiving this, some expositors have supposed them to be representatives of the whole church, and the twenty-four elders of its rulers and pastors; but it is surely far more reasonable to reverse this arrangement, and to conclude that the four living creatures represent a part, the twenty-four elders the whole of the church; and indeed it seems evident that they were emblems of the true ministers of the Gospel, in the different parts of the earth. Ezekiel, being about to predict providential dispensations respecting the nation of Israel, had a vision emblematical of the ministry of angels, by which those events would be accomplished; but John's predictions relating chiefly to the church in the different regions of the earth, and to the affairs of nations only in subserviency to them, he had a vision emblematical of the Gospel ministry, by which the interests of the church would principally be maintained. As the temper of mind and spiritual gifts, which qualify men for this work, accord in great measure to the affections and endowments of angels, it is not at all wonderful to find a coincidence in the hieroglyphics by which they were represented. But each cherub in Ezekiel's vision had four faces, and John's living creatures had the same appearances divided among them; for angels may be supposed to possess *singly* the several excellencies that are given to *many* of the most eminent ministers. In various particulars, the emblem teaches what true and able ministers are and do: and thus it serves to instruct and remind them, 9 And [l] when those beasts give glory, and honour, and thanks, to him that sat on the throne, [m] who liveth for ever and ever,

10 The four and twenty elders [n] fall down before him that sat on the throne, [o] and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, [p] and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

l v. 13, 14. vii. 11, 12.
m x. 6. xv. 7 Ex. xv. 18. Ps. xlviii 14. Heb vii. 8 25.
n v. 14. xix. 4 Job i. 20 Ps lxxii. 11. Matt. ii. 11.
o vii. 11. xv. 4. xxii. 8, 9 1 Chr. xxix. 20 2 Chr vii 3 Ps. xcv 6 Matt iv. 9, 10. Luke xxiv 52
p 4 1 Chr. xxix. 11—16. Ps. cxv. 1, 2. 1 Cor. xv. 10.

11 Thou [q] art worthy, O Lord, [r] to receive glory, and honour, and power: [s] for thou hast created all things, [t] and for thy pleasure they are, and were created.

q v 9. 12. 2 Sam. xxii. 4. Ps xviii. 3
r xiv. 7. Deut. xxxii 4. 1 Chr. xvi 28. 29. Neh. ix. 5 Job xxxvi. 3 Ps. xxix. 1, 2. lxviii. 34. xcvi. 7, 8.
s x 6. Gen. i. 1. Ex xx. 11. Is xl. 26. 28. Jer. x. 11. xxxii 17. John i. 1—3 Acts xvii. 24. Col i. 16, 17. Heb. i. 2. 10.
t Prov. xvi. 4. Rom. xi. 36.

CHAP. V.

The apostle beholds a sealed book which none could open, and weeps on that account, 1—4. *He is assured by one*

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of their duties. The lion is the known emblem of courage and magnanimity; the calf or young ox of strength, hardiness, and patient endurance of labour; the human face is the emblem of prudence, benevolence and compassion; and the eagle of penetration, soaring beyond earthly things, contemplation of heavenly objects, and affections fixed on things above. The six wings, (*Note, Is.* vi. 1—4.) denote alacrity, humility, promptitude, and speed, in the Lord's work. The living creatures were also full of eyes before, behind, and *within*, which aptly represented vigilance, circumspection, attention to their work and charge, a watchful and cautious observance of the motions and stratagems of their enemies, self-acquaintance, and jealous diligence in searching their own hearts, and taking heed to their own spirits. Their unceasing and unwearied worship of the Lord, day and night, may signify, that, through their instructions, exhortations, example and assistance, converted sinners in every part of the earth were continually blessing and glorifying God, and worshipping at his mercy-seat; and the three-fold repetition of the word *holy*, (as in the worship of the seraphim in the above-cited passage in Isaiah,) might be an intimation of the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, to which respect was had, which Person soever was immediately addressed. (i. 4. 8.)

V. 9—11. Whilst these four living creatures ascribed glory and honour, and rendered thanks, to the eternal Jehovah, (in the midst of the circuit of the throne, and nearer than the seats of the elders,) (6.) the latter prostrated themselves before him in humble grateful adoration, and in acknowledgment that all their honour and felicity were bestowed on them of his mere mercy, they cast their crowns before the throne, and declared him to be worthy of all honour and dominion, as the great Creator of all worlds, by whose sovereign will they continued to exist, as they had been originally formed for his glory. (*Note, John* i. 1—3. *Col.* i. 15—17.) In the next chapter we shall find the same company worshipping the Son, as the Redeemer of sinners, and joined by the angels in that sacred service.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—5.

The Lord Jesus, 'having overcome the sharpness of 'death, hath opened the gates of heaven to all believers,' and if we look unto him by faith, and obediently attend to his voice, whilst he calls us to set our affections on things above, we shall, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, behold the glory of our reconciled God upon his throne of grace, be encouraged by the engagements of his everlasting covenant, and draw nigh in humble boldness with our worship, notwithstanding the terrors of his justice, and the awful curses of his broken law. For blessed are all they who belong to his church, in heaven, or on earth. Great is the honour and dignity conferred on them, or prepared for them, yea, far greater than all the thrones, sceptres, diadems, or triumphs, which have excited the ambition or envy of mankind in every age and place. If then we are baptized with the illuminating, purifying, and transforming influences of the Holy Spirit, washed in the pure fountain of the Redeemer's blood, and clothed in the sacerdotal robe of his righteousness, we shall soon have done with conflict and suffering, receive the victor's honourable crown, and join in the rapturous worship of heaven.

V. 6—11.

Here on earth the Lord conducts the affairs of his church by his ministers, whom he hath brought nearer to him than their brethren, and who ought to aspire after a proportionable pre-eminence in holiness. Many indeed bear that name, who are far from answering the scriptural character of ministers; and we all may learn by these instructive emblems, what need we have to be humbled, and ashamed of our inconsistent conduct and defective services; for though faithful ministers emulate the obedience of angels, yet they find they "do not the things "which they would." It behooves us, however, to look in this mirrour, that we may learn what manner of persons we ought to be, and are; and may thus know what to pray for, and endeavour after; that we may become more bold, laborious, loving, prudent, spiritual, active, vigilant, attentive to our own hearts, and devoted to the work of our gracious Lord. May he bless, uphold, encourage, and prosper all, who in any measure answer to these characters; may he raise up numbers of such ministers in all the four quarters of the globe, and convert blind teachers into faithful pastors. Thus the worship of the church on earth, under the guidance and instruction of able and spiritual ministers, will become more like that of adoring seraphim; whilst the multitude of his people, in every place, as with one heart and voice, ascribe the whole honour of their redemption and conversion, their present privileges and future hopes, to the eternal and most holy God, who is worthy to receive glory and dominion as the Omnipotent Creator and Sustainer, and the Sovereign Lord of the whole universe. May the name of our heavenly Father be thus hallowed on earth, as it is in heaven. Amen.

of the elders that the Lamb had prevailed to open it; who accordingly came and took it. 5—7. *He hears the living creatures and the elders adoring their Redeemer; and angels and all creatures joining in the praises of him who sat on the throne, and of the Lamb that was slain,* 8—14.

AND I saw in the right hand of him [a] that sat on the throne, [b] a book written within, and on the backside, [c] sealed with seven seals.

2 And I saw [d] a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, [e] Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?

3 And [f] no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

4 And [g] I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

5 And [h] one of the elders saith unto me, [i] Weep not: behold, [k] the Lion of the tribe of Juda, [l] the Root of David, [m] hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

6 And I beheld, and, lo, [n] in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood [o] a Lamb as it had been slain, having [p] seven horns and [q] seven eyes, which are [r] the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

7 And he came and took the book [s] out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.

a See on, iv. 3.
b x. 2 8—11. Is. xxxiv 16. Ez. ii. 9, 10.
c vi. 1. Is. viii. 16. xxix. 11. Dan viii 26. xii. 4—9.
d Ps. ciii 20
e 5. Is xxix 11, 12 xli. 22, 23.
f 13. Is. xl. 13, 14. xli. 28. Rom. xi. 34.
g iv. 1 Dan. xii. 8, 9 2 Cor. xi. 28.
h iv. 4 10. vii. 13. xi. 16.
i Jer xxxi. 16. Luke vii 13 viii. 52. xxiii 28 John xx. 13.
k Gen. xlix. 9, 10. Num. xxiv. 9. Heb vii. 14.
l xxii. 16 Is xi. 1. 10. Jer. xxiii 5, 6 Rom i. 3. xv. 12.
m i. 1, vi. 1.
n See on, iv 4—6.
o 9 12. vi. 16 vii. 9—17 xii 11. xiii. 8. xvii. 14. xxi. 23. xxii. 1. 3 Is. liii 7, 8. John i 29. 36. Acts viii. 32. 1 Pet. i 19, 20
p 1 Sam. ii. 10. Dan. vii. 14. Mic. iv 13. Hab. iii. 4. Luke i 69. Phil. ii. 9—11.
q 2 Chr. xvi 9. Zech. iii. 9 iv 10.
r See on, iv. 5.
s 1. See on, iv. 2, 3.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1—4. The vision still continuing, the apostle next saw a book in the right hand of him who sat upon the throne, which was written within, and "sealed on the outside with seven seals:" for this seems the more obvious meaning. It appeared as a roll consisting of several parchments, according to the custom of those times: and though it was supposed to be written within, yet nothing could be read till the seals were loosed; so that the words "on the backside," probably refer to the sealing, and not to the writing. It was afterwards found to contain seven parchments, or volumes, each of which was separately sealed: but if all the seals had been on the outside, nothing could have been read till they had all been loosed; whereas the loosing of each seal was followed by some discovery of the contents of the roll: yet the appearance on the outside seems to have indicated, that it consisted of seven parts. This was an emblem of the secret decrees and purposes of God, relative to future events, from which all prophecies are, as it were, extracts: but it especially represented those purposes which were about to be revealed, and may, therefore, be considered as the same for substance, with that part of the book which follows. A mighty angel, as the Lord's herald to all creatures, inquired who was "worthy," by his personal dignity or excellency, or the extraordinary services performed by him, to have the honour of opening this book. But there was *no one*, either angel in heaven, or man on earth, or spirit of man in the separate state, whose body lay under the earth, that could claim so high an honour; or so much as behold and obtain the least insight into the deep things of God which it contained. When this was made known, the apostle, who had gone up thither, with earnest desires and expectations of hearing things, which should come to pass in after times, wept much at his supposed disappointment.

V. 5—7. One of the emblematical representatives of the church seemed to the apostle, in his vision, to notice his grief, and to encourage him with the assurance, that the Lion of the tribe of Judah, had prevailed to open the book; being distinguished from, and honoured far beyond, all creatures. A tradition generally prevailed, that a lion was painted on the standard of Judah, when the nation of Israel encamped in the wilderness, but this is not at all probable. (*Note, Num.* ii. 2.) Christ, however, was descended from Judah, and had been predicted with reference to this emblem in Jacob's blessing. (*Note, Gen.* xlix. 9, 10.) He was infinitely superior in dignity and power to all others of the tribe; and he is most terrible to his obstinate enemies, merciful to those who submit to him, and the guardian of his people; so that this title was peculiarly suited to him. He was described as "the Root of David;" in his human nature he was a Branch of renown, sprung up from the decaying root of David's royal family: in respect of his Deity, he was the *Root* whence David himself sprang; and, as the promised Messiah, he was the great Honour, and the Source of all the dignity and authority of that distinguished race. Whilst the Elder was informing John that Christ had prevailed to open the book, he looked, and saw with astonishment, that near to the throne, and within the circle formed by the living creatures and the elders, (iv. 6.) there stood "a Lamb, "even as it had been slain," with the marks of the mortal wounds upon it, though it had been marvellously restored to life. (*Note, John* i. 29.) This was a hieroglyphical representation of Christ's High Priesthood before God, in our nature, as risen from the dead, through the merit of his sacrifice, in behalf of all who come to the Father through him; so that it was in consequence of that atonement, which the sacrificing of spotless lambs had prefigured from the beginning, that he prevailed to open the book. The seven horns of this emblematical Lamb represented the power of his providential kingdom to protect his subjects, and annoy his enemies; and his seven eyes may denote his prophetical office, and his personal knowledge of all hearts and all events; but especially the treasures of wisdom laid up in him to be communicated to his church by "the seven Spirits of God, sent forth into

8 And when he had taken the book, [t] the four beasts, and four *and* twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, [u] having every one of them harps, [x] golden vials full of * odours, which are [y] the prayers of saints.

9 And they [z] sung a new song, saying, [a] Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: [b] for thou wast slain, [c] and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, [d] out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

10 And hast made us unto our God [e] kings and priests: [f] and we shall reign on the earth.

11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of [g] many angels round about [h] the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them [i] was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

12 Saying with a loud voice, [k] Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, [l] to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

13 And [m] every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and [n] such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, [o] Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, *be* unto [p] Him that sitteth upon the throne, [q] and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.

14 And [r] the four beasts said, Amen. [s] And the four *and* twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

t 14. *See on*, iv. 4. 10. vii. 10—12. xix. 4. John v. 23. Rom. xiv. 10—12 Phil. ii 9—11. Heb. i 6

u xiv. 2, 3. xv. 2. Ps. xxxiii. 2. xliii. 4. lxxxi. 2. cl. 3

x xv. 7.

* Or, *incense.*

y viii 3, 4. Ps. cxli. 2.

z xiv 3 Ps. xxxiii. 3. xl. 3. xcvi. 1. xcviii. 1. cxliv. 9. cxlix. 1. Is. xlii 10.

a *See on* 2, 3. iv. 11.

b 6. 12 xiii 8.

c xiv 6. Matt. xx. 28. xxvi 28. Acts xx 28. Rom. iii. 24—26. 1 Cor. vi. 20. vii. 23. Eph i. 7. Col. i. 14. Tit ii. 14. Heb. ix. 12—14 1 Pet i. 18, 19. 2 Pet ii. 1. 1 John i. 7 ii 2.

d vii. 9. xi 9 xiv. 6. Dan. iv. 1. vi. 25 Mark xvi. 15, 16. Col i 23.

e i. 6. xxii. 5. Ex. xix 6. 1 Pet. ii 5. 9 ——f xx. 6 Dan vii. 18. 27.——g vii. 11. 1 Kings xxii. 19. 2 Kings vi 16—18. Ps. ciii. 20. cxlviii. 2.——h *See on*, iv. 4. 9, 10.

i xix. 6. Deut xxxiii 2 Ps. lxviii. 17. Dan. vii. 10. Heb. xii. 22.

k *See on*, 9. Zech. xiii. 7.

l iv. 11. vii. 12. xix. 1. Matt. xxviii. 18. John iii. 35, 36. xvii. 2 2 Cor. viii. 9. Phil. ii. 9—11. 1 Tim. i. 17.

m 3. vii. 9, 10. Ps. xcvi. 11—18. cxlviii. 2—13. Luke ii. 14. Phil. ii 10. Col. i 23.

n Is. xxiv 14. xlii. 10

o 12. i. 6. 1 Chr. xxix. 11. Ps lxxii. 18, 19 Matt vi. 13. Rom xi 36. xvi 27 Eph iii. 21. 1 Tim. vi. 16. 1 Pet v. 11. Jude 25.

p *See on*, iv 2, 3.

q *See on*, 9. vi. 16. vii. 10

r xix. 4.

s *See on*, iv. 10, 11.

"all the earth;" that is, the Holy Spirit, as given by him to reveal the truth and will of God to apostles and prophets, that they might be written for the instruction of mankind, and as illuminating the understanding, and preparing the hearts of his people to receive that instruction. (*Marg. Ref.*) Several eminent expositors suppose, that seven superior angels, or arch-angels, are meant; but the texts referred to, and the emblematical style of the book, seem inconsistent with that interpretation. This divine Saviour, however, approached to receive the book from the hand of him who sat on the throne.

V. 8—10. When Christ had received the book, and was preparing to loose the seals, the representatives of the ministers of the church, and the elders, who had before prostrated themselves in adoration of the great Creator, now fell down in like manner to worship the Lamb, or the incarnate Son, as the Saviour of lost sinners, thus rendering him divine honour, even in the presence of the Father's manifested glory. Their harps, with reference to the music and psalmody of the temple, were emblems of their melodious praises and thanksgivings; the golden vials, or small censers full of odours, like the burning of incense at the tabernacle and temple, represented the acceptableness of the prayers of the saints, through the intercession of Christ, and by the influences of his sanctifying Spirit. These were presented by the living creatures and elders, as the prayers of Israel were offered, whilst the priests were burning incense in the sanctuary. For though heaven is the scene of these visions, yet they had continual reference to the temple and its worship, and the state of the church on earth is throughout particularly adverted to. Moreover, they all joined in a song of praise, which was not only most excellent, but it was also *new*, in respect of the occasion and composition; for the Old Testament church celebrated the praises of Jehovah, their Redeemer from Egypt, and anticipated the coming of their expected Messiah, but the New Testament church adored Christ, as actually come, as having finished his work on earth by his sacrifice on the cross, and as entered into his mediatorial glory. He, therefore, and he alone, was worthy to take the book, and disclose the purposes of God to mankind; for he had become incarnate, and, for the glory of God and the salvation of men, had willingly given himself to be slain as a sacrifice. And thus he had redeemed them to God, by the shedding of his all-atoning blood, that he might bring them, as reconciled and accepted worshippers, into his presence; and he had collected them, by the preaching of the Gospel and the power of his grace, out of the various families, languages, and nations of the world, to be exalted and consecrated, as kings and priests, through their union with him and conformity to him; so that they were assured, that on earth they should acquire the ascendency both over their personal enemies, and those of his church, as well as reign with him for ever in heaven. It is indisputably manifest, that the four living creatures join in, or rather lead, the worship of the Lamb, as having redeemed *them* to God: and this proves beyond controversy, that part of the redeemed church is meant by this emblem, and not angels, whose worship is next described, but in language evidently different.

V. 11—14. Whilst these adoring praises were rendered, by the representatives of the church of redeemed sinners to their divine Saviour, the apostle heard likewise the voice of many angels, around the throne, and encircling *without* the living creatures and elders, whose number amounted to many millions, and could not be ascertained; yet they all, in perfect harmony, with a loud voice, declared that "the Lamb, who had been slain" for the redemption of sinful men, was "worthy to receive "power," in his mediatorial character and in human nature, over all creatures in heaven and earth, and "riches," even all the treasures of grace and glory, for the benefit of his people, and that "wisdom, strength, "honour, glory, and blessing," should be vested in him, and ascribed to him, as the Object of universal adoration,

CHAP. VI.

The opening of six of the seven seals, and the emblematic discovery of future events made after each of them, 1—17.

AND I saw [a] when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were [b] the noise of thunder, [c] one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.

a *See on,* v. 5—7.
b iv. 5. x. 3, 4. xi. 19.
c 3. 5. 7. iv. 6, 7. Acts iv. 20

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praise, gratitude, and love. Thus the innumerable company of angels, though they do not stand related to him as partakers of the same nature, and have no immediate concern in his redemption, are yet represented as beholding such divine excellency and glory in him and his mediatory work, (for into these things they desire to look,) that they adore and honour him with most rapturous ascriptions of praise, rejoice in his exaltation, "far above all principality and power," and seem to vie with redeemed sinners in his worship. In this they were immediately joined by all the inhabitants of heaven and earth, and the souls of those in the separate state, whose bodies were under the earth, or in the sea, or by all creatures in the universe, according to their several capacities, with the exception of none but the determined enemies of God. These indeed the nature of the case and the whole tenour of Scripture, as well as other visions in this book, necessarily exclude, yet they too, though reluctantly, shall bow to Christ, and be put under his feet. All the rest, however, rendered and ascribed "blessing and honour, and "glory to him that sat on the throne, and to the Lamb, "for ever and ever," to which the four living creatures joined a cordial Amen. Thus the whole church, by its representatives, fell down and worshipped the eternal God. (*Marg. Ref.*) What words could more fully and emphatically declare, that Christ is and ought to be worshipped, equally with the Father, by all creatures, to all eternity! Will any one, after reading this, assert, that he is a mere man, or a created Being; or that it is idolatry to worship him? or will such persons profess to believe that this book is the unerring word of God? Can they disprove the divinity of a book, the prophecies of which have already been so remarkably accomplished? or can any man, who opposes the worship of Christ, or the doctrines of his Deity, atonement, and salvation through faith in his blood, suppose that he can ever enter heaven? or, if he could, that he could join in the work and worship of that blessed world, or even endure it?

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

How vain and presumptuous must all man's endeavours be to discover future events, beyond the discernment of a sagacious probable conjecture, as such things are sealed up in impenetrable secrecy, and no creature in heaven, earth, or hell, is able, or worthy, to disclose the least tittle of them, except the incarnate Son of God alone! We need not indeed weep, that we cannot foresee the future events respecting ourselves in this world; as the eager expectation and prospect of distant prosperity would unfit us for present duties and conflicts, and the foresight of future calamities would render our most prosperous days distressing. Yet in this distracted evil world we may properly desire to learn, from the promises and prophecies of Scripture, what will be the final event to believers, and to the church, and in both respects the Incarnate Son hath prevailed to procure us all the information that our circumstances need. May we then value, and study to become acquainted with, every part of that revelation, which he hath given us. What apparently contrary excellencies centre in our Redeemer's character! "The Lion "of the tribe of Judah," is also a meek and spotless Lamb, and a bleeding Sacrifice for sin; and whilst as a Lion he protects his people, even as a Lamb he is most formidable to his obstinate enemies. (vi. 16, 17.) The whole universe could never, in any other instance, show such an union of unsearchable riches and deep poverty, of sovereign authority and willing entire subjection, of divine dignity and immense humiliation and condescension, of majesty and meekness, of holiness and love of sinners, of justice and mercy, of desert of honour and happiness, with patient endurance of most complicated sufferings. In these and various other respects, he is altogether worthy of our admiration, confidence, and imitation, as far as it is possible for us to be placed in similar circumstances. Yet our particular concern with him is in the character of a Redeemer. As the Omnipotent and Omniscient Lord of all, he rules every thing by his universal providence, and the energy of his omnipresent Spirit, in subserviency to his great concern of "redeeming us to God with his "blood." His faithful ministers, therefore, through all the earth, whilst they instruct men to worship the Creator and Governor of the world, will also excite them, by their doctrine and example, most humbly to adore the Lamb that was slain, and to present their loudest sweetest songs of praise to him, in and through whom the prayers of the saints ascend as incense before the throne of God. He is worthy to reveal and to direct the dispensations of Providence, yea, he is entitled to universal adoration; and if all the angels of God with one voice proclaim, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive autho- "rity, riches, wisdom, power, honour, glory, and bless- "ing;" and if all holy and accepted creatures in the whole universe give the same blessing, and honour, and glory, "to him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, "for ever and ever;" surely they, "whom he hath redeem- "ed to God with his blood, out of every kindred and people "of the earth," should cordially say Amen to it! Can we allow those persons to be his ministers and disciples, who refuse that honour to him, which all obedient creatures render him without one discordant voice? If it were possible for true Christians to refuse these adorations to the eternal Son of the Father, even the very stones would cry out in abhorrence of man's ingratitude to him, who stooped so low for their salvation. We cannot err in adoring him, "whom all the angels of God worship." Thus we shall most acceptably glorify him that liveth for ever and ever, and be trained up for the work and joy of heaven, for which no sinner is qualified, who cannot cordially join the new song of the redeemed, and ascribe "salvation, and "glory, and blessing, to him that sitteth on the throne, and "to the Lamb for evermore." Amen.

2 And I saw, and behold, [d] a white horse: [e] and he that sat on him had a bow; [f] and a crown was given unto him: [g] and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

3 And [h] when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.

4 And there went out another [i] horse *that was* red: [k] and *power* was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: [l] and there was given unto him a great sword.

5 And when [m] he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo, [n] a black horse; and he that sat on him [o] had a pair of balances in his hand.

6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, * A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; [p] and *see* thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

d xix 11 14. Zech. i. 8. vi. 3.
e Ps. xlv 3—5.
f xiv. 14. xix 12. Zech vi. 11—13 Matt. xxviii 18.
g xi. 15. 18 xv 2. xvii. 14 Ps. xcviii 1 cx. 2 Is xxv. 8 Rom. xv. 18, 19. 1 Cor xv. 25 55—57 2 Cor. x. 3-5
h *See on*, 1.
i xii 3 xvii 3. 6. Zech. i. 8 vi. 2
k xiii. 10. Ex ix. 16, 17 Is. xxxvii 36, 37. Ez xxix 18—20 Dan ii 37, 38. v. 19. John xix. 11.
l Ps xvii. 3. Is x 5, 6. Ez. xxx 24, 25.
m *See on*, 1. iv. 6, 7 v 5. 9.
n Zech. vi 2 6.
o Lev. xxvi. 26. Lam v 10. Ez. iv. 10. 16.
* The word *chœnix*. signifieth a measure containing one wine quart, and the twelfth of a quart.
p ix. 4. Ps. lxxvi. 10

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1, 2. It is generally agreed that this chapter relates to the events which took place from the time of the vision to the establishment of Constantine the Great upon the Imperial throne, as the first Christian emperor, by which the persecutions of Pagan Rome ceased, and Christianity became the established and favoured religion throughout the empire. When the Lord Jesus, as "the Lamb that had been slain," opened the first seal, the apostle's attention was excited by a voice like thunder from one of the four living creatures, who called on him to come and see what passed. This was the voice of him who was like a lion; and the same took place respecting the other living creatures in their order, after the opening of the three next seals, but the meaning of the emblem does not clearly appear. The apostle then beheld with astonishment, a white horse, on which One was mounted, armed with a bow, as for the battle; to him a crown, denoting royal authority, was given, and he went forth conquering all that opposed him, and still preparing to obtain new victories. They who suppose the apostle to have had this vision in the reign of Nero, about A. D. 68, explain this emblem of the victories gained by Vespasian and Titus, among which the taking and destruction of Jerusalem was most considerable. But it is almost incredible that this most important event should be only obscurely hinted at, if it had been then in futurity, and it is far more likely that the apostle wrote this book some time after that event. Others, therefore, explain this discovery of some victories obtained by the emperor Trajan over the surrounding nations; but these events had no immediate connexion with the affairs of the church, and Trajan, who was a persecutor, however celebrated in other respects, was not aptly described by one mounted on a white horse. This emblem rather denotes righteousness and purity; and the mild beneficent victories of Christ, by his word and Holy Spirit, in the conversion of sinners to the obedience of faith, seem to have been thus predicted. After his advancement to his mediatorial throne, he had gone forth as a merciful and pacific conqueror, and had obtained many victories, but both Jews and Gentiles opposed the progress of his Gospel; yet the opening of this seal showed that he would still go on with his conquests, and more widely than ever extend his spiritual dominion. Accordingly, accurate historians are of opinion, that Christianity spread more rapidly and extensively, among the Gentiles, just after this time, than it had before done. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3, 4. The red horse, which appeared at the opening of the second seal, leads our thoughts to wars and conquests of another nature than those before considered. The Lord Jesus, in his righteous providence, seems to be here represented as commissioning, and employing, the executioners of his vengeance on his obstinate enemies. Accordingly, historians record that insurrections, bloody battles, massacres, and devastations of a most extraordinary kind, took place between A. D. 100, and A. D. 138. Five hundred and eighty thousand Jews are computed to have been slaughtered, in different places, during that period, and even a larger number of the Romans and Greeks seem to have been butchered by them, in the most barbarous manner imaginable. So that the two parties of the enemies of Christ and the Gospel seemed to vie with each other, in executing his righteous vengeance on their competitors. Thus the instruments of his indignation were empowered to take peace from the earth, and to set men on to kill one another, and a great sword of war and slaughter was put into their hand. Some make this period to have lasted longer than is above stated, but such difficult questions cannot be particularly discussed, in this compendious view of these comprehensive prophecies.

V. 5, 6. The black horse, which appeared on the opening of the third seal, was a proper emblem of calamity and mourning; and the balances in the hand of the rider denoted, that, in the times referred to, there would be a great scarcity of provisions, so that men would have their food weighed out to them with great exactness, as it is done when any company are reduced to short allowance. (*Lev.* xxvi. 26. *Lam.* v. 4. *Ez.* iv. 10.) The voice also which proclaimed the price of corn has the same meaning, though to an English reader it seems to denote the contrary. For the measure specified, according to the most accurate calculation, held no more than the usual daily allowance for bread to a labouring man, or even to a slave, and the penny, or denarius, (about seven-pence half-penny,) was commonly his day's wages. If then a poor man could only earn enough to buy a sufficient quantity of bread, without any other necessary of life, to what straits must he be reduced, in endeavouring to sustain a family! The barley indeed was stated to have been much cheaper; but then it is much less serviceable for bread, and the poor could not possibly have obtained more than a bare subsistence on the meanest food. Yet the orders given to the emblematical executioner of this sentence, to spare the oil and the wine, may imply, that there should

7 And [q] when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.

8 And I looked, and behold, a [r] pale horse: and his name that sat on him [s] was Death, and hell followed with him: And power was given * unto them [t] over the fourth part of the earth, [u] to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

9 And when he had opened the fifth seal, [x] I saw under the altar [y] the souls of them that were [z] slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

10 And [a] they cried with a loud voice, saying, [b] How long, O Lord, [c] holy and true, [d] dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

11 And [e] white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, [f] that they should rest yet for a little season, [g] until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren, that should be killed as they *were*, should be fulfilled.

q See on, i. 5.
r Zech vi 3.
s xix. 13, 14 Is. xxv. 8. Hos. xiii 14. Hab ii. 5. 1 Cor. xv. 55. *Marg*
* Or, *to him*.
t viii 7—12. ix. 15. 18 xii 4.
u Lev. xxvi 22—33 Jer. xv 23. xvi. 4 16 xliii 11. Ez. v. 15—17. xiv. 14—21.
x ix. 13 xiv 18 Lev. iv. 7 John xvi 2. *Gr* Phil ii. 17. 2 Tim. iv. 6.
y xx. 4. 2 Cor. v. 8 Phil. i. 23.
z i 9. ii 13 xi. 3—7. xii. 11 xix 10. 2 Tim. i. 8.
a Gen. iv. 10 Ps. ix. 12. Luke xviii. 7, 8. Heb. xii. 24.
b Ps xiii. 1 xxxv. 17. lxxiv. 9, 10. xciv. 3, 4. Dan. viii. 13. xii. 6. Zech. i. 12.
c *See on*, iii. 7. xv. 3, 4.
d xi. 18. xvi. 5—7. xviii. 20. 24 xix. 2. Deut. xxxii. 36—43. Judg xvi. 28. 1 Sam. xxiv. 12 Ps. lviii. 10, 11. Is. lxi. 2. lxiii. 1—6. Luke xxi. 22 Rom. xii 19. 2 Thes. i. 6—8.
e *See on*, iii. 4, 5. vii. 9. 14.
f xiv. 13 Is. xxvi. 20, 21. Dan. xii. 13. Heb. xi. 40.
g vii 14. xiii. 15. xvii. 6. Matt. x. 21. xxiii. 34, 35. John xvi. 2.

not be a total failure of the fruits of the earth. This seal is supposed by some expositors to have reached from A. D. 138 to 193, though others state it differently. There is, however, no material disagreement between them; and there are accounts in the history of those years of long continued scarcities, through the whole Roman empire, during which all the care of the emperors and their ministers could only just prevent the horrors of entire famine. This was another method, by which Christ fought against the persecutors of his church.

V. 7, 8. The pale horse, which appeared at the opening of the fourth seal, on which death rode as a terrific conqueror, followed by hell, (or the grave and state of departed souls to seize on the dead,) was an apt emblem of the several divine judgments, which are afterwards enumerated, and through which it is said that power was given to death and hell over the fourth part of the earth, or a large proportion of its inhabitants, especially throughout the whole Roman empire. Some expositors make this seal to reach from A. D. 193, to A. D. 270; others include only 50 years of that time under it. However, within the shorter period, there were more than twenty emperors, who for a time ruled with great power, and most of them with great tyranny and cruelty, as long as their dominion endured; there were also above thirty usurpers in different parts of the empire, who supported their claims by war, and perished, with multitudes of their adherents. Amidst such intestine convulsions, and fierce contests *within* the several provinces of the empire, death on his pale horse must have killed immense numbers with the sword. This universal war and confusion, by taking men off from the cultivation of the earth, and destroying the fruits of it when produced, naturally made way for famine, which grievously prevailed in every place. The scanty, low, and unwholesome diet, occasioned by hunger, or famine, naturally introduced pestilence, which is often called *death* by the eastern writers; and the most learned men have declared, that so extensive and destructive a pestilence, as that which during this period wasted the empire for fifteen years together, is not met with in universal history. These desolations must also have given opportunity to wild beasts to increase upon the residue of the inhabitants, and accordingly we read, that they were forced to wage war with wolves, lions, and tigers, and that many were devoured by them. (*Notes, Ez.* v. 17. xiv. 21. xxxiii. 27.)

V. 9—11. On the opening of the fifth seal, the apostle observed "under the altar," (for there is a continual reference to the appearance of the divine glory in the sanctuary, and to the peculiarities of the Jewish worship,) the souls of those persons who had been slain for believing and obeying the word of God, and for the testimony which they had borne to the truth of the Gospel. These appeared as sacrifices, that had newly been offered, to show their fellowship with Christ in his sufferings, and the acceptableness of their faithfulness unto death, through his propitiatory oblation; for it is probable, that the altar of burnt-offering is intended, though some understand it of the golden altar for incense within the sanctuary. They seem to have represented not only those who had suffered martyrdom before the apostle had this vision, but the whole multitude that were slain previous to the prophetical period referred to, beginning about A. D. 270; and with one consent, and a loud voice, they inquired of the Lord, as *holy* and *faithful*, How long he would endure the provocations of the persecutors, before he proceeded to judge their cause, and avenge their blood on the inhabitants of the earth, by the subversion of the persecuting power of Pagan Rome? This was the language of their zeal for the honour of God, and their desire for the prevalence of the Gospel. The white robes given to each of them denoted, that they were immediately admitted into a state of felicity, as accepted and holy; but they were required to rest, and wait a short space for the avenging of their blood, as there were many others of their brethren who would suffer death in the same cause, before the purposes of God respecting the destruction of their persecutors were fulfilled. 'Mr. Lowman observes very well, that this 'representation seems much to favour the immediate happiness of departed saints, and hardly to consist with that 'uncomfortable opinion, the insensible state of departed 'souls till after the resurrection.' (*Bp. Newton.*) This seems to have been a prediction of the terrible persecution of the church under Dioclesian, which reached much further, and was far more bloody, than any of those that had preceded it. The fury of it lasted for ten years, which was called by Christians, The Æra of martyrs; but this seal is supposed by some expositors to relate to the whole time between A. D. 270 and 304. Here also there are *immaterial* differences of opinion among learned men; and as so many interesting events are hinted at in a few verses, it can scarcely be supposed that, after many cen-

12 ¶ And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, [h] there was a great earthquake; [i] and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

13 And [k] the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her * untimely figs, when she is [l] shaken of a mighty wind:

14 And [m] the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; [n] and every mountain and island were moved out of their places:

15 And [o] the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond-man, and every free-man [p] hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains;

16 And said to the mountains and rocks, [q] Fall on us, and hide us from [r] the face of him that sitteth on the throne, [s] and from the wrath of the Lamb:

17 For [t] the great day of his wrath is come; and [u] who shall be able to stand?

h viii. 5. xi. 13. xvi. 18. 1 Kings xix. 11—13. Is. xxix 6. Am i. 1. Zech xiv 5. Mat. xxiv. 7 xxvii 51. xxviii. 2.
i Is. xiii. 9, 10. xxiv. 23 lx. 19, 20. Ez. xxxii. 7, 8. Joel ii 10. 30, 31. iii. 15. Am. viii 9. Hag. ii 6, 7. 21, 22 Matt. xxiv 29. xxvii. 45 Mark xiii. 24, 25. xv. 33 Luke xxiii. 44, 45. Acts ii. 19, 20.
k viii. 10—12. ix. 1 Ez. xxxii. 7. Dan. viii. 10. Luke xxi 25.
* Or, *green figs.*
l Is. vii 2. xxxiii. 9. Dan. iv. 14. Nah. iii. 12.——m Ps. cii. 26. Is xxxiv. 4. Heb. i. 11, 12. 2 Pet. iii. 10.——n xvi. 20 Is. ii. 14—17. Jer. iv. 23—26. li. 25.
o xviii 9—12. xix 18—21. Job xxiv. 19, 20 Ps ii 10—12. xlix. 1, 2. lxxvi 12 cx 5. 6. Is xxv. 21, 22.
p Josh x. 16, 17. Judg vi. 2. 1 Sam xiii. 6. Is. ii 10 19. xlii 22. Mic. vii. 17. Heb xi. 38.
q ix. 6. Jer. viii. 3. Hos x. 8. Luke xxiii. 30.
r iv. 2 5. 9 xx. 11.
s 10 xix. 15. Ps. ii. 9—12 xiv. 10. xxi 8—12. cx. 5, 6 Zech. i. 13, 14. Matt. xxvi. 64. 2 Thes i. 7—9.
t xi 18. xvi. 14. Jer xxx 7 Joel ii. 31. Zeph. i. 14. Rom. ii 5 Jude 6.——u Ps cxxx 3, 4 Joel ii. 11. Mal iii. 2.

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turies, we should be able to determine such matters with exactness; especially as the historians of those times were remarkably inaccurate and confused in their writings.

V. 12—17. The great earthquake, (or concussion, whether of the earth or the heavens,) which followed the opening of the sixth seal, was the emblem of extraordinary revolutions in the civil and religious state of the world, attended with vast commotions of every kind.—The blackness of the sun, and the moon appearing as blood, denote the extinction, with horror and bloodshed, of the most exalted and conspicuous persons, such as the emperors, and their chief ministers: the falling of the stars, was emblematical of the degradation, or death, of illustrious persons in great numbers, such as magistrates and senators. The departure of the heaven, like the rolling up of a parchment to be laid aside, and the removal of the mountains and islands, seem to have represented the total subversion of the Pagan persecuting dominion, by the victories of Constantine, and by his accession to the imperial throne; and the entire and universal change which took place at that time. 'The great lights of the 'heathen world, the powers civil and ecclesiastical, were 'all eclipsed and obscured, the heathen emperors and 'Cesars were slain, the heathen priests and augurs were 'extirpated, the heathen officers and magistrates were 'removed: the heathen temples were demolished, and 'their revenues were appropriated to better uses.' (*Bp. Newton.*) (*Marg. Ref.*) Such bold metaphorical descriptions of great revolutions abound in the prophecies of scripture; for these events are emblems and anticipations of the end of the world, and the day of judgment; nor could any revolution be more properly represented by this language, than the entire subversion of the greatest fabric of Pagan idolatry, tyranny, and persecution, that ever existed on earth. This unexpected change would throw all that party into the utmost consternation and despair: and the apostle in his vision saw them all, even the slaves and free-men, as well as the kings, captains, and great or rich men, endeavouring to shelter themselves in dens and caverns, and wishing to be crushed by rocks and mountains; if that might but cover them from the power of God, and from the wrath of the Lamb, whose gospel they had opposed, and whose servants they had persecuted. For the prevalence of Christianity, and the accession of a Christian emperor, would lead them to conclude with desperation, that Jesus was indeed the Lord; that the time was come when he would take full vengeance on his enemies; and that none could resist him, escape from him, or pacify him. The series of prophetic events requires us to interpret this seal, of the victories and accession of Constantine, &c: when the Christian church gained a complete triumph over the persecuting power of Rome Pagan: but the passage may profitably be accommodated to the day of judgment. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

The ministers of the gospel ought to call men's attention to the prophecies of scripture, and the providential works of God as accomplishing them. The victories of our exalted Redeemer, by the preaching of the gospel, in bringing the nations to the obedience of faith, have been and will be progressive, till his cause be universally triumphant: we should, therefore, rejoice to be in any way instrumental in promoting these beneficent conquests: and our prayers, that "he may still go forth, conquering and "to conquer," should continually be presented before the throne of grace. But he fights in another manner against the despisers of his salvation and the opposers of his glory: he can raise up and employ sanguinary potentates, or insurgents, to execute his vengeance on his enemies; and when he gives them power, and leaves them to their own hearts' lusts, they soon excite multitudes to kill one another by the force of the sword. He can also withhold the influences of the heavens, and restrain the earth from yielding its increase; and so visit the nations with distressing scarcity, or destructive famine: and death, when commissioned by him, marches forth on his pale horse, and pestilences sweep away millions; till at length the beasts of the earth seem to acquire the dominion of the desolated lands, and add to the miseries of the few remaining inhabitants. How mad must it then be for the potsherds of the earth to contend against his iron rod!—But let us be thankful for our exemption from these dire calamities, and for our peace, liberty, plenty, and manifold advantages; and let the rich be reminded, even in times of comparative scarcity, to give more liberally to the

CHAP. VII.

The winds restrained till the servants of God are sealed, 1—3. *The number of them from the several tribes of Israel,* 4—8. *An innumerable multitude of all nations seen before the throne; with an account of the way in which they came thither, and the blessedness which they enjoy,* 9—17.

AND [a] after these things, I saw [b] four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, [c] holding the four winds of the earth, that [d] the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

2 And [e] I saw another angel ascending from the east, [f] having the seal of [g] the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, [h] to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

3 Saying, [i] Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, [k] till we have sealed [l] the servants of our God [m] in their foreheads.

a iv—vi.
b iv. 6 ix. 14 Ez. vii. 2. xxxvii. 9. Zech. i 18—20 vi 1. Matt xxiv 31 Mark xiii.27
c Is xxvii 8 Jer. xlix.36 Dan. vii. 2. viii 8. Jon i. 4 Matt. viii 26, 27. xxiv. 31.
d vi 6. ix. 4. Is xxvii 3.
e viii.3. x. 1. Mal. iii 1 iv. 2 Acts vii. 30—32.
f 3—8 iii. 1 x 4. Cant. viii. 6. John vi. 27. 2 Cor. i. 22. Eph. i. 13. iv. 30.
g *See on*, Deut. v. 26. 1 Sam. xvii. 26. 36. 2 Kings xix. 4. Matt. xxvi. 63. 1 Thes. i. 9. Heb. xii.22.
h i. 3.. viii. 7—12.
i vi 6 ix 4. Is vi. 13 xxvii 8. lxv. 8 Matt. xxiv 22. 31.
k Ex. xii. 13 23. Is xxvi. 20, 21. Ez. ix. 4—6 Zeph. ii. 3 ——l xix. 2 Is liv. 17 Dan iii. 17 26. vi. 16. 20 Mal. iii. 18. John xii. 26. Rom. vi. 22.——m xiii. 16. xiv. 1. xx. 4. xxii. 4.

relief of their poor neighbours. In these temporal judgments, the Lord in wrath remembers mercy. His people also partake of many of the calamities, in addition to the persecutions which they often endure.

V. 9—17.

Vast multitudes have already been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they constantly held to the truth; and many more will probably be thus killed, before his purposes shall be accomplished. But the Lord himself is the Comforter of his afflicted servants; precious is their blood in his sight; and their patience unto death in his cause, is a sacrifice most honourable, and therefore most acceptable, to him, through Jesus Christ. Their enemies can only kill the body: then the Lord delivereth them out of *all* their troubles; white robes of joy and triumph are given to every one of them; they enter into immediate rest; and after a short season, "the earth shall "disclose their blood," and the vengeance that is written will be executed on all their impenitent persecutors, by the holy and faithful Lord of all. He hath gained many signal victories over the most powerful enemies of his church; and vast revolutions and convulsions in empires have been effected, in order to the establishment of Christianity, in defiance of opposing princes and nations: yet hitherto the commanders in this contest have rallied their scattered troops, and returned to the desperate charge. But he will shortly gain a more decided, universal, and durable victory, than any which he hath yet obtained; and with more terrible destruction to the armies of the aliens. And if, on such occasions, the most powerful kings, and valiant captains, and all other opposers of his power, are so dismayed, as to hide themselves in dens and caverns: what will the terror of the wicked be at the day of judgment, when the sun and moon shall literally be turned into darkness; when the heavens and earth shall become one common conflagration, till they pass away, and no place is found for them; and when the great day of the wrath of the Lamb will indeed be come, and none of his enemies will be able to abide it! In vain will they then "call to "the rocks and mountains to hide them from Him, that "sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the "Lamb;" from which none will be preserved, except that despised company, who have here believed, loved, and obeyed him. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, "but his words shall not pass away." "Be wise now, "therefore, O ye kings, be instructed, ye judges of the "earth; serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with "trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye "perish." (*Notes, Ps.* ii.) And may all, who look for such things, "be diligent, that they may be found of him, "in peace, without spot, and blameless." (2 *Pet.* iii. 7. —14.)

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1—3. This chapter is a continuation of the sixth seal. (viii. 1.) The four angels, standing on the four corners of the earth, represent the instruments of Providence throughout the nations, in all parts of the earth: and their restraining the winds, that no destructive tempests might be excited by land or sea, is supposed to be an emblem of the tranquillity of the Roman empire, and of all nations subsequent to Constantine's accession to the imperial throne; which was the more delightful, as it succeeded such long-continued and terrible convulsions and desolations. At the same time, "another "Angel came up from the east." This seems to have been an emblem of Christ; for who else could have "the "seal of the living God," even the Holy Spirit, by which his people are "sealed unto the day of redemp"tion?" By his gospel he came from the eastern nations, where his religion was first published; (as the rising sun proceeds from east to west;) and he diffused that heavenly light to the western, or European, provinces of the empire; and accompanied it by his new-creating Spirit; and thus sealed numbers as the servants of God. This great "Angel of the covenant," as one having sovereign authority, called to the other angels, to whom a commission had been given, to bring calamities on mankind by land and sea; ordering them not to execute it, till he and his ministers, as the instruments of his grace, had sealed the servants of God in the forehead; that they might be evidently distinguished from others, and so be preserved during the approaching calamities. This signified, that great numbers would be baptized, and profess themselves disciples of Christ, during the happy tranquillity, which followed Constantine's accession; and that very many would be really converted, and manifest the image of God by the sanctification of the Holy Spirit. The gospel was very extensively preached during this period, and immense multitudes embraced Christianity. The favour indeed, shown to the converts to Christianity, in an indiscri

4 And [n] I heard the number of them which were sealed: *and there were* sealed [o] an hundred *and* forty *and* four thousand, of [p] all the tribes of the children of Israel.

5 Of the [q] tribe of Juda *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad *were* sealed twelve thousand.

6 Of the tribe of [r] Aser *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses *were* sealed twelve thousand.

7 Of the tribe of Simeon *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar *were* sealed twelve thousand.

8 Of the tribe of Zabulon *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin *were* sealed twelve thousand.

9 ¶ After this I beheld, and lo, [s] a great multitude, which [t] no man could number, [u] of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, [x] stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, [y] clothed with white robes, [z] and palms in their hands;

10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, [a] Salvation to our God which [b] sitteth upon the throne, and [c] unto the Lamb.

11 And [d] all the angels stood round about the throne, and *about* the elders and the four beasts, [e] and fell before the throne on their faces, [f] and worshipped God,

12 Saying, [g] Amen: [h] Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and [i] thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, *be* unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

n ix. 16.

o xiv. 1, 3. Gen. xv. 5. Rom. ix. 27. xi. 5, 6

p Ez. xlvii. 13. xlviii. 19 31 Zech. ix. 1 Matt. xix 28. Luke xxii. 30 Acts xxvi 7. Jam i 1.

q Ex. i. 2—4. Num 1. 4—15. x. 14—27. xiii. 4—16 1 Chr. ii. 1, 2.

r Luke ii. 36.

s Gen. xlix. 10. Ps. ii. 8. xxii. 27. lxvi 4 lxvii 2. lxxii. 7—11. xcviii. 3. cx. 2, 3. cxvii. Is ii. 2, 3. xlix. 6—8. lx. 1—14. Jer. iii. 17. xvi. 19 Zech ii 11. viii. 20—23. Rom. xv. 9—12.

t v. 11 xi 15 Gen. xiii 16. Hos i. 10. Luke xii 1. Rom. xi. 25. Heb. xi. 12. xii. 22.

u v. 9. Dan iv. 1. vi. 25.

x Luke xxi. 36. Eph. vi. 13.

y 13, 14 *See on*, iii. 4, 5. 18. iv. 4. vi. 11.

z Lev. xxiii. 40. John xii. 13

a xix. 1. Ps. iii 8. xxxvii. 39 lxviii. 19, 20. cxv. 1. Is. xliii 11. xlv. 15. 21, 22. Jer. iii. 23 Hos xiii. 4. Jon. ii. 9 Zech, ix. 9. Luke iii. 6. John iv. 22. Eph ii. 8.

b iv. 2, 3 9—11 v. 7. 13, 14. xxi. 5.

c v. 6. 9. xxii. 3. John i. 29. 36.

d iv. 6. v. 11—13. xix. 4—6. Ps. ciii. 20, 21. cxlviii. 1, 2.——e xi. 16.——f iv. 10. xv. 4 xix. 4 xxii 9. Ps. xlv. 11. xcvii. 7. Matt. iv. 10. John iv. 23 Heb. i. 6.——g i. 18. v. 14. xix 4. Ps. xli 13. lxxii. 19. lxxxix. 52. cvi 48 Matt. vi. 13 ——h *See on*, v. 12, 13 ——i Neh. xii. 8 46. Ps. l. 14, xcv. 2. c. 4 cvii. 22. cxvi. 17. cxlvii. 7. Is. li. 3. Jer. xxxiii. 9. Jon. ii. 9 2 Cor. iv. 15. ix. 11, 12. Col. ii. 7. iii. 17.

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minate and injudicious manner, induced many from secular motives to become Christians, and thus tended greatly to fill the church with hypocrites, which introduced a worldly spirit, and at length caused manifold evils; yet this prophecy fully proves, that real religion was *at first* greatly promoted by the advancement of a Christian emperor, and that it obtained an establishment in many places, which before had little regarded it.—‘I saw another Angel, even the great Angel of the covenant, Christ Jesus, ascending up from the eastern coast, where Jerusalem stood, who, by virtue of his Mediatorship, had in his hand that Seal, or mark of the living God, which in his eternal decree is set upon his elect, whereby they are sealed both to salvation in the end, and to a gracious protection till then, who did, by the mighty voice of his word, command these four angels,—saying, Hold your bands, &c.’ (*Bp. Hall.*) (*Notes*, 2 *Cor.* i. 20—22. *Eph.* i. 13, 14. iv. 30.)

V. 4—8. This account of the numbers sealed from twelve tribes cannot be understood in a literal sense; for if we explain it exclusively of Jewish converts, it can hardly be supposed that the same number of each tribe were sealed. But Israel was the ancient church of God, which after a time was incorporated as a nation; and the Christian church, which succeeded to it, had, after a long time supplanted both the Mosaic dispensation, and the idolatry of Pagan Rome, and acquired an establishment upon the ruins of them. As, therefore, the tribes of Israel were numbered after they were formed into a nation, so the numbers added to the church, in consequence of this establishment, were *figuratively* declared to be one hundred and forty-four thousand, or twelve times twelve thousand, a large definite number being put for an indefinite: and this being divided into twelve parts, one of them was assigned to each of the tribes of Israel; intimating that these persons succeeded to their privileges and occupied their place; for I apprehend that the Gentile as well as the Jewish converts were intended. (*Note*, 9—12.)—The tribes are here arranged differently than elsewhere; Judah is placed first, in honour of Christ who sprang from him; Dan is wholly omitted, perhaps because idolatry was first publicly established by that tribe. (*Notes*, *Judg.* xviii.) Others, however, think, that the tribe of Dan had long before become nearly extinct; and, indeed, it is not mentioned in the genealogies contained in the first of Chronicles. Levi is numbered with the rest, and Joseph is placed instead of Ephraim, whilst Manasseh is likewise continued. The order of primogeniture is neglected; nor is any regard shown to the children of the free-women above those of the bond-women, as both are alike in Christ.

V. 9—12. Many expositors have supposed that the preceding verses relate exclusively to the Jewish converts, at this time added to the church, and that these refer to the Gentiles who then embraced the Gospel; and others explain them of the peace and prosperity of the church during those days. But it appears to me far more probable that the happy estate of those, who had adhered to Christ during the preceding calamities, and had been faithful unto death, was intended; for though they had been slain, or had otherwise been removed, before the favourable change took place, yet they were no losers, but the contrary. A multitude, so large that no man could number them, collected from the several nations of the earth known in those days, appeared to stand before the throne, as accepted worshippers of God, and “before the “Lamb,” as his redeemed people. This view and interpretation gives us enlarged conceptions of the success of the Gospel during the three first centuries, and may encourage the hope, that vast numbers lived by obedient faith, and died in Christ, unknown to history; notwithstanding

13 And [k] one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are [l] arrayed in white robes? [m] and whence came they?

14 And I said unto him, Sir, [n] thou knowest. And he said unto me, These are they which [o] came out of great tribulation, [p] and have washed their robes, and made them white in [q] the blood of the Lamb.

15 Therefore [r] are they before the throne of God, [s] and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall [t] dwell among them.

16 They shall [u] hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall [x] the sun light on them, nor any heat;

17 For the Lamb which is [y] in the midst of the throne, shall [z] feed them, and [a] shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and [b] God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

k iv 4 10. v 5 11. l *See on* 9. m Gen xvi. 8 Judg. xiii. 6. John vii 28 n Ez. xxxviii 3. o ii 9. vi. 9—11 xv. 2. xvii. 6. John xvi. 33. Acts xiv. 22. Rom. v 3 2 Thes i 4. p i. 5 Is. i. 18. Zech. iii. 3—5. xiii 1. John xiii. 8—14 1 Cor. vi. 11. Eph. v. 26. 27 Heb. ix. 14. 1 John i. 7 q v.9 xii.11 Heb. xiii 12. 1 Pet i. 19. r iv 3 xiv 3—5 Heb viii 1. xii.2. s xx 10. xxii. 5. Ps. cxxxiv. 1, 2.

t xxi. 3. xxii. 3. Ex. xxix. 45. 1 Kings vi. 13. 1 Chr. xxiii. 25. Ps. lxviii. 16—18. John i. 14. 1 Cor. iii 16. 2 Cor. vi. 16. u Ps. xlii. 2. lxiii. 1. cxliii 6. Is. xli. 17. xlix. 10. lxv. 13 Matt. v. 6. Luke i 53 vi. 21. John iv. 14. x Ps. cxxi, 6. Cant. i. 6. Is. iv. 5, 6. xxv. 4 xxxii. 2. Jon. iv. 8 Matt. xiii 6. 21. Mark iv 6 17. Jam. i. 11.——y *See on.* v 6 ——z Ps. xxii. 26. xxiii. 1. 5. xxviii 9. xxxvi. 8 Cant. i. 7, 8. Is. xxv. 6 xl 11 xlix 9 Ez. xxxiv. 23 Mic. v. 4. vii. 14 Matt. ii 6. *Marg* John xxi. 15—17. Acts xx. 28. 1 Pet. v. 2.——a xxi. 6. Ps. xxxvi. 9. Is. xii. 3. xxx. 25. xxxv. 6, 7. Jer. ii. 13. xxxi. 9. John iv. 11. 14. vii. 37, 38.——b xxi. 4. Is. xxv. 8. xxx. 19. xxxv 10 lx. 20.

the lamentable account given us of the heresies, contentions and abuses, which prevailed at that early period.—Every one of this company was clothed with white robes, as perfectly justified, sanctified, and made happy in heaven. They had also been engaged in war; as victors they carried the well known emblem of palm-branches; and having obtained complete salvation, in respect of their souls, they ascribed it in no degree to themselves, or to their own wisdom, strength. labours, services, sufferings, or martyrdom; but gave the whole glory of it to their God and Father, who was seated on the throne, as being the effect of his special love and grace; "and unto the Lamb," as it was bestowed on them through his atonement and mediation. Whilst these redeemed sinners stood next to the throne, and led the worship of heaven, in virtue of their union with, and relation to, the incarnate Son of God, the angels, (free from the least emotion of envy, and rejoicing in their exaltation, and the glory of God in it,) stood without the circle made by the emblematical representatives of the church and its ministers, and in prostrate adoration added their cordial Amen to the praises rendered to God and the Lamb. They then showed their delight in that solemn and rapturous worship, by ascribing blessing and glory to their God and Portion, as the Fountain of all excellency and felicity, celebrating his manifold wisdom in these surprising events, joining their thanksgivings to those of redeemed sinners, rendering him the honour of all his wonderful works, and rejoicing that power and might belonged to him for ever and ever. This, being connected with their consent to the praises rendered to God and the Lamb, clearly intimated that "they honoured "the Son, even as they honoured the eternal Father."

V. 13—17. The scene, thus presented to the apostle's mind, related to events which did not occur till above two hundred years afterwards, namely in the time of Constantine: as he was, therefore, receiving prophetical information, one of the representatives of the universal church inquired of him, whether he knew who they were, thus arrayed in white robes, or whence they came. And the apostle having respectfully replied, that he was persuaded the elder well knew, thus intimating his desire of instruction, he was shown, that "they were persons "who had come out of great tribulation."—This could not be meant of the Gentiles, converted to Christianity after the accession of Constantine, for the church then enjoyed great peace; and though it might be accommodated to the state of the church at large in those peaceful days, which had succeeded to a season of extreme tribulation, yet it far more aptly and emphatically represented the case of those multitudes, who had been faithful unto death, amidst the harassing persecutions of the foregoing ages. They had not made their robes white by their own services or sufferings, nor had they been originally white; but they had washed them from the guilt aud pollution, which had contaminated them, in the blood of the Lamb, by faith in his atoning Sacrifice and prevailing intercession, and by trusting in his name for the mercy and grace, which he died to procure for sinners. Therefore they had found acceptance with God and admission into heaven, and stood before the throne, where, with unceasing, yea, augmented pleasure, they served and worshipped God day and night, whilst he graciously dwelt among them as their Father and Friend, overshadowing them with his presence, and filling them with ineffable and rapturous joy. Thus, by his love, and the displays of his glory, all their thirstings after him and holiness were fully satisfied, nor were they troubled with one desire of any other or greater happiness than they securely enjoyed. Neither were they exposed to any affliction, temptation, fear, or persecution, (like the heat of the noon-day sun,) as all these were finally passed away. For the Lamb, who redeemed them to God with his blood, and who, in consequence of his victory, was seated with his Father upon his throne, employed all his power and authority in satisfying and anticipating all their wants, and conducting them to the inexhaustible Fountain-head of unalloyed felicity, whilst the eternal Father, as delighting over them to do them good, wiped away all their tears from their eyes, and turned their former sorrows into the fulness of eternal joy. Nothing on earth can answer to such language as this, and indeed the prosperity of the church at that time very soon terminated as a dream, and cannot be reasonably considered as exclusively, or primarily, intended by this most energetic and rapturous language. But such a view of the immediate felicity of those who followed Christ faithfully in the predicted season of persecution, was very proper to reconcile the minds of Christians to their trials, and to animate them to face death in its most terrifying forms. Accordingly, the church, during these times, seems to have studied this book more, and even to have understood *this first part of it* far better, than Christians in succeeding generations have done.

CHAP. VIII.

The seventh seal is opened; and, after a short silence, seven angels appear with seven trumpets prepared to announce approaching judgments; with reference to Christ's intercession, and the prayers of his saints, 1—6. *The sounding of four of the trumpets, with the emblematical predictions following each of them; and an intimation of more awful calamities, under the other three,* 7—13.

[a] AND when he had opened the seventh seal, there was [b] silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

2 And I saw the [c] seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven [d] trumpets.

a v. 1. 9 vi. 1 3 5 7. 9 12.
b Job iv. 16. Ps. xxxvii. 7 lxii 1. *Marg* Hab ii. 20. Zech. ii 13.
c xv. 1 xvi. 1. Matt xviii. 10. Luke i 19.
d 6–12. ix. 1, 13, 14. xi. 15. *See on*, Num x. 1—10 2 Chr xxix. 25–28 Am. iii. 6—8.

3 And [e] another Angel came and [f] stood at the altar, [g] having a golden censer; and there was given unto him [h] much incense, that he should * offer *it* [i] with the prayers of all saints upon [k] the golden altar which was before the throne.

4 And [l] the smoke of the incense, *which came* with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the Angel's hand.

5 And the Angel took the censer, [m] and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast *it* † into the earth: [n] and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and [o] an earthquake.

6 And the [p] seven angels which had the seven trumpets, prepared themselves to sound.

e vii. 2 x 1 *See on*, Gen xlviii 15, 16 Ex. iii 2—18. Acts vii. 30—32
f ix. 13. Ex xxx. 1—8 2Chr. xxvi. 16—20. Rom. viii. 34. Heb. vii 25.
g Lev xvi 12. 1 Kings vii 50. Heb ix. 4.
h Lev. xvi 13. Num. xvi 46, 47. Mal i 11.
* Or. *add it to the prayers.*
i v. 8 Ps cxli. 2 Luke i 10. Heb. iv. 15, 16. x. 19—22. 1 John ii 1, 2.
k ix. 13 Ex. xxxvii. 25, 26 xl. 26.
l 3 xv. 8.
m xvi. 1, &c. Is. lxvi 6 14—16. Jer li 11. Ez x. 2—7. Luke xii. 49
† Or. *upon*
n *See on* iv. 5. xi. 19. xvi 18 2Sam xxii 7–9. Ps. xviii. 13 Is xxx. 30 Heb xii 18, 19
o xi. 13 19 1 Kings xix. 11 Is. xxix. 6. Zech. xiv. 5. Matt xxiv. 7. xxvii. 52—54. Acts iv. 31. xv. 26 —— p *See on*, 2

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

The intervals of peace on earth are caused by a positive divine interposition, to restrain the furious passions of men, and the agency of Satan, which at all other times naturally tend to confusion, discord, mischief, and misery. When the Lord Jesus sees good to grant his church seasons of rest, and to raise up men, endued with authority, to countenance and concur in promoting the Gospel, he commonly seals many by his converting grace unto the day of redemption, though human depravity and the artifices of Satan often pervert such prosperous days into an occasion of negligence and hypocritical profession, and this makes way for his ministering angels, being commissioned to bring calamities upon the earth. Nothing, however, can finally hurt those, who are sealed by the Spirit; nor let it be deemed futile to observe, that this seal must be on the forehead, visible both to friends and foes, but not to the believer himself, except as he looks steadfastly in the glass of God's word. (*Notes*, &c. *Ez.* ix.) It is encouraging to those, who are decidedly on the Lord's part in this evil world, to hear of the increase of the true Israel of God, and they will pray him to add to their numbers a hundred fold more, how many soever they be; and, though they be not spared to witness this blessed change, they must exult to recollect what multitudes are gone before them to heaven, and what accessions are daily making to them from all the nations of the earth.

V. 9—17.

The few believers, who are scattered abroad in this world, seem a solitary and singular remnant, and as such are generally despised; yet have they innumerable friends and coadjutors, with whom they will shortly, and for ever, be united. The whole multitude, who now stand before the throne of God, (with all that ever shall be saved,) were once dead in sin, and exposed to wrath; but they were taught their guilt and danger, and led to trust in the Lamb of God; thus they began to fight the good fight of faith, against Satan, the world, and sin, amidst many fears, sorrows, and temptations; at length they obtained the garments of joy, and the palm of victory; and now they ascribe their salvation to God, and to the Lamb, whilst adoring angels delight to swell the chorus of their joyful thanksgivings. Could we ascend into heaven, and inquire who they were that are arrayed in white robes, and whence they came, amidst ten thousand differences in other matters, we should learn that every one of them had come out of sorrow, and out of sin, that they had all been in conflict and tribulation, and that they had all "washed their robes, and made them white in the blood "of the Lamb." Not one discordant voice will be heard in heaven for ever, nor could those, who expect salvation in any other way, join the praises of that blessed world, or even say Amen to them. As all the redeemed owe their felicity wholly to the sovereign mercy of the Father, through the atonement of the Son, and by the sealing and new creation of the Holy Spirit; so the work and worship of God their Saviour is their element, and his presence and favour complete their felicity, nor can they conceive of any other joy. Let us then inquire whether we have, in our judgment, experience, and affections, "the meetness "for this inheritance of the saints in light." All who are admitted to the marriage-supper of the Lamb, previously seek and obtain the wedding-garment; none will ever join this company before the throne, who have not on earth learned to lisp their song, and to anticipate their felicity. If this be our privilege, let us bless God for his mercy, and patiently endure our season and measure of tribulation, expecting shortly "to hunger no more, and "thirst no more;" to have no more sin, temptation, or sorrow; to be with our beloved Saviour, enjoying the fulness of his love, drinking ineffable delights from the living fountains of waters, to which he will lead us, and to have all tears for ever wiped from our eyes. "I have waited for "thy salvation, O LORD."

7 The first angel sounded, and there followed [q] hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were [r] cast upon the earth: and [s] the third part of trees were burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

q xvi 21. Ex ix. 23–25. 33. Josh x. 11 Ps. xi 5,6 xviii. 12, 13. lxxviii. 47, 48. cv. 32 Is. xxviii 2. xxix. 6. xxx. 30. xxxii. 19. Ez. xiii. 10–15. xxxviii. 22. Matt. vii 25–27.

r xvi 2.

s 9. 10. 12. vi 8 Is. ii. 12, 13. xi. 7. Jam. i. 11. 1 Pet i. 24

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1—6. The last of the seven seals contains under it far more than all the others, as it introduces, and seems indeed to include, that period which fell under the seven trumpets. When it was opened, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour, which either intimated that the peace of the church and the empire would be of a very short continuance, or it was expressive of the solemn expectation excited on this occasion. During this interval, the apostle saw "the seven "angels who stood before God," having been appointed to this service, and of whom we shall read more afterwards; and to each of them was given a trumpet, that they might in succession sound an alarm to the nations. (*Marg. Ref.*) At the same time another Angel appeared as a Priest standing before the altar of incense. The appearance of a Lamb, was emblematical of Christ "our "Passover, sacrificed for us," and this Angel represented him in his priestly character, offering up the prayers of all his saints before God, accompanied by his all-prevailing intercession. This being done, the Angel filled the censer with fire from the altar. There was no fire on the golden altar except that in the censer, which was taken from the altar of burnt-offering; the fire, here spoken of, must have come from thence. This the Angel cast on the earth, which occasioned voices, thunderings, and lightnings; this denoted, that the approaching calamities would be the effect of God's displeasure with men, for their opposition to the Gospel of his Son, and their injurious and cruel treatment of his people, and so in fact be inflicted as an answer to their prayers for deliverance, through the intercession of Christ. After this, the seven angels prepared to sound their trumpets. 'The great 'Angel of the covenant came and stood, as the High 'Priest of his church, before the altar of heaven, and 'many holy and effectual prayers were offered unto him, 'that he might by his merciful mediation present them to 'God the Father.' (*Bp. Hall.*) 'The placing of this 'circumstance immediately before the sounding of the 'trumpets suggests, that the subject of these prayers was 'the occasion of something to be called for by these trumpets, and what could this be, but that of the destruction 'of the Roman Empire? It is plainly suggested, that 'the petition for some delay would be accepted; yet all 'further applications on that head are discouraged by a 'most significant emblem, the censer being cast away.' (*Whitaker.*)

V. 7. The emblematical predictions following the four first trumpets principally related to the gradual and complete subversion of the Roman empire, in the western part of the world, though this was connected with multiplied calamities in the eastern provinces, which are also implied. Constantine the Great built Constantinople, and made it his residence and the metropolis of the empire, and, by a concurrence of circumstances, some time after his death, that vast fabric was divided into two parts, governed by two distinct successions of emperors. But though the western and eastern empires were thus separated, yet they were not wholly unconnected; so that the ruin of the western empire was attended by great convulsions in the eastern, and the subsequent subversion of the latter occasioned manifold evils in the countries which had constituted the former. As therefore the events, that related to the two divisions of the empire, were thus involved with one another, it was proper that the predictions of them should be so likewise; yet the residue of the chapter primarily predicts the subversion of the western, and the next chapter that of the eastern empire. The calm which followed Constantine's accession to the throne did not last long; even the latter part of his life was far from being undisturbed, and after his death many bloody wars were waged within the empire, by his sons, and other competitors for the imperial authority; whilst the church was disturbed by various descriptions of heretics, and unnatural persecutions were raised by men who called themselves Christians. These and other evils weakened both the church and the state, and, after a time, the Huns and Goths from the northern regions of Europe broke in upon the distracted empire, and made terrible ravages in many of its provinces. The latter events seem to have been intended by the storm, "of hail and fire mingled "with blood," by which a third part of the productions of the earth were destroyed, that is, multitudes were killed, both high and low, grown persons and infants, through the whole Roman empire, which might be deemed a third part of the earth, as discovered at that time. (*Ex.* ix. 22—35.) This period is supposed by some approved expositors to reach from A. D. 338 to 412; but others explain it principally of the incursions of the Goths under Alaric, who entered the empire, A. D. 395, and after spreading desolation by fire and sword through the provinces, A. D. 410, he took and plundered Rome, with circumstances of barbarity very correspondent to these emblems, as contemporary writers have testified; especially in that he slew, without distinction, princes, nobles, priests, and people, and showed no mercy even to the tender infants, thus destroying "the trees and the green "grass together." 'The first four trumpets describe the 'removal of that power, which, in the days of Paul, 'prevented the developement of "the man of sin;" 'namely, the western imperial dignity of Rome. On the 'decease of Theodosius, that great prince, A. D. 395, 'the northern cloud, which had been so long gathering, 'discharged itself. He died in the month of January; 'and before the end of the same year the Gothic nation 'was in arms. The barriers of the Danube were thrown 'open, the savage warriors of Scythia issued from their 'forests, and the uncommon severity of the winter, (the 'season in which *natural hail and snow* are generated,) 'allowed the poet to remark, that they rolled their ponderous waggons over the broad and icy back of the indignant river. The fertile fields of Phocis and Beotia were 'covered with a deluge of barbarians, who massacred the 'males of an age to bear arms, and drove away the bear-

8 And the second angel sounded, [t] and as it were a great mountain [u] burning with fire was cast into the sea; [x] and the third part of the sea became blood:

9 And [y] the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of [z] the ships were destroyed.

10 And the third angel sounded, and there fell [a] a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon [b] the fountains of waters;

11 And the name of the star is called [c] Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and [d] many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

12 And the fourth angel sounded, [e] and

t Jer li. 25. Mark xi. 23.
u Am vii. 4.
x 7. xvi. 3 Ex. vii. 17—20.
y 10. 12. Ex. vii. 27. Zech. xiii. 8
z Ps. xlviii 7. Is. ii. 16. xxii. 1.
a i. 20. vi. 13. ix. 1. xii. 4. Is. xiv. 12. Luke x. 18. Jude 13.
b xvi. 4. Ex vii. 20, 21. Judg. v. 11 2 Kings ii. 19—22 2 Chr. xxxii 3 Is. xii. 3. Hos. iii. 15, 16
c Deut. xxix. 18. Ruth i. 20. Prov. v. 4. Jer. ix 15. xxiii 15. Lam. iii 5. 19 Am v. 7. vi 12 Heb. xii. 15.
d Ex. xv. 23.
e xvi 8. 9. Is xiii. 10. xxiv 23. Jer iv. 23. Ez. xxxii. 7, 8. Joel ii 31. Am. viii 9. Matt. xxiv. 29. xxvii. 45. Mark xiii. 24. xv. 33. Luke xxi. 25. xxiii 44, 45. Acts ii. 20.

'tiful females, with the spoil and cattle of the flaming 'villages.'—'I have adopted the language of the historian. Unconscious that he was bearing his testimony 'to the truth of prophecy, he has used the same allegorical language as that employed by St. John. The correspondence of nations,' says he, 'was in that age so 'imperfect and precarious, that the revolutions of the 'north might escape the knowledge of the court of Ravenna, till the dark cloud, which was collected along 'the coasts of the Baltic, burst in thunder upon the 'banks of the upper Danube.' (*Faber, and Gibbon in Faber.*)—The nature of this publication must exclude most of the quotations which might be made from Gibbon, the *elegant* and *infidel* historian of these times; but he has certainly, without intending it, shown the exact completion of these prophecies in many instances. Different opinions also prevail, as to the duration of the events, predicted by the sounding of the first trumpet, but it cannot be expected that these topics, which, after all, very slightly affect the main subject, should be here particularly noticed. Some think that all the calamities brought on the empire by the northern invaders, and especially those of Attila, mentioned in the ensuing note, were intended by the general language of this verse, though other eminent expositors place a part of them under the second trumpet.

V. 8, 9. A great burning mountain is an emblem of a mighty destructive warrior, and has been so used by the most celebrated poets. The Roman empire, with its multitude of people and nations, might be aptly compared to the sea. (xvii. 15.) This great burning mountain, therefore, being cast into the sea, with the effects produced by it, represented most emphatically the irruption of the barbarous nations, under ferocious leaders, into the Roman empire, and their shedding the blood of immense multitudes, and destroying the cities, or desolating the country with fire and sword. After Alaric, with his Goths, had finished his depredation, Attila, at the head of a vast army of Huns, ravaged the empire during the space of fourteen years, massacreing, plundering, and destroying all before him, in the most barbarous manner that can be conceived. He even called himself "the scourge of God, and the "terror of mankind," and perhaps no man ever better merited that title. He was indeed a burning mountain cast into the sea, and turning it into blood; for he drenched the countries with the blood of the inhabitants, and destroyed every thing that came in his way, nor did any part of the empire wholly escape his fury. These events seem to have been principally intended, but we may include under this trumpet the various calamities, which befel the empire from A. D. 412 to 450. If these devastations under Attila from the north belong to the first trumpet, those under Genserick, king of the Vandals, from Africa to the south, must be here intended. (*Note*, 10, 11.)—But, whether Attila or Genserick were meant, it is manifest, that the third part of the sea turned into blood is the emblem of the Roman empire, supposed to contain a third part of the world, and the burning mountain must consequently mean the *conqueror* who produced these effects, and not the *conquered*; else there are two emblems in the same verse of the *latter*, and none of the *former*.

V. 10, 11. The great star falling from heaven is explained by some expositors of the Arian and Pelagian heresies, and the contests and persecutions connected with them. No doubt such events might very aptly be represented by the falling of a star, and its embittering and poisoning the waters, to the destruction of those who drank of them; and the church was doubtless miserably corrupted, and deformed by heresy, during that period. Yet the series of the prophecy favours the interpretation of those, who explain it of the continuation of those calamities which subverted the empire. An eminent prince suddenly appearing in the heart of the empire, and conspicuous even in the mischiefs which he occasioned, might be aptly represented by a star, or luminous meteor, shooting from heaven, and burning as a lamp. The name *Wormwood*, and the effect of its falling upon the waters, denoted the further desolations of the empire, and the ruin of the remaining comforts which were left to the relics of the miserable inhabitants, who were so harassed and afflicted, that they could not seek for the necessary support of life, without exposing themselves to the fury of the invaders. Thus the embittering and poisoning of the rivers and fountains completed the former judgment of turning the sea into blood. Accordingly, very soon after Attila's retreat, Genserick unexpectedly invaded the empire with three hundred thousand Vandals and Moors from Africa, besieged and took Rome, and abandoned that city to the cruelty and avarice of his troops; and by this success he so weakened the empire, that it was soon after subverted; and as this assault was made at the very source of its power and prosperity, it might on this account also be represented as poisoning the rivers and fountains of waters. He was also a bigoted Arian, and a cruel persecutor of the orthodox Christians, and in this sense too he poisoned the fountains. These events occurred between A. D. 450 and 456.

the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, [f] and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.

13 And I beheld, and heard an angel [g] flying through the midst of heaven, saying, with a loud voice, [h] Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabiters of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!

f Ex. x. 21—23 2 Cor. iv. 4 2 Thes. ii. 9—12.

g xiv. 6 xix. 17 Ps. ciii. 20 Heb. i. 14.

h ix. 1. 12. xi. 14 Ez ii. 10.

CHAP. IX.

The fifth trumpet sounds, and the bottomless pit is opened, 1, 2. *The success of the Saracens, and the propagation of the imposture of Mahomet are emblematically predicted,* 3—12. *The sixth trumpet*

V. 12. Under the fourth trumpet, the sun, moon, and stars, or the great luminaries of the Roman empire, were eclipsed and darkened; for the third part, though spoken of the luminaries, or the time of their shining, seems still to refer to the extent of the empire, as containing one third of the then known world. Whilst the splendour of the eastern empire was greatly tarnished, and it shone but with a feeble and almost expiring light, that of the western was gradually extinguished. 'Genserick left it 'in a weak and desperate condition; it struggled hard, 'and, as it were, gasped for breath during eight short and 'turbulent reigns, for the space of twenty years, till at 'length it expired, A. D. 476, under Momyllus, who 'was in derision called Augustulus, or the diminutive 'Augustus.' (*Bp. Newton.*) Still, however, though the Roman sun was extinguished, its subordinate luminaries faintly shone whilst the senate and consuls continued. But after some other changes, A. D. 566, the whole form of the ancient government was subverted, and Rome itself was reduced, from being the empress of the world, to be a poor dukedom, tributary to the Exarch of Ravenna.—The events of above two hundred years are here predicted in six verses, events peculiarly important in themselves, and in their consequences, yet recorded by historians in the most disorderly and intricate manner. However, therefore, it may suit the design of those, who confine their labour to this one part of scripture, to enter into particulars, or to argue in behalf of this, or against that, interpretation, it cannot fall in with the design of a practical exposition of the whole word of God. The author observes, with satisfaction, that the interpreters agree in the grand outline; and even the testimony of infidels, when writing the history of these times, demonstrates the exact accomplishment of the prophecy.—'I have now accom-'plished the laborious narrative of the decline and fall of 'the Roman empire, from the fortunate age of Trajan 'and the Antonines, to its utter extinction in the west, 'about five centuries after the Christian era. At that 'unhappy period, the Saxons fiercely struggled with the 'natives for the possession of Britain; Gaul and Spain 'were divided between the powerful monarchies of the 'Franks and the Visigoths, and the dependent kingdoms 'of the Suevi and Burgundians; Africa was exposed to 'the cruel persecution of the Vandals, and to the savage 'insults of the Moors; Rome and Italy, as far as the 'banks of the Danube, were afflicted by an army of 'barbarian mercenaries, whose lawless tyranny was suc-'ceeded by the reign of Theodorick the Ostrogoth. All 'the subjects of the empire, who, by the use of the Latin 'language more particularly deserved the name and pri-'vileges of Romans, were oppressed by the disgrace and 'calamities of foreign conquest, and the victorious nations 'of Germany established a new system of manners and 'government in the western countries of Europe.' (*Gibbon.*)—Can there now be the shadow of a doubt concerning the exact accomplishment of these compendious prophecies, some hundreds of years after they were written? And who can then hesitate to say, that St. John wrote by the inspiration of that God, who sees the end from the beginning?

V. 13. This angel flying through the midst of heaven, to denounce a threefold wo on the inhabitants of the earth, under the three remaining trumpets, was an emblem intended to excite the greater attention, and to intimate that evils still greater, more extensive, and durable, would come on mankind in the subsequent ages, the events of which were about to be predicted.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The intervals of peace which the church hath hitherto enjoyed, have commonly been of short continuance, Amidst the confusion occasioned by the vices of mankind, we should rejoice that "the LORD reigneth," and that the prayers of all true believers, being presented through the meritorious intercession of our great High Priest, will surely be accepted and answered. All created angels are ministering spirits, for the benefit of the heirs of salvation, even when they are employed to visit nations with terrible calamities; nay, the fire from the altar, being cast on the earth, (the vengeance inflicted for men's contempt of the sacrifice and salvation of Christ, and the injuries done to his people,) causes the most terrible desolations that are made on earth. Whilst the present wrath of God and of the Lamb, through those executioners of vengeance who mean not so, fills countries with misery, destroys the wretched inhabitants, and embitters and poisons all the comforts of life, till the greatest prosperity be totally darkened and extinguished; the messengers of the Lord are ordered to proclaim aloud in all the world, that still more dreadful woes are in reserve for the impenitent workers of iniquity, for what are all temporal evils, compared with the destruction of body and soul in hell? Let sinners then take warning to flee from the *wrath to come;* let believers learn to value, and be thankful for, their privileges, and let them "patiently continue in well-"doing," and so "look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus "Christ unto eternal life."

sounds; and predictions of the successes of the Turks, and the impenitence of those who escaped their ravages, are delivered, 13—21.

AND [a] the fifth angel sounded, and I saw [b] a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and [c] to him was given the key of the [d] bottomless pit.

2 And he opened the bottomless pit; and [e] there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; [f] and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

3 And there came out of the smoke [g] locusts upon the earth, and unto them was given power, [h] as the scorpions of the earth have power.

4 And it was commanded them [i] that they should not [k] hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men [l] which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

5 And to them [m] it was given that [n] they should not kill them, but that [o] they should be tormented five months: [p] and their torment *was* as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.

a 12, 13 viii. 6. 7, 8. 10 12. xi. 14, 15
b i. 20 viii. 10. Is. xiv. 12 Luke x 18 2 Thes. ii. 3—8 2 Tim. iii. 1–5.
c i. 18 xx 1
d 2 11. xvii. 8 xx 10. Luke viii. 31. Rom. x. 7. *Gr.*
e 17. xiv. 11. Gen. xv. 17. xix. 28 Is xiv 31. Joel ii. 30. Acts ii. 19.
f *See on,* viii. 12. Ex. x 21—23. Joel ii. 2 10.
g Ex. x. 4–15. Judg. vii. 12 Is xxxiii. 4 Joel i. 4 ii 25. Nah. iii. 15. 17.
h 5 10, 11. Deut. viii. 15 1 Kings xii 11 Ez. ii. 6. Luke x. 19.
i vi 6 vii 3 Job i. 10. 12, Ps. lxxvi. 10. Matt. xxiv 24 2 Tim. iii 8 9.
k viii 7.
l *See on,* vii. 3, 4. xiv. 1. Ex. xii. 23. Ez. ix. 4 6. Eph iv. 30.
m xiii. 5 7. Dan v. 18–22 vii 6. John xix. 11
n xi. 7. Job ii. 6.
o 10.
p *See on,* 3.

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1, 2. There can scarcely remain a reasonable doubt in the mind of an attentive inquirer, who has competent information on the subject, but that these verses predict the rise and progress of Mahommed and his successors, as ruling over the Arabians or Saracens. Early in the seventh century, (about A. D. 606, or 608,) Mahommed began to pretend to a very extraordinary intercourse with God, declaring that he had been in heaven, and there had learned a religion which he was to propagate in the world, being an improvement of Christianity as at first delivered, and a reformation of it from subsequent corruptions. These pretences were here described by "a "star falling from the heaven to the earth," especially as he shone with a very conspicuous, though pestiferous light. A key given to him to "open the bottomless pit," or the abyss of hell, was a very suitable emblem of the power and influence which God was pleased to permit him to acquire, for the propagation of his satanical delusions, as if hell itself had been opened by him, and its destructive exhalations allowed to obscure the sun and infect the air. For this most artful, politic, and prosperous impostor gradually acquired such ascendency among the Arabians, or Saracens, to whom he belonged, that they not only received his religious system, but enlisted under his banner as their captain and ruler, and he led them forth to conquest, that they might by this method compel the nations to receive his doctrine. In this enterprise he and his successors were so prosperous, that the light of Christianity was obscured, and many nations, where once it had shone in the clearest manner, were almost totally darkened, and infected with this smoke from the abyss. Mahommed had never been *a star,* as that emblem marks out the ministers of Christianity, and he emerged from obscurity, acquired eminence and celebrity, and never declined from it. It has therefore been reasonably questioned, whether he could properly be denoted under the emblem of "a *falling star,*" or rather, according to the original, "a star which *had fallen,* from heaven unto the "earth." An apostate Nestorian monk, called Sergius, or Baheira, has therefore been considered as this star, because he assisted Mahommed in forging his imposture, and was in many ways subservient to his designs. Thus he is supposed to have opened the abyss, and let forth the locusts and their king. (2. 11.) But it may be doubted, whether so important a part, according to the general style and manner of prophecy, would be assigned to so comparatively obscure an individual, whose name few, except those who have particularly studied Mahommed's history, have so much as heard of. If the falling star then means some agent distinct from Mahommed, who was his forerunner, (as I conceive it does,) I should fix upon the western corrupter of Christianity, whose mystery of wickedness had been long working, but burst forth almost at the same time with the imposture of Mahommed. The worship of images, saints, and angels, prayers for the dead, and many other of the corruptions of popery, had, at this time, made very great progress in Christendom. These corruptions, of which the bishop and church of Rome were the source, centre, or principal support, evidently prepared the way for Mahommed, in connexion with the wickedness of the professors and ministers of Christianity, and furnished him with his most plausible pretexts, and so the "fallen star," the western Antichrist, (if that name may, for brevity's sake, be used,) opened the door for Mahommed and his imposture, that is, for the eastern Antichrist. It appears clearly that not an individual, no not Mahommed, as considered apart from the Caliphs his successors, is meant either by the fallen star, or the angel of the abyss, but a succession of men, or associated bodies of men, carrying on from generation to generation the same design. And, as the corrupters of Christianity made way for the imposture of Mahommed, and the apostacy which it occasioned, who can more properly be designated by "the star fallen from heaven to earth," and "opening the abyss," than they? (*See Faber, Vol.* ii. 29—33.)

V. 3—5. Out of this smoke above-mentioned, came locusts; that is, vast armies of Saracens were raised, by means of Mahommed's imposture, to spread desolations through the nations. They resembled locusts in their numbers, and they came from the same regions whence the largest swarms of these destructive insects have in all ages arisen. Locusts are said to be bred in pits and caverns, and these proceeded from the smoke that came out of the bottomless pit. Yet at the same time they also resembled scorpions, whose sting gives extreme pain, and often proves mortal; and, whilst locusts destroy the fruits

6 And in those days [q] shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

7 And [r] the shapes of the locusts *were* like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads *were* as it were crowns like gold, and [s] their faces *were* as the faces of men.

8 And they had [t] hair as the hair of women, [u] and their teeth were as *the teeth* of lions.

9 And [x] they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; [y] and the sound of their wings *was* as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.

10 And they had [z] tails like unto scorpions; and there were stings in their tails: and their power *was* to hurt men five months.

11 And [a] they had a king over them, *which is* the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue *is* * Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath *his* name † Apollyon.

[q] vi. 16 2 Sam. i 9 Job iii 20—22. vii 15 16. Jer. viii. 3 Hos. x 8 Jon. iv. 8, 9 Luke xviii. 30.

[r] Joel ii. 4, 5. Nah. iii. 17.

[s] Dan. vii. 4. 8.

[t] 2 Kings ix. 30 Is iii 24. 1 Cor. xi. 14, 15 1 Tim. ii 9. 1 Pet. iii. 3

[u] Ps. lvii. 4 Joel i. 6.

[x] 17 Job xl 18 xli 23-30. Joel ii. 8.

[y] Job xxxix 25 Is. ix. 5. Joel ii 5—7. Nah. ii. 4 5.

[z] *See on*, 3. 5.

[a] xii 9. John xii. 31. xiv. 30 xvi. 11. 2 Cor iv. 4. Eph ii. 2. 1 John iv. 4. v. 19.

* † That is, *a destroyer.* John viii. 44.

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of the earth, yet do not hurt the bodies of men; these mystical locusts were commanded not to hurt the grass, or other vegetable productions, but only those men, who had not the seal of God upon their foreheads: and it is remarkable, that the Saracen armies were expressly laid under a similar injunction. 'When Yezed was marching with 'his army to invade Syria, Abubeker charged him with 'this, among other orders, Destroy no palm-trees, nor 'burn any fields of corn; cut down no fruit-trees, nor 'do any mischief to cattle, only such as you kill to eat.' (*Bp. Newton.*) Corrupt and hypocritical professors of Christianity were meant by "those men who had not the "seal of God in their foreheads;" which fully proves, that something distinct from outward baptism, and exclusively belonging to true Christians, is denoted by that emblem. (*Note*, vii. 1—3.) Now it is well known, that the Saracens extended their conquests principally in those countries where the worship of angels, and other corruptions of Christianity prevailed; whilst the places where religion was preserved more pure, were sheltered from their fury: and no doubt God permitted the scourge to come on the nations where his Gospel was perverted, for their correction or punishment. It was also predicted, that they would be restrained from killing those whom they were commissioned to torment; yet, no doubt, immense multitudes were slain by such cruel victors: this, therefore, evidently means that they would be empowered *durably* to ravage, harass, and disturb the nations, and the church; but not utterly to destroy them. 'They might kill them 'as individuals; but still they should not kill them as a 'political body, as a state, or empire.' (*Bp. Newton.*) Accordingly, they miserably desolated and oppressed both the Greek and Latin churches, but they could not totally extirpate them; they repeatedly besieged Constantinople, but were always repulsed; they even plundered Rome, but they could not make themselves masters of it; they took from the eastern empire many of its richest provinces, but they could not utterly subvert it. Moreover, it was predicted that they should distress and torment mankind during five months; according to the term of life which naturalists assign to locusts. (10.) These months of thirty days, each day denoting a year, amount to one hundred and fifty years: and Mohammed first opened the abyss, and began publicly to propagate his imposture, A. D. 612; and A. D. 762, (just one hundred and fifty years afterwards,) the city of Bagdad was builded, the Saracens ceased from their ravages and became a settled people, they made no more rapid conquests, and obtained no further accession to their power, which thenceforth began to decline. They then ceased to be *locusts;* though this wo trumpet continued much longer, as will presently be seen. These invaders speedily conquered Palestine, Syria, Armenia, almost all Asia-Minor, Persia, India, Egypt, Numidia, Barbary, Spain, Portugal, part of Italy, and the principal Islands in the Mediterranean Sea.

V. 6. It was also foretold, that these tremendous conquerors would cause such extreme calamities and miseries to the inhabitants of the countries which they ravaged, by giving the utmost license to the cruelty, rapacity, and lust of the soldiers, that death must appear to numbers more desirable than life; and they would have been more merciful, if they had dispatched the wretched victims of their unbridled passions, than by constraining them to drag on an unwilling life, and so prolonging those miseries which they ardently wished for death to terminate.

V. 7—10. The shape of these figurative locusts was next described; they resembled horses, as locusts do, especially in their heads: now the Arabians were remarkable for their skill in horsemanship, and their chief force lay in cavalry. (*Note*, *Joel* ii. 4—6.) The "crowns on their "heads like gold," may denote the turbans which the Arabians have always worn, or it may refer to the many kingdoms which they subjected to their dominion. They had beards on their faces, like men, but they wore their hair like women, plaited, or flowing down their backs, and the Arabians are known to have done this. The teeth, as of lions, which are ascribed to them, represented their strength and fury to destroy; whilst their breast-plates of iron showed their care to protect themselves by defensive armour, that is, by the most effectual public measures. The sound of their wings prefigured the fury with which they assaulted their enemies, and the rapidity of their conquests. But though they devoured and caused desolations, like locusts, yet the principal mischief which they did was effected by their tails, in which they had stings like those of scorpions; for wherever they extended their conquests, they left behind them the poison of their abominable religion, so that the consequences of their victories were more mischievous than the slaughter made by them.

V. 11. The king over these locusts, who was the angel of the abyss, or a messenger from the abyss, may

12 One [b] woe is past; *and*, behold, there come [c] two woes more hereafter.

13 ¶ And [d] the sixth angel sounded, and I heard [e] a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

14 Saying [f] to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, [g] Loose the four angels which are bound in [h] the great river Euphrates.

15 And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared * for [i] an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, [k] for to slay the third part of men.

b See on, 1, 2.
c 13—21. viii. 13. xi. 14.
d See on, 1.
e See on, viii. 3—5. Heb. ix. 24. x. 21.
f viii. 2. 6.
g 15. xvi. 12.
h Gen ii 14. 2 Sam. viii. 3. Jer. li. 63.
* Or, *at.*
i 5 10
k 18 viii. 7. 9. 11, 12.

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signify their Caliphs in succession, who were the chief priests of their religion, the commanders of their armies, and their emperors. The name of this king, even "the "destroyer," (for so the word means in both languages,) was peculiarly suitable to a succession of rulers, who murdered both the bodies and souls of men by the same malignant expeditions, as they seemed to be Satan, the first murderer's, vicegerents and visible representatives upon earth. Every circumstance of this emblematical prediction so exactly accords to the Saracens, and so little suits the church or hierarchy of Rome, or any of their religious orders, (who gained their advantage by priestcraft, not by arms,) that there can be no propriety in attempting to explain it of them, especially as they are described with sufficient precision in what follows. Prophecies have a determinate meaning, and by giving loose to a lively imagination, to find distant resemblances, we are more likely to perplex, than to satisfy the inquirer.

V. 12. After the apostle had seen these things, he was informed, that one wo was past, and two others were coming. 'This is added, not only to distinguish the woes, 'and to mark more strongly each period, but also to 'suggest, that some time will elapse, between this first 'wo of the Arabian locusts, and the next of the Euphratean 'horsemen.' (*Bp. Newton.*)

V. 13—15. The voice of the angel from the horns of the altar, on which incense used to be burned, strongly indicated, that the judgments about to be predicted, were appointed to punish men for corrupting the Gospel, and so turning it into the savour of death and condemnation.—After the sixth angel had sounded his trumpet, he was ordered to loose the four angels, who had been bound near the Euphrates, which was done accordingly. This is explained, by the most approved interpreters, to be a prediction of the conquests of the Turks, or Othmans; and the only material objection to this is drawn from the distance of time that intervened, between the events before predicted and the ravages of the Turks. But this is readily answered, by observing that the three wo trumpets must take in all the space between the subversion of the western empire and the destruction of the beast, which is yet to be expected. (xi. 14, 15.) The Saracens also possessed, though they did not extend, their dominions, till the Turks supplanted them. Indeed we cannot find any other events satisfactorily correspondent to the discoveries made after this trumpet, or any other, which will not leave a far greater distance between the second and third wo trumpets, than this interpretation leaves between the first and second. The Turks, pouring into Persia, and the regions bordering on the Euphrates, in the eleventh century, established four sultanies or kingdoms in those parts; but they were prevented from making further conquests, especially by the Croisades, or religious wars, waged in that and the two following centuries by the western Christians, who wanted to wrest Palestine out of the hands of the infidels. But when these ruinous projects were finally abandoned, the four angels which were bound in the Euphrates, who were emblems of these four sultanies, were loosed. Then the Turks uniting began their ravages and victories, and made great havoc among the inhabitants of that part of the world which had constituted the Roman empire, and which we have often read of, as "the third part of men." The western empire had been broken to pieces under the four first trumpets, the eastern had been nearly ruined under the fifth, and under the sixth it was finally subverted. The Turks conquered all the countries that had belonged to it; A. D. 1453 they took Constantinople, and thus brought to a final end the whole Imperial power which originally belonged to Rome. These powers were prepared for a certain fixed time, which being computed by a day for each year, according to the prophetic manner, and twelve months of thirty days each being allowed to the year here mentioned, that is, 360 days, or years, thirty more being added for the month, and one for the day, the whole amounts to 391 years and fifteen days. Now the first conquest of the Turks over the Christians took place, A. D. 1281; and the last success, by which they extended their dominions, was A. D. 1672, being exactly 391 years from the one to the other. So that one of their historians, (Prince Cantemir,) here divides the narrative, calling the former part "The growth of the Othman empire," the latter, "The decay of the Othman empire." Since that period, they have had little success in any of their wars, and their power is so much weakened and cramped at present by the rival power of Russia, that it is not at all probable they will ever recover their ascendency or renew their conquests. Had we records of these events sufficiently exact, we should no doubt find, that the half-hour, or fifteen days, was fixed with the same punctuality by the Spirit of prophecy. Though the term of their "slaying the third part "of men," or that during which they would extend their ravages and conquests, was predicted, yet that of the duration of their empire was not, but it will end after the sounding of the third wo trumpet. (xi. 14.) 'Dr. 'Lloyd, bishop of Worcester, who has now for above 'twenty years been studying the Revelations, with an 'amazing diligence and exactness, had, long before this 'year, said, The peace between the Turks and the papal 'Christians was certainly to be made in the year 1698, 'which he made out thus; the four angels, mentioned in 'Revelations, that were bound in the river Euphrates, 'which he expounds to be the captains of the Turkish 'forces, that till then were subject to the sultan at Ba-

16 And [l] the number of the army of the [m] horsemen *were* two hundred thousand thousand: and [n] I heard the number of them.

17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, [o] having breast-plates of fire, and of [p] jacinth, and [q] brimstone: and the heads of the horses *were* [r] as the heads of lions: and out of their mouths issued fire, and smoke, and brimstone.

18 By these three was [s] the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

l Ps. lxviii. 17. Dan vii 10.
m Ez xviii 6. xxxviii 4. Dan xi 40
n vii. 4.
o
p xxi. 20
q 18. xiv. 10 xix. 20 xxi. 8. Gen. xix 24. Ps xi 6. Is. xxx. 33 Ez. xxxviii. 22.
r 1 Chr. xii. 8 Is. v. 28 29.
s *See on*, 15. 17.

19 For their power is in their mouth, and [t] in their tails: for their tails *were* like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

20 And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues, [u] yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not [x] worship devils, [y] and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood; which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:

21 Neither repented they of [z] their murders, nor of [a] their sorceries, [b] nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

t 10. Is. ix. 15. Eph. iv 14.
u 21. ii. 21, 22. xvi. 9. Deut. xxxi. 29. 2 Chr. xxviii. 22. Jer. v. 3. viii. 4–6. Matt xxi. 32. 2 Cor xii. 21.
x Lev. xvii. 7. Deut. xxxii. 17. 2 Kings xxii. 17. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 25. Is. ii. 8. Jer. xxv. 6. xliv 8. Acts vii. 41. xix. 26. 1 Cor. x. 20, 21. 1 Tim. iv. 1.
y Ps cxxv. 4–8. cxxxv. 15–18. Is. xli. 7. xlii. 17, 18. xliv. 9–20. xlvi 5–7. Jer. x. 3–5 8, 9 14, 15. xvi 19. 20. li 17 18. Dan. v. 23 Hab. ii 18–20 Acts xvii. 29 Rom i. 21–23.
z xi. 7–9. xiii 7. 15. xvi. 6 xvii 6. xviii. 21 Dan vii. 21–25. xi. 33.
a xiii. 13 xviii 23. xxi 3. xxii. 15. Is. xlvii. 9. 12. lvii. 3. Mal. iii. 5.
b xiv 8. xvii 2. 5. xviii 3. xix. 2. Matt. xv 19. 2 Cor. xii. 21

‘bylon, were to be loosed, and freed from that yoke, and set up for themselves. And these were prepared to slay the third part of men, for an hour, a day, a month, and a year. He reckons the year in St. John as the Julian year of three hundred and sixty-five days, a month is thirty of these days, and a day makes one, which added to the former number makes three hundred and ninety six. Now he proves from historians, that Ottoman came, and began his conquests at Prouse, in the year 1302, to which the former number, in which they were to slay the third part of men, being added, it must end in the year 1698. And though the historians do not mark the hour, or the twelfth part of a day, or year, yet he is confident, if that ever is known, that the prophecy will be found even in that to be punctually accomplished. After this, he thinks, their time of hurting the papal Christians is at an end. They may indeed still do mischief to the Muscovites, or persecute their own Christian subjects, but they can do no more hurt to the papalins.” (*Bp. Burnet's History of his own time.*) In several subordinate particulars this statement differs from that above given, which seems to be the most exact, both as to the beginning of the Othman's successes, and the close of them, and also of the method by which the time should be computed. Yet the grand outline of interpretation is the same; and considering the date of bishop Lloyd's conclusions, which preceded the final successes of the Othmans, but which have, for substance, been verified for much above a hundred years, they may justly be considered as extraordinary, and an important proof of the true meaning of the prophecy, and of its exact accomplishment.

V. 16—19. The number of the army of horsemen was declared to be 200,000,000; that is, an immense multitude, a large definite number being put for an indefinite. Accordingly the Turks brought vast armies into the field, often to the amount of four, five, six, or seven hundred thousand men, chiefly cavalry; and when the whole multitude is considered, who were employed in this manner during the conquests of 391 years, we shall see the propriety of the apostle's strong prophetical language. He also saw both the horses and their riders, in his vision, as having breast-plates of fire, hyacinth, and brimstone, which may be considered as representing the scarlet, blue, and yellow colours, for which they have always been remarkable; the horses' heads like those of lions, denoted their strength, courage, and fierceness; and “the fire, “smoke, and brimstone, which issued out of their “mouths, and killed the third part of men,” is an evident and most astonishing prediction of the invention of gunpowder and artillery, which were first invented at this period, and which the Turks used, with great success, in their wars, especially in the siege of Constantinople, when immensely large guns were employed, so that one of them is said to have carried a stone of three hundred pounds weight. By these the walls of that city were at length battered down, which made way for the final destruction of that empire. These tremendous conquerors, before whom desolation marched, and from whose mouths fire, and smoke, and brimstone, issued, not only slew men in battle, when they faced them, but they had tails like serpents, with heads upon them, with which they hurt men, as by an envenomed bite; that is, the Turks left behind them, wherever they went, the same poisonous and ruinous religion, which the Saracens had done before them, and this proved more durably mischievous than their most bloody conquests; so that the remains of the Greek church and of Christianity, in those countries, was almost wholly extirpated, and Mahometism became universally prevalent in that part of the world, in which the Gospel was for a long time most signally successful.

V. 20, 21. The rest of men, who were not destroyed, or compelled to become Mahometans by the above-mentioned calamities, did not repent of their evil works. The Latin, or Roman, church, which escaped this destruction, still persisted in the idolatrous worship of demons, or angels and departed saints, by which devils are virtually worshipped, in their stupid adoration of senseless images, for which they have no better plea to use than the pagans had; in their murders, massacres, bloody wars with heretics, so called, inquisitions, and persecutions, in their sorceries, or pretended revelations and miracles; and in “their “fornication,” forbidding marriage, yet conniving at concubinage in the clergy, binding numbers by vows to a single life, and yet licensing brothels by public authority of the pope, in Rome itself; and in “their thefts,” or

CHAP. X.

The apostle in vision beholds a mighty Angel, with a little book open in his hand; and hears the voice of seven thunders, which he was ordered to seal up, 1—4. *The Angel swears by the eternal Creator, that at a distant time, after the sounding of the seventh trumpet, the mystery of God should be finished,* 5—7. *The apostle receives and eats the little book,* 8—11.

AND I saw [a] another mighty Angel come down from heaven, [b] clothed with a cloud: [c] and a rainbow *was* upon his head, [d] and his face *was* as it were the sun, and his feet as [e] pillars of fire:

2 And he had in his hand [f] a little book open: and [g] he set his right foot upon the sea, and *his* left *foot* on the earth,

a 5, 6. v. 2 vii. 1, 2. viii 2—5 13. ix. 13, 14. xiv. 14 15.
b i. 7. Ex. xvi 20. Lev. xvi 2. Ps. xcvii. 2. civ. 3. Is. xix 1 Lam. iii. 44. Dan vii. 13 Luke xxi. 27.
c iv. 3 Gen ix. 11—17. Is. liv 9 Ez. i 28.
d i. 16. Dan x 6 Matt. xvii 2 Acts xxvi. 13
e i. 15 Cant v 15.
f 10. v. 1—5. vi 1. 3. Ez. ii. 9, 10.——g 5. 8. Ps. ii 8. lxv. 5. Prov. viii. 15, 16. Is. lix 19. Matt. xxviii. 18. Eph. i. 20—22. Phil. ii. 10, 11.

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those exactions and impositions, by which they fraudulently, oppressively, and iniquitously, drew immense treasures from the nations. So that the eastern church, in which many corruptions first prevailed, was punished by the first wo of the Saracens; and as this did not bring them to repentance, the second wo of the Turks completed its ruin. But the western church, not repenting of her abominations, will at length be overwhelmed with the third wo. For the reformation from popery, and all that hath hitherto taken place in these western regions, hath but amounted to the two witnesses, (xi. 3,) protesting against the prevailing abominations; and the prevalence of infidelity, skepticism, and heresy, in proportion to the gradual decline of popery and superstition, gives no just room to suppose, that matters are very much improved in the western church. In this skeptical, profane, licentious, and superficial age, indeed, Satan hath evidently changed his ground, but the Scriptural Christian will readily perceive, that he hath hitherto in a great measure maintained it.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

The Lord frequently sees good to punish the abuse of spiritual advantages by spiritual judgments, leaving "the "sun and the air to be darkened with the smoke of the "infernal pit," and the word of the Gospel to be withdrawn or corrupted by the artifices of Satan, because men would not walk in the light whilst they enjoyed it. A fallen star, some apostate endued with abilities and possessed of influence, often proves Satan's instrument in blinding and deceiving mankind. This judgment, however, would *for the present* be little regarded, if other visitations were not connected with it; but, sooner or later, devouring locusts and tormenting scorpions will come out of this baleful smoke, and the prevalence of false religion against the truth of Christ will make way for such calamities on guilty nations, as may render life itself a burden, and death the apparent and desired relief. And in the future world, all the wicked will be tormented, but not killed; they will desire in vain to sink into non-existence; in this sense death shall flee from them, and they shall never overtake it. As we ought to fear him, who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell, more than them that can only kill the body, so those destroyers are most to be dreaded, who act as "angels of the bottomless pit," and vicegerents of Satan, by diffusing pernicious heresies and impostures, contrary to the pure doctrine of Christ; for that grand deceiver, when "transformed into an Angel of "light," and his ministers, when they pretend to be teachers of righteousness, do far more mischief to mankind, than the most barbarous and successful warriors could ever accomplish: but he who murders at once both the souls and bodies of men, most completely merits the title of ***Abaddon, Apollyon***, the ***Destroyer***.

V. 12—22.

We may rejoice that the Lord hath a hook in the nose, and a bridle in the mouth of every boasting enemy, by whatever method he threatens to subvert his cause. He gives deceivers or destroyers power, till his own purposes of judgment or correction are accomplished; and then he cuts them off, or lays them aside, at his pleasure. Thus one wo comes after another on hypocrites and corrupt churches, but they "who have the seal of God in their "foreheads" cannot be hurt; for the Lord binds and looses, limits or enlarges, increases or diminishes nations and their rulers, according to the counsel of his own will. The attentive reader of scripture and of history may, therefore, find his faith and hope increased by those events, which in other respects fill his heart with horror and anguish, and suffuse his cheeks with floods of tears, whilst he contemplates men's ingenuity and indefatigable industry in the work of destruction, and in extending misery amongst their fellow-creatures; and whilst he observes that the rest of men, who escape these plagues, repent not of their evil works, but go on with their idolatries, impiety, infidelity, iniquity, oppression, cruelty, and licentiousness, till wrath come upon them also to the uttermost.

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1, 2. In the conclusion of the former chapter, the apostle had received some intimations of the corruptions of the western church, during the period of the two preceding trumpets; but before he was made acquainted with the events, which would follow the sounding of the seventh trumpet, he was shown something more of the state of it. This information was introduced by a most august and consolatory vision: he appeared to himself to be on earth, and to see a mighty Angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud, to veil the splendour of his appearance; and as an emblem of the darkness of the dispensations which were predicted, a rainbow, signifying the covenant of grace, surrounded his head, his face shone like the sun, and his legs were as pillars of fire.

h Prov xix. 12. Is. v. 29 xxxi. 4 xlii 13. Jer. xxv. 30 Joel iii 16. Am. i. 2 iii. 8.
i viii. 5 xv 1. 7
k i. 11. ii. iii Is. viii. 1. Hab. ii. 2, 3.

3 And cried with [h] a loud voice, as *when* a lion roareth: and when he had cried, [i] seven thunders uttered their voices.

4 And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, [k] I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, [l] Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.

5 And the Angel which I saw [m] stand

l Deut xxix. 29. Is. viii. 16. xxix. 11. Dan. viii. 26. xii. 4, 9.
m *See on*, 2.

(*Note*, i. 12—20.) This mighty Angel must be either Christ himself, or an emblematical display of his glory.—He held in his hand a little open book, as containing the Revelation of the purposes of God, which he was about to communicate to his servant. This was distinct from the larger book before mentioned, (v. 1,) being a kind of appendix, or codicil, to it. Indeed some respectable interpreters suppose this little book to have contained all the following parts of the Revelation, and thus they make it much greater than the book, of which Christ opened the seals! This is an objection to that arrangement, to which I could never find a satisfactory answer: besides, the great book would end abruptly in the middle of the sixth trumpet, and the same subject would be as abruptly taken up in the little book. I apprehend, therefore, that this little book contained no more than the former part of the next chapter, (1—14.) which was an important appendix to the ninth chapter, as it gives an account of the state of the western church during the period of the fifth and sixth trumpets. Then the former subject proceeds, the seventh trumpet is sounded, and a compendious view is given of the subsequent events to the end of the world. After this the second part of the book proceeds; and the apostle is shown a great variety of events, tending to explain those which had before been predicted in a more summary manner, but chiefly relative to the state of the church, as the former part had been to those which concerned the empire. This arrangement, which is *nearly* the same with that adopted by Bishop Newton, makes no material alteration in the plan of the celebrated Mr. Mede, and those who have followed him; whilst it avoids the difficulty of making the little book by far the largest, and the necessity of dividing the sixth trumpet between the two books. Still every event is referred to the times, to which, according to the synchronisms of that able writer, it belongs, and which are evidently deduced, not from vague hypothesis, but from the internal construction of the prophecy. And the observation of another learned writer, (Dr. Hurd,) stands equally good; 'The knowledge of this order is a great 'restraint on the fancy of an expositor; who is not now 'at liberty to apply the prophecies to events of any time 'to which they may *appear* to suit: but to events only 'falling within that time to which they belong, in the 'course of this pre-determined method; and if to this 'restriction we add *another*, which arises from the neces'sity of applying not one, but many prophecies, to the 'same time, we can hardly conceive how an interpreta'tion should keep clear of all these impediments, and 'make its way through so many interfering checks, un'less it were the *true* One. Just as when a lock, (to use 'Mr. Mede's allusion,) is composed of many and intricate 'wards, the key that easily turns within them, and opens 'the lock, can only be that which properly belongs to it.'—Since I first wrote these remarks, expositors have arisen, (especially the pious and learned Mr. Faber,) who suppose that the little book contained the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth chapters of Revelation. But, after much consideration, I feel constrained to dissent from this opinion, however respectably supported. First, because it makes the little book, or codicil, bear a too great proportion to the whole prophecy. The prophetical chapters, properly speaking, are only twelve, namely, the sixth, eighth, ninth, eleventh, to the fourteenth inclusive, and the sixteenth to the twentieth inclusive: for the seventh, tenth, and fifteenth contain not much explicit prediction, and the two last chapters, succeeding the day of judgment, are rather, as it will appear, destructive of the heavenly state, than prophetical, in the ordinary sense of the word. Now the four chapters, assigned to the little book, not being very short, yet crowded with most important predictions, contain at least a third of the whole prophecy, which is more than can properly be assigned to the little book. Secondly, the eleventh chapter evidently carries on the prediction, in a general manner, to the Millennium, and indeed to the end of the world. (xv. 15—18.) Now, the succeeding chapters to the twentieth plainly treat of times previous to the Millennium. The prophet must therefore somewhere *go back*, to take a more particular view of his subject than he at first gave: but no place can be assigned for this, so rationally, as the close of the eleventh chapter. The course of predicted events cannot be *successive*, in those chapters, therefore some of them must be *coincident*. Thirdly, no interpretation of the former verses of the twelfth chapter gives me the least satisfaction, except that which recals the reader's attention to the events which took place when pagan persecution terminated, the Roman emperors professed Christianity, and further corruptions, calamities, and persecutions, sprang from that very source, which seemed to promise far happier days. I therefore still think, that the little book contains only the first fourteen verses of the next chapter to the close of the sixth trumpet, being coincident, as to the state of things in the west, with that of the eastern empire, as predicted in the ninth chapter. I am not, however, unwilling to concede, that the following verses, to the close of the eighteenth, may be assigned to it, as a general pre-intimation of the final success of that cause, which had so long been trampled under foot.—Several objections to this interpretation will be obviated, as we proceed.

V. 3, 4. The mighty Angel, above described, sat his right foot on the sea, and his left on the dry land, to denote his sovereign authority over the whole earth, and perhaps intimating his determination of spreading the Gospel through every part of it; and he demanded attention, with a voice like the roaring of a lion, to show the power and terror of his word to his obstinate enemies. After which seven thunders were heard, that in the most majestic manner uttered intelligible voices; these either related to matters proper for the apostle to know, but not to be published, or else they are coincident with some things which are afterwards more clearly revealed. They upon the sea and upon the earth, [n] lifted up his hand to heaven,

6 And sware [o] by him that liveth for ever and ever, [p] who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, [q] that there should be time no longer:

7 But [r] in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, [s] the mystery of God should be finished, [t] as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

8 And [u] the voice which I heard from heaven, spake unto me again, and said, Go, *and* take the little book, which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.

9 And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, [x] Take *it*, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.

10 And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth [y] sweet as honey; and as soon as I had eaten it, [z] my belly was bitter.

11 And he said unto me, [a] Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.

[n] Gen. xiv. 22. xxii 15, 61. Deut. xxxii. 40. Ez. xx. 5. 15. 23. 28. 42. xxxvi. 7. xlvii. 14. Dan. xii. 7. Heb. vi. 13.

[o] i. 18. *See on*, iv. 9, 10. Jer. x. 10.

[p] *See on*, iv. 11. xiv. 7. Gen. i. ii. Ex. xx. 11. Neh. ix 6. Ps. xcv. 3—6. cxlvi. 5, 6. cxlviii. 1—7. Jer. x. 11—13 Acts xiv. 15. xvii. 23, 24. Rom. i. 20, 21.

[q] xvi 17. Dan. xii. 7.

[r] xi. 15—18.

[s] Rom xi. 25. xvi. 25. Eph. iii. 3—9.

[t] *See on*, Luke xxiv. 47. Acts iii. 21.

[u] *See on*, 4, 5 Is xxx. 21.

[x] Job xxiii 12. Jer xv 16 Ez. ii. 8. iii. 1—3. Col. iii. 16

[y] Ps. xix. 10. civ. 34. cxix 103. Prov. xvi. 24. Ez. iii. 3

[z] Ez. iii. 14 *Marg.*

[a] xi. 9. xiv 6. xvii. 15 Jer. i. 9, 10. xxv. 15—30.

CHAP. XI.

The apostle is directed to measure the temple, &c. but to leave the outer court to the Gentiles; with a prediction of their prevalence for forty-two months, 1, 2. *Power is given to two witnesses, who prophesy in sackcloth, for twelve hundred and sixty days,* 3—6. *The beast makes war upon them, and slays them: but after three days and a half, they arise, and ascend into heaven,* 7—12. *Divine judgments overtake their enemies,* 13. *The seventh trumpet sounds; and a dis-*

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were, however, ordered to be sealed up, and it does not become us to inquire any further concerning them.

V. 5—7. The apostle next saw the angel lift up his hand to heaven, as was customary when solemn oaths were taken, and heard him swear, by the self-existent eternal Creator of all things, "that there should be time "no longer," or, as it may be rendered, that *the time should not be yet*, that is, the time of those glorious things, with which the mystery of God would be finished, but that further delays must be expected; till at length in the days of the seventh angel, after he had begun to sound his trumpet, that would be accomplished, according to the predictions of former prophets, in the destruction of every antichristian power, and the universal prevalence of true religion, which would continue, with little interruption, to the consummation of all things, and so issue in the eternal state. But before those events began to take place, other preparatory transactions must occur, and this solemn declaration seems to have been intended to teach Christians in the intervening ages, to wait with patience, and to expect a happy event of the calamities of the church, though the time of it seem long delayed. If we adhere to our translation, the meaning must be, that all the subsequent events, to the end of time, would fall under the period of the seventh trumpet.

V. 8—11. (*Note, Ez.* iii. 1—3.) The apostle's eating the book was an emblem of his duly considering and understanding it, and his making it his own, as it were, to the purposes for which he received it. The knowledge of future events was at first very sweet to him, as honey to the taste, but when he had more fully understood them, they occasioned him subsequent grief and anguish of heart. By publishing the contents of this little book, and the rest of the predictions which he was about to receive, he hath indeed "prophesied before many peoples, and nations, and "tongues, and kings," and doth so to this day.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Surety of the new covenant, who purchased the blessings of it by his blood, manages all things in heaven and earth with uncontrollable authority. His power and his word are most terrible to his enemies, but the believer need not fear his unchangeable Friend, for he will communicate those discoveries and consolations to him, which are kept secret from all others. The final salvation of the righteous, and the final prevalence of true religion on earth, are engaged for, by the same unfailing word of the Lord; and, though "the time shall not be yet," we have solid ground to conclude, that the sounding of the seventh trumpet has either already taken place, or is just at hand, when glorious scenes will be exhibited. Very soon, however, to us, "time shall be no longer;" but if we are believers, a happy eternity will follow, and we shall look down from heaven, to behold and rejoice in the triumphs of Christ and his cause on earth. Let us then rely on the immutable word and oath of the Lord, for strong consolation amidst all our trials; let us attend to and obey the voice from heaven, which calls us from the attractions of things present, that we may consider the things which shall be hereafter; let us seek our instructions from Christ, and obey his orders, daily meditating on and digesting his word, turning it into nourishment to our own souls, and declaring it to those around us, according to the duties of our several stations. Indeed the sweetness of such contemplations will often be mingled, or followed, with bitterness, whilst we compare the scriptures with the state of the world and the church, or even with that of our own hearts. Yet, if we are interested in the salvation of Christ, and are employed in any measure for the good of others, we should not so much regard our present feelings, as the glory of God in our eternal happiness, and that of those with whom we are connected.

covery of the glorious events which shall follow, 14—18. *An introduction to the prophecies of the subsequent chapter,* 19.

AND there was given me [a] a reed like unto a rod: [b] and the Angel stood, saying, Rise, and [c] measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.

2 But [d] the court which is without the temple * leave out, and measure it not; for [e] it is given unto the Gentiles: [f] and the holy city shall they [g] tread under foot [h] forty *and* two months.

3 And † I will give *power* unto my [i] two [k] witnesses, and they shall prophesy

a xxi. 15. Is. xxviii 17. Ez xl. 3—5. xlii. 15—20. Zech. ii. 1, 2. Gal. vi. 15, 16.
b x. 1—5.
c Ez. xl—xlviii. 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Eph. ii 20—22 1 Pet. ii. 5. 9.
d Ez xl 17—20 xlii. 20.
* Gr. *cast-out.*
e xiii—xviii. Ps. lxxix. 1. Lam. i. 10 Luke xxi. 24. 2 Thes ii 3—12. 1 Tim iv. 1—3. 2 Tim iii. 1—6
f xxi. 2 xxii. 19 Is xlviii. 2 lii 1. Matt. iv. 5. xxvii. 53.
g Dan vii. 19. viii. 10. 24, 25 Matt. v. 13 Heb. x. 29.
h 3. 11. xii 6. xiii. 5. Num. xiv. 34. Dan. vii. 25. xii. 7. 11. 12 —— † Or, *I will give unto my two witnesses, that they may prophesy.* John iii 27 1 Cor. xii. 23 Eph iv. 11.
i Num. xxxv. 30. Deut. xvii 6. xix. 15. Matt. xviii 16. 2 Cor. xiii. 1. —— k xx. 4 Luke xxiv. 48 John xv. 27. Acts i. 8. ii. 32. iii. 15. xiii. 31.

[l] a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days, [m] clothed in sackcloth.

4 These are the [n] two olive-trees, and the [o] two candlesticks [p] standing before [q] the God of the earth.

5 And if any man will hurt them, [r] fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

6 These have [s] power to shut heaven; that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and [t] have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

l *See on,* h. 2. xii. 6.
m Gen xxxviii. 34. 1 Chr. xxi. 16. Esth. iv. 1, 2. Job xvi. 15. Is. xxii. 12. Lam. ii. 10. Jon. iii. 5—8.
n Ps. lii. 8. Jer. xi 16. Zech iv. 2, 3. 11—14. Rom. xi. 17.
o i. 20. Matt. v. 14—16. Luke xi. 33
p Deut. x 8. 1 Kings xvii. 1.
q Ex viii. 22 Is. liv. 5. Mic. iv. 13 Zech. iv. 14.
r Num. xvi 28—35 2 Kings i. 10—12 Is xi 4. Jer. i. 10. v. 14. Ez xliii 3 Hos. vi 5. Zech. i. 6. ii 8 Acts ix. 4, 5.
s 1 Kings xvii 1. Luke iv. 25. Jam v. 17, 18.
t Ex. vii—xii, xiv. Ps. cv. 26—36.

NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1, 2. It has before been supposed, that the former part of this chapter exhibits the contents of the little book, (*Note*, x. 1—4.) which represents the state of the western church, during the two preceding wo trumpets, and before the sounding of the seventh trumpet, (15,) and this precisely fixes the chronology of it. The discoveries of this little book are related under emblematical appearances and actions as before. The scene is the temple; and a reed, like a measuring rod, being given to the apostle, he was ordered to measure the temple, the altar, and the worshippers in the inner court. (*Note, Ez.* xl—xlvi.) This denoted, that in the predicted period there would be a small number, whose doctrine, worship, and behaviour, would bear measuring by the word of God, and that these only would be acceptable interior worshippers; whereas the outer court, being left unmeasured, and given to the Gentiles, emphatically showed that the greatest number of professed Christians would be idolaters and wicked men. The holy city also, being trodden under foot by them, implied that the church at large, and its most lucrative and eminent places, would be filled with idolaters, infidels, and hypocrites, and that true Christians would be oppressed in a grievous manner. The duration of these evil times was fixed to forty-two months, or twelve hundred and sixty days, which by prophetical computation are so many years. (*Notes, Dan.* vii. 25. viii. 9—14. xii. 7—12.) The whole of Daniel's prophecies should be compared with the subsequent parts of this book, as the same events and dates are intended in both, when they are properly explained, and this gives a measure of certainty to the interpretation. Daniel also fixes these events to the remains of the fourth monarchy, after it was broken to pieces, and formed ten kingdoms, (*Notes, Dan.* vii;) and this determines the geography of them to the western empire, which was properly the seat of that monarchy. So that the outlines both of the *time* and *place* to which these prophecies belonged are unalterably determined, by the prophets themselves; nor can the accomplishment of them be referred to other times or places, without doing the most manifest violence to them in both respects. Indeed, the prophecies of Daniel and those of the apostle, when properly explained, and compared with each other and their accomplishment, constitute the fullest imaginable demonstration of the truth of the scripture. But demonstration itself cannot convince those, who will not bestow pains to examine it. The beginning of these twelve hundred and sixty years must be placed subsequent to the four first trumpets on the subversion of the western empire, which was completed A. D. 566. This made way for the pope, in process of time, to acquire a vast accession of ecclesiastical dominion. He became universal bishop, A. D. 606, and was fully established as a temporal prince, A. D. 756. Did we know exactly at what time to begin the twelve hundred and sixty years, we might show with certainty when they would terminate; but this would not consist with that wise obscurity, which always in some respects rests on prophecies, before they are fulfilled. Till the event, therefore, shall explain this matter, it must be left undetermined; but, perhaps, the *beginning* of the rise and of the fall of this antichristian tyranny, and the *completion* of them, may both be at the distance of twelve hundred and sixty years from each other, as in more than one way the Babylonish captivity lasted seventy years. The beginning, however, of these years cannot well be fixed sooner than A. D. 606, or later than A. D. 756.—'*Measuring* the servants of God is equivalent to *sealing* 'them. The unmeasured tenants of the outer court, and 'the unsealed men throughout the Roman empire, are 'alike the votaries of the apostacy; while they that were 'measured, and they that were sealed, are the saints who 'refused to be partakers of his abominations.' (*Faber.*)

V. 3—6. It would be tedious even to mention the conjectural explications, which have been given of this prophecy concerning the witnesses, but they generally violate the apostle's rule, (2 *Pet.* i. 20, 21;) not proceeding upon a large and comprehensive view of the subject, but confining the interpretation to *private*, and comparatively little events. A *king*, in prophetical language, commonly means a succession of Monarchs; a *witness*, therefore, must be explained by the same rule, and not the prophecy of individuals, but of a succession of men, who, during the period referred to, bore testimony to the truth, must be intended. Two witnesses were mentioned, 7 And [u] when they shall have finished their testimony, [x] the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

8 And [y] their dead bodies *shall lie* in the street of [z] the great city, which spiritually is called [a] Sodom, and [b] Egypt, where also [c] our Lord was crucified.

9 And they of [d] the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations shall see their dead bodies [e] three days and an half, [f] and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

[u] 3. Luke xiii. 32. John xvii. 4 xix. 30. Acts xx. 24. 2 Tim. iv. 7.

[x] xiii. 1. 7. 11 xvii. 6—8. xix. 19, 20 Dan. vii 21, 22 25. viii. 23, 24 2 Thes. ii. 8, 9.

[y] 9. Ps lxxix. 2, 3. Jer. xxvi. 23 Ez. xxxvii. 11

[z] 13. xiv. 8 xvi 19. xvii 1. 5 xviii. 2. 10. 18 21.

[a] Gen xiii 13 xix. 24. Jer xxiii 14. Ez. xvi 53—55. Am. iv 11 Matt. x. 15 2 Pet ii. 6. Jude 7.

[b] Ex i 13. 14 iii. 7. Ps. lxxviii 43—51.

[c] xvii. 24 Luke xiii 33, 34. Acts ix 4 Heb. vi. 6. xiii. 12

[d] x. 11. xiii 7. xvii 15.——[e] *See on*, 2, 3. 11 ——[f] *See on*, v. 8. xix. 17, 18. Ec vi 3. Is. xxxiii. 1. Jer. vii. 33. Matt. vii. 2.

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because one was insufficient for the legal proof of any fact; and these witnesses were as few as could suffice to attest the true Gospel, and to enter a public protest against the antichristian perversions of it; though perhaps Moses and Aaron, Elijah and Elisha, and the apostles and seventy disciples, sent forth two and two, might be alluded to. All real Christians, who boldly professed their religion, may be considered as uniting in this testimony; yet ministers, and especially bold and zealous men who attempted reformation, were the witnesses primarily intended. The angel before-mentioned, even the Lord Jesus, declared that he would give them power, or authority, to prophesy, during the assigned time; yet this must be done in sackcloth, as expressive of their afflicted persecuted state, and of their deep concern and sorrow of heart, on account of the abominations against which they protested. It hath been shown by many writers, that during the darkest ages of popery men were raised up, who bore a decided testimony against the prevailing corruptions of the Roman church, and for the leading doctrines of the Gospel.—It was indeed the interest, and the constant practice, of their opponents to silence their testimony, to blacken their characters, or to destroy them as heretics; yet, after all their endeavours to suppress, misrepresent, and mutilate their writings, enough remains to show, that Christ had a remnant of faithful witnesses and disciples, through all the ages here referred to. From the eighth to the eleventh century, inclusive, we find accounts of individuals or collective bodies, who under the brand of heresy, and in the face of persecution, evidently held, and openly professed, the great doctrines of salvation by faith in Christ, and through his mediation, merits, and grace, and protested against the abuses of popery; and these, who just prevented the total darkness of that gloomy period, could by no means be extirpated. On the contrary, they continued to increase in many places; in the valleys of Piedmont, especially, vast multitudes were collected, and called *Waldenses* and *Albigenses*, who were evidently moderate Calvinists, (to speak in modern language,) and their lives were generally exemplary, as some of the Papists themselves have allowed.—These subsisted during the twelfth, thirteenth, and following centuries, though they were persecuted with such unrelenting fury, and pursued with such cruel and destructive wars, that, in France alone, a million of them are computed to have been slain, for the sole crime of protesting against the tyranny of the Pope, and the corruptions of the church of Rome. They, however, continued to "prophesy in sackcloth;" and when driven from Piedmont, they settled in other places, propagated their religion, and prepared the way for the reformation. Connected with them, and agreed in their leading doctrines and in opposition to the church of Rome, were the Lollards in England, and the Bohemians, from among whom arose John Huss and Jerom of Prague, who were burnt in the fifteenth century by the council of Constance. Multitudes embraced the doctrines of the Gospel in many places during those times, and professed or preached it at the hazard of their lives; and great numbers were burnt, or put to death in the most cruel manner, for so doing. At length Luther arose, and the reformation took place, since which time, the same testimony for the truth of Christ, and against the errors of antichrist, hath been maintained. Nor is the term yet expired; the witnesses are not indeed at present exposed to such terrible sufferings as in former times; but those scenes will probably be re-acted before long, and they have abundant cause to prophesy in sackcloth, on account of the state of religion even in the protestant churches. However, though men despised and hated the witnesses, they were, in reality, "the two olive-"trees," endued with spiritual gifts and grace, that, through their instrumentality, others also might receive the unction from the Holy one, and "the two candlesticks," to hold forth the light of divine truth in this benighted world; they stood to minister with acceptance, "before "the God of the earth," the Proprietor and Governor of all mankind, and were the champions, as it were, of his cause, and the heralds of his glory, in the countries where they lived. (*Notes*, *Zech.* iv.) Moreover, if any man, being enraged by their testimony, and emboldened by their apparent weakness, should dare to injure them; "fire "proceeding from their mouths, to devour their enemies, "would certainly slay them:" that is, the Lord would certainly plead and avenge their cause, and resent the injuries done to them, as done against himself. Their warnings and instructions would tend to the condemnation of those who hated them on that account; the denunciations of divine vengeance uttered by them, would certainly be accomplished; and even their prayers would be answered in judgments on those who persisted in their enmity. For, in this respect, they would have power, like Elijah, to shut heaven, and to restrain the rain from falling, during the three years and a half of their prophesying, (*James* v. 17;) or to prevent blessings coming from above on those, who rejected their testimony and persecuted them for it: as well as to turn the waters into blood, or to inflict all others plagues at their pleasure; as Moses did upon the Egyptians. That is, they would have as great an interest in heaven, as the most eminent of the prophets; and God would as surely punish those nations, princes, or other persons, who injured them, as he did those that had formerly oppressed his people, or murdered his messengers.

10 And they that [g] dwell upon the earth shall [h] rejoice over them, and [i] make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because [k] these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

11 And after [l] three days and an half, [m] the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; [n] and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

12 And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, [o] Come up hither. [p] And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; [q] and their enemies beheld them.

g xii. 13. xiii 8. 14 Matt. x 22.
h Judg. xvi 23 24. Ps xiii 4 xxxv 19 24–26. lxxxix. 42. Prov. xxiv. 17 Jer. l. 11 Ob 12 Mic. vii. 8 John xvi. 20. 1 Cor. xiii 6
i Neh. viii 10–13 Esth. ix. 19–22.
k 5, 6. xvi. 10 1 Kings xviii. 17 xxi. 20 xxii 8. 18. Jer. xxxviii. 4. John vii. 7. Acts v. 33. vii. 54–57. xvii 5, 6
l 9.——m Gen ii. 7 Ez. xxxvii 5–14. Rom viii. 2. 11.
n 13. Josh. ii 9. Jer. xxxiii. 9. Hos. iii. 5. Acts v. 5 11
o iv. 1. Ps. xv. 1. xxiv 3. Is. xl 31.
p iii 21. xii. 5. 2 Kings ii. 11. Is. xiv. 13. Acts i. 9. Rom. viii. 34–37. Eph ii 5, 6.
q Ex. xiv 25 Ps. lxxxvi 17 cxii. 10. Mal iii. 18. Luke xvi. 23.

V. 7—12. When these witnesses "shall have finished," or, *shall be about to finish*, their testimony; the beast, that cometh out of the bottomless pit, (that is, the persecuting power, which will afterwards be more fully described,) shall fight against them, and kill them. Many *private* interpretations, (for so they appear to me,) have been given of this passage, as if it related to the martyrdom of individuals, or partial persecutions in past times; and some imagine, that it only denotes the constant persecution of true Christians, through the whole period of twelve hundred and sixty years: I cannot, however, but think, that it relates to events yet future: and that it will be fulfilled about the time of the sounding of the seventh trumpet.—The great city, in the street of which the dead bodies of the witnesses shall lie unburied, seems not to mean either Rome, or Jerusalem, *literally;* but Jerusalem *mystically;* that is, the professing Church of God, as possessed by Gentiles, (2;) and so become the rival of Sodom in lewdness; of Egypt in cruelty to the children of God; and of Jerusalem at the time when Christ was there crucified, in general enmity to him and his cause. Yet the arrangement of the prophecy, in other respects, shows that the countries, which belonged to the church of Rome, when at the height of its power, and most prosperous in its rage, "for crucifying our Lord" afresh in his people, were principally, or wholly intended: and indeed, though our Lord personally was crucified at Jerusalem, it was by the authority of the Roman emperor, when Judea was a province of that empire. Present appearances indeed, favour the opinion, that this general and successful war of the beast against the witnesses of Christ, will be conducted under another form, and other pretences, and perhaps by other instruments and means, than former assaults have been. Papal persecutors were often concealed infidels; and infidels concealed under any other mask, and so opposing vital Christianity within the same district, may equally answer to the prediction: for the peculiar opinions of this antichristian power are not here specified, and the apostle elsewhere speaks of antichrist as one, who opposes the doctrine, the authority, or glory of Christ. (*Notes*, 1 *John* ii. 18—24. iv. 3.) The prevalence of infidelity in different forms, throughout Europe, and the zeal with which principles of that tendency are every where propagated: when contrasted with the declining state of popish superstition, renders it not very improbable, that the beast may change his ground and method of attack, before he thus prevails against the witnesses; for that time approacheth. It likewise appears from the prediction, that the temporary victory of this enemy over the truth, will be so entire, throughout the extent of the western church, that there will be scarcely any open profession or preaching of the true Gospel, or steady opposition to the prevailing antichristianity, in all that part of the world; so that the different nations of Europe, and others as connected with them, will have nothing to do, but to contemplate and insult over the dead bodies of the witnesses, which they will not suffer to be buried. This may signify, that they will revile and deride all those, who before had professed and preached the truth, and thus preserve them from oblivion, by exposing them to ignominy. At the same time, they will use the customary methods of mutual congratulation on an event which they deem so joyful; supposing that they have at last finally extirpated a race of men, whose examples, doctrines, warnings, and reproofs, alarmed and disquieted their minds, and prevented them from proceeding without disturbance in their ungodliness and iniquity. But the triumphing of these wicked men shall be short; for after three days and a half, prophetically computed, the witnesses shall rise again from the dead, to the great consternation of their insulting murderers; that is, the Lord will raise up a competent number of witnesses, to stand up for his pure Gospel, to the terror of its opposers, who hoped it was finally extirpated. Nay, these witnesses will be called, by a voice from heaven, to ascend thither, which they will accordingly do, in the sight of their enemies. That is, the apparent extirpation of genuine Christianity in the western church, (the bounds of which are considered in their largest dimensions, for all true protestants are only witnesses for the truth, within the dominions of the beast,) will make way for better times, when the ministers and professors of the Gospel shall be far more zealous, honoured, and prospered, than before, even as the ascension of Christ to glory was subsequent to his death and resurrection. The above is the substance of what the first edition of this work contained; and since that time the author has had abundant opportunity of re-considering his interpretation, and of comparing it with those of many other commentators, and with events which have occurred in Providence. He must, however, still avow his full conviction, that the transactions, predicted under the emblems of these verses, have not hitherto taken place. It is generally agreed, that this chapter coincides in time with the ninth, and that the state of the church, and of the nations in the western empire, is here predicted, as that of the eastern empire had before been. The whole testimony, therefore, against idolatry and popery, in the ten kingdoms, during the twelve hundred and sixty years, must be intended; and till that testimony is *generally* suppressed, the witnesses are not slain. The triumphs of the persecutors, in Germany, Bohemia, Spain, or Italy, do not amount to any thing, which can be called "the slaying of the wit-

13 And the same hour [r] was there a great earthquake, [s] and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of * men seven thousand: [t] and the remnant were affrighted, and [u] gave glory to the God of heaven.

[r] 19. *See on*, vi 12 viii. 5 xvi 18.
[s] viii 9—12. xiii 1—3. xvi 19
* Gr *names of men*. iii. 4 Gen. vi 4 Acts i. 15
[t] *See on*, 11
[u] xiv 7. xv. 4. xvi. 9. Josh. vii 19. 1 Sam vi. 5. Jer xiii. 16. Mal. ii. 2.

14 The [x] second woe is past; *and* behold, the third woe cometh quickly.

15 ¶ And [y] the seventh angel sounded; [z] and there were great voices in heaven, saying, [a] The kingdoms of this world are

[x] vii. 1. ix. xv. xvi. &c.
[y] viii. 2—6. 12. ix. 1. 13.
[z] xii 10 xvi. 17. xix. 6. Is. xxvii. 13 xliv 23. Luke xv. 6 10.
[a] xii. 10. xv 4. xvii. 14 xx 4. Ps. xxii 27, 28 lxxii. 11. lxxxvi. 9. lxxxix 15—17 Is ii 2. 3 xlix. 6, 7. 22, 23 lv. 5. lx. 3—14. Jer xvi. 19. Dan ii. 44. 45 vii. 14 22 27 Hos ii 23. Am. ix. 11, 12. Mic. iv. 1, 2. Zeph. iii. 9, 10 Zech. ii 11. viii. 20—23 xiv. 9. Mal. i 11.

“nesses,” so long as a public testimony against papal corruptions, and for the true Gospel, is borne in any other parts of the western empire. However we explain the expression, “when they shall have finished their testimony,” we must make it agree with this part of the prediction, “they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.” Now, if the witnesses were slain at the council of Constance, or by the total ruin of the league at Smalcald, or at any of the times which different expositors fix upon, they prophesied one, two, or three hundred days, less than the predicted period. Except any will say, that they prophesied in *sackcloth* after their resurrection and ascension into heaven. The different opinions of eminently learned and able men on the subject, and the extreme difficulty which they all seem to find, in making one part of their interpretations consistent with the others, are powerful arguments in my mind, that they have not fact and truth to bear them out. The fulfilment of the prophecy seems to me indispensably to require the following particulars. 1st. The general suppression of the public testimony for the truth, and against the perversions of Christianity, throughout all the kingdoms of the western empire; but no such general suppression has taken place, especially in the later ages of the period in question. 2dly. The open, avowed, and general triumph of enemies, however distinguished, as if the hated cause of true Christianity were finally ruined. 3dly. The very speedy, and unexpected revival of the witnesses, and the immediate, general, and extraordinary triumphs of the Gospel in all those countries, where it was supposed to be extirpated. Whether this will be, as some with much probability think, the last persecution before the Millennium, the event must determine; but *the war of the beast against the witnesses* is a widely different thing from *the war of Christ against the persecutors*, which, I apprehend, is meant by the pouring out of the vials, at the opening of the seventh trumpet. During the former, the enemy triumphs, and the witnesses prophesy in sackcloth, till slain; during the latter, the witnesses and their cause triumph, and their enemies are destroyed by tremendous judgments. Yet these distinct events have, by some respectable expositors, been apparently confounded. If “the slaying of the witnesses” be future, it is of vast importance that Christians should be aware of it, and act accordingly. It does not follow, from the suppression of the public testimony, viz. the general silencing of faithful ministers, and inhibiting the public administration of ordinances through the ten kingdoms, that there will be no true Christianity in those kingdoms. Nay, it is not improbable, that the prevalence of true Christianity will provoke this persecution; that there will be thousands, and tens of thousands, who *secretly*, at the hazard of their lives, meet together, for the worship of God; that books, previously circulated, containing clear and practical religious instruction, will in a very great degree supply the want of public ordinances, during this short interruption; that the persecution itself, and the suppression of the testimony, will so show the odiousness of the persecutors, and the excellency of true Christians, as, by the divine blessing, exceedingly to multiply real believers, during the interdiction: and, in short, that the means previously used, nay, the seed which we are now sowing, may be exceedingly prospered, in bringing forward the glorious times which shall succeed. The term of three years and a half, according to the prophetical calculation of the days in which the testimony shall be suppressed, and the efficacy with which it shall then burst forth, from the ashes under which it had been smothered, and this through all the ten kingdoms, appear to me to give an astonishing interest to this view of the subject, as well as most animating motives now to sow to the utmost that seed, which will then produce the glorious harvest. In many other cases, we should “rejoice with trembling;” but in this, while we cannot but tremble at the prospect before us, we should *tremble with rejoicing*. Like the believer's death, it will be a dark and painful entrance on scenes inexpressibly delightful; and the approach of it, if perceived, will assure the intelligent Christian, that the final triumphs of the church are at hand, even at the door. In what way the accomplishment will take place, the event must show, and it is vain to argue against the improbability of it: for the dispensations of Providence commonly subvert all our preconceptions of probability. This exceedingly low state of real Christianity seems only to relate to the western church; and probably in America, in Africa, in the East Indies, or other parts of Asia, there may be very flourishing churches at the same time.

V. 13, 14. Immediately after the events, intended by the resurrection and ascension of the witnesses, some terrible judgment will befall a large part of this antichristian city, especially some one of the ten kingdoms, which will destroy a great number of persons, and so alarm others, as to tend to their conversion, and to the glory of God in it. The original expression, “seven thousand *names of men*,” induces many to think that this refers to the degradation and destruction of the most renowned and powerful supporters of Antichrist; but the event alone can determine the precise meaning of this. Thus the second wo, or the sixth trumpet, will terminate, and behold the third wo will speedily approach. Whether the revolutions and desolations in France and on the continent, during the last twenty years, are specially meant, (as some expositors confidently decide,) our descendants will be more competent to determine than we are. At least, I dare not venture an *opinion*, but am rather disposed to think that the whole is yet future.

become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of his Christ; [b] and he shall reign for ever and ever.

16 And [c] the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God,

17 Saying, [d] We give thee thanks, O [e] Lord God almighty, [f] which art, and wast, and art to come; because [g] thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.

18 And [h] the nations were angry, [i] and thy wrath is come, [k] and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, [l] and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, [m] and them that fear thy name, small and great; and [n] shouldest destroy them which * destroy the earth.

19 ¶ And [o] the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple [p] the ark of his testament: [q] and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, [r] and great hail.

b Ex xv. 18 Ps. cx. 4 cxlvi 10. Is ix. 7. Ez xxxvii. 25 Dan. ii 44 vii 18 27 Mic. iv. 7. Matt vi. 13. Luke i 33. Heb i 8

c iv. 4. 10 v 5—8. 14 vii. 11. xix 4

d iv. 9. Dan ii 23. vi. 10 Matt. xi. 25 Luke x 21 John xi. 41 2 Cor. ii 14. ix 15. 1 Tim. i. 12.

e *See on*, i. 8. iv. 8. xv. 3. xvi. 7. 14 Gen. xvii. 1.

f *See on*, i. 4 8. xvi 5.

g *See on*, 15. xix. 6 11—21. xx 1—3. Ps xxi 13. lvii. 11 lxiv. 9, 10. xcviii 1—3. cii 13—18 Is li. 9—11. lii 10.——h 2. 9, 10 xvii. 12—15. xix 19, 20 Ps. ii. 1—3. Is xxxiv 1—10. lxiii. 1—6. Ez. xxxviii. 9—23. Joel iii. 9—14. Mic. vii. 15—17. Zech. xiv. 2, 3.——i *See on*, vi. 15—17. xiv. 10. xv. 1 7. xvi. xix. 15.

k *See on*, vi 10, 11. xx. 4, 5 12—15. Is. xxvi. 19—21. Dan. vii. 9. 10. xii. 1, 2.

l xxii. 12. Matt. v 12. 2 Thes. i. 5—7. Heb. xi. 25, 26.

m xix 5 Ps. lxxxv. 9. ciii. 11 cxv. 13, 14. cxlvii 11. Ec viii. 12 xii. 13. Luke i 50.

n xiii 10. xviii 16—24 xix. 19. 21. Dan vii 26. viii. 25. xi 44, 45.

* Or, *corrupt*.

o xiv. 15—17. xv. 5—8. xix. 11. Is. vi 1—4.

p Ex. xxv. 21, 22. Num. iv. 5. 15. x. 23. 2 Cor iii. 14—16. Heb. ix. 4—8.——q 13. 15 *See on*. iv. 5, viii 5. xvi. 18.——r viii 7 xvi. 21. Ex. ix. 18—28. Josh. x. 11 Job xxxviii 22, 23. Ps. xviii 12 cv. 32 Is. xxviii. 2. xxx. 30. xxxii. 19. Ez. xiii 11. xxxviii. 22.

V. 15—18. The little book hath been shown to contain such important predictions, as abundantly to account for the solemnity with which it was delivered to the apostle. He therefore next proceeds with the subject of the ninth chapter. When the seventh angel had sounded his trumpet, there were great voices in heaven, all the blessed inhabitants rejoicing with admiring gratitude, because "the kingdoms of this world," which had so long lain under the wicked one, were become willingly subject to JEHOVAH, and to his anointed King, who would reign over them for ever, as his kingdom on earth would continue to the end of time, and in heaven to eternity. Then the emblematical representatives of the whole church were seen to prostrate themselves, in adoring worship, praising, and rendering thanks to him, as the self-existent, omnipotent, and eternal Lord God, because he had taken to him the power over the nations, which was his by right at all times, and who had now established his kingdom throughout the earth. If this be not addressed to Christ personally, as some think, it must be allowed to include him, as One with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, in the unity of the Godhead. What follows is explained by some persons, to relate to the execution of the wrath of God on the nations before the Millennium, for the rage and enmity against his people whom they had slain, but who were figuratively raised from the dead, in the revival and final prevalence of the Gospel, and rewarded in the exceeding prosperity of the Church; whilst they who destroyed the earth, were exterminated; but others suppose it to refer to the temporary opposition raised against the Gospel after the Millennium, and just before the general resurrection, and the final judgment. (*Note*, xx. 7—15.) The account, however, in this place is very brief; for it will be explained, and dilated on afterwards, in several chapters: and perhaps both events are compendiously hinted at. 'Thus we are arrived at the consum'mation of all things, through a series of prophecies, 'extending from the apostle's days to the end of the 'world. This series has been the clue to conduct us in 'our interpretation of these prophecies: and though some 'of them may be dark and obscure, considered in them'selves; yet they receive light and illustration from others 'preceding and following. Altogether they are, as it 'were, a chain of prophecies, whereof one link depends 'on and supports another. If any parts remain yet 'obscure and unsatisfactory, they may perhaps be cleared 'up, by what the apostle has added by way of explanation.' (*Newton*.)

V. 19. This verse introduces a new subject, and should have been placed at the beginning of the next chapter. (iv. 1; 2. *Is.* vi. 1—3.) The scene of the vision was laid at the temple, which was so far opened, that the ark of the covenant became visible: this denoted that further discoveries were about to be made relating to the *interior* parts of religion: for the preceding chapter chiefly referred to the affairs of the empire, and the *external* concerns of the church. "The lightnings, and voices, and "thunderings," were tokens of the divine presence; and emblems of the terrible judgments, which were about to be revealed. The next chapter seems to go back to the primitive ages of the church: and we must pass a second time through many of the same succeeding periods as before; though principally with relation to the times of the three last wo trumpets.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

The Lord measures his professed worshippers by the rule of his word, and weighs them in his balance: his ministers must also use the same standard; and they, who would be approved as inner-court worshippers, must try themselves by the same unerring touchstone. For mere nominal professors are accounted Gentiles before God; and yet the holy city hath frequently been trodden under foot by such enemies of the Lord, in the habit of worshippers! Indeed, for many ages, a small number of witnesses, prophesying in sackcloth, have appeared on the part of Christ and the truth; whilst multitudes, in splendour and power, have been ranked on the side of antichrist, in one form or another. But it is a most honourable employment to unite with these witnesses, how few, despised, or persecuted soever they may be; and to enter a public protest, connected with a holy and exemplary conduct, against the prevailing corruptions of the age and place in which we live. They who do this, are green olive trees in the house of God, and shining lights in the dark places of the earth: but we cannot obtain this honour, without courage, self-denial,

CHAP. XII.

A travailing woman, watched by a red dragon, that he might devour her offspring: she is delivered of a son; his exaltation, and her flight into the wilderness, 1—6. Michael overcomes and casts out Satan; joy in heaven on that occasion: and wo denounced on the earth, through Satan's rage and malice, 7—12. The dragon persecutes the woman; her flight into the wilderness, and preservation from his unwearied and varied efforts, 13—17.

AND [a] there appeared a great * wonder in heaven; [b] a woman [c] clothed with the sun, [d] and the moon under her feet, and upon her head [e] a crown of twelve stars:

a 3. xi. 19. xv. 1. 2 Chr. xxxii. 31. Mark xiii. 25. Acts ii. 19
* Or, sign. Matt. xii 38 xxiv 30. Luke xxi. 11. 25.
b Is xlix. 14--23. liv 5—7. lx. 1—4 Hos. ii 19, 20 John iii. 29. 2Cor xi. 2 Eph. v. 25—27. 32
c xxi. 23. Ps. lxxxiv. 11. Is. lx. 19. 20 lxi. 10. Mal. iv. 2 Rom. iii. 22 xiii. 14 Gal iii. 27.
d Gal vi. 14. Tit. ii. 11, 12.
e i. 20. xxi. 14. Is. lxii. 3 Zech. ix. 16.

2 And she, being with child, cried, [f] travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

3 And there appeared another † wonder in heaven; and behold, [g] a great red dragon, having [h] seven heads and [i] ten horns, and [k] seven crowns upon his heads.

4 And [l] his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and [m] the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

5 And [n] she brought forth a man-child, who was to [o] rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was [p] caught up unto God, and *to* his throne.

6 And [q] the woman fled into the

f 4 Is. liii. 11. liv 1. lxvi. 7, 8. Mic v. 3. John xvi. 21. Gal. iv. 19. 27
† Or, sign See on, 1.
g 4 9. 17. xiii. 2. 4. xvi. 13 xvii. 3, 4. xx. 2 Is xxvii. 1. li. 9.
h xiii. 1. 3 xvii. 9
i xvii 3 7. 12 16. Dan. ii. 42 vii. 7. 8 20. 24.
k xiii 1.
l ix. 10 19. Dan. viii. 9—12
m Ex i 16 Matt. ii. 3—16. John viii. 44. 1 Pet. v. 8.
n 2. Is. vii. 14. Jer. xxxi. 22. Mic. v. 3 Matt. i. 25.
o *See on*, ii 26, 27. xix. 15. Ps ii. 9
p *See on*, xi 12. Mark xvi 19.
q 14.

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and patience. Christians of this description are harmless, and they appear to be helpless and friendless; but it is safer to meet a roaring lion, or to face a battery of cannon, than to injure them, for the Lord will plead their cause, "and spoil the souls of those that spoil them:" and their pious instructions, friendly warnings, and benevolent prayers, will be as fire to consume their inveterate enemies. Indeed, the wrath of God against persecutors of his saints will either stop the current of his bounty, or turn their comforts into curses, or bring the heaviest plagues on offending nations.

V. 7—12.

Neither Satan, nor any of his emissaries, can cut off the Lord's ministers, till they have finished their testimony, and be ripe for glory. The cruelties and outrages of persecutors on the living or on the dead, as if they would carry their revenge into another world, cannot hinder the immediate felicity of their souls, the glorious resurrection of their bodies, or their final admission into heavenly mansions. But by such impious barbarities Christ is crucified afresh, and Jerusalem is turned into Sodom and Egypt; and the external homage paid to Christ by men of this character, (as the papists adore the crucifix,) seems even to crucify him again in effigy, after the example of those who builded the sepulchres of the prophets, and murdered the incarnate Son of God.—Determined rebels against the light rejoice, as on some most happy event, when they can drive away or destroy the faithful servants of Christ, whose doctrine and conduct are a torment to them; but this joy is soon turned into terror and anguish; for the servants of God will rise again, to be swift witnesses against them; then they will behold those ascending to the glory of their Lord, whilst more terrible vengeance awaits their enemies, than earthquakes, or death in its most terrific form, can so much as shadow forth.

V. 13—19.

Many woes await the impenitent in this world, but the most dreadful wo will, as it were, cause all the rest to be forgotten, and it will arrive quickly. For the seventh angel shall sound, and the inhabitants of heaven will rejoice, because "the kingdoms of the earth shall become "the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ," and he shall "reign for ever." At present, prayer for that blessed revolution in the state of the world, is the duty of all real Christians; but shortly they will be called to join in songs of loud thanksgiving and humble adoration "to "the Lord God almighty, who is, and was, and is to "come." (i. 4. 8. 11.) Oh, may the name of our heavenly Father be thus hallowed, may his kingdom thus come, and may his "will be done on earth, as it is in heaven," for his "is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, "for ever, Amen."—The anger of the nations against his righteous authority will bring on the great day of his wrath: the time of the dead, when they shall be judged, will soon come; then shall his faithful servants and friends, both great and small, be most munificently rewarded, and they who have destroyed the earth shall be themselves destroyed. In the mean time, we, through the rended veil, may see the ark of the covenant, and our God upon a mercy-seat; and if we humbly approach him in this new and living Way, the most tremendous threatenings of his word, and the most awful judgments of his hand, will do us no harm, and should cause us no consternation.

NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1—6. The prophecies of this book, (as it appears to me,) naturally divide themselves into two parts, the second of which begins with the last verse of the preceding chapter. So that we are here brought back to the primitive ages of the church, though they are more briefly mentioned than those which followed. Inattention to this circumstance has created much perplexity in many attempts to explain these predictions; for if we do not keep hold of the clue, what hath properly been called the internal geography and chronology of the book, imagination will rove at large, and supposed allusions to detached events, in different ages and places, will r 1 Kings xvii 3—6. 9—16. xix 4—8. Matt. iv. 11. wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, [r] that they should feed her there [s] a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days. s See on, xi. 2, 3.

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disjoint the interpretation, and render the whole ambiguous and suspicious. The church, under the common emblem of a woman, the mother of individual believers, deriving its original from heaven, and being destined to return thither, was beheld by the apostle, in vision, in heaven, with such attire and circumstances, as rendered the appearance peculiarly wonderful, and denoted that it was significant of some great events. She was clothed with the sun, as an emblem of her being justified, sanctified, and irradiated, by virtue of union with Christ, "the Sun of "righteousness;" she had the moon under her feet, to denote her superiority to the reflected and feebler light of the Mosaic dispensation, and to the love of all sublunary objects; her crown, with twelve stars, represented her honourable maintenance of the doctrine of the twelve apostles. Her pregnancy and travailing pains seem to be an emblem of the afflicted state of the church in the three first centuries, during which time, amidst many hardships and persecutions, with fervent prayers and earnest labours, she sought deliverance from her oppression, and an increase of her family, and waited the appointed term, which was to bring a happy crisis to these her sorrows. (*Gal.* iv. 19.) At the same time another marvellous sight was seen in heaven, even "a great red "dragon." A dragon was a known emblem of Satan, and of his principal agents or vicegerents on earth. (*Marg. Ref.*) Purple or scarlet was the distinguishing colour of the Roman emperors, consuls, and generals, even as it hath been since of the popes and cardinals. The seven heads of the dragon signify the seven hills on which Rome was built, and the seven forms of government which successively prevailed there; (*Marg. Ref.*) the ten horns marked out the ten kingdoms, into which the western empire was at length divided; (*Notes, Dan.* ii. 31—48. vii. 23—27;) but "the seven crowns on the dragon's "heads," and not ten crowns on his horns, showed, that the whole power was yet vested in the emperors and senate at Rome; and not as afterwards in the monarchs of the kingdoms. And this circumstance, ***which many have not observed***, precisely fixes the date of the prophecy, and undeniably proves that it related to the pagan emperors, and not to the antichristian power afterwards mentioned. (xiii. 1.) The tail of the dragon, drawing a third part of the stars, represented the power of the Romans, which had cast down the princes of one third part of the earth, and reduced their countries to subjection. This monster appeared to watch the woman, being prepared to devour her offspring, as Pharaoh destroyed the male children of Israel, or as Herod sought the life of Christ. Thus the Roman emperors and magistrates jealously watched the progress of Christianity from the first, and harassed the church with constant persecutions. But at length the woman was delivered of a male child. During the time of the persecuting emperors, the church was greatly increased; at length one sprang from her, who ascended the imperial throne, being appointed to be the vicegerent of Christ, in ruling the nations, and crushing the enemies of the Gospel, as with a rod of iron. (*Notes*, ii. 26, 27. vi. 12—17. *Ps.* ii. 9.) Thus the offspring of the church, even Christians in general, and Constantine in particular, with the Christian emperors who succeeded him, escaped the rage of the red dragon, and the latter was exalted to very great honour and authority, under the immediate protection, and by the special favour, of God. New trials, however, awaited the church, which at length drove her into the wilderness, or rendered her desolate and distressed. For the termination of pagan persecution made way for those events which at length terminated in the antichristian power, the continuance of which was fixed to one thousand two hundred and sixty years. (*Notes*, xi. 1—14.) But God had provided a place where he would sustain her when the time arrived; and her flight into the wilderness is here mentioned by way of anticipation. This interpretation has been objected to, because the sixth verse is supposed to be introduced by anticipation; but, in fact, it is manifest that the apostle thus introduces it; else, why does he resume it, after several verses, predicting most important events, (14) with some additional circumstances? Yet even then, the church is represented only as prepared to fly, not as yet actually fled. The author has before shown his decided opinion, and stated his reasons for it, that "the little book" contained no more than part of the eleventh chapter, that the slaying of the witnesses is *yet future*, and that the concluding part of the preceding chapter, to the end of the eighteenth verse, brings the series of predicted events to the Millennium, and indeed to the end of the world. If, then, this and the following chapters relate, as undoubtedly they do, to events *preceding* the Millennium, the sacred writer must in some place go back, and resume his subject; and no part can be selected, in which this can so naturally be fixed, as the last verse of the preceding chapter, which introduces the beginning of this. 'We would also divide the Revelation 'into two parts, or rather the book so divides itself. For 'the former part proceeds, as we have seen, in a regular 'and successive series, from the apostle's days to the con'summation of all things. Nothing can be added, but it 'must fall somewhere or other, within the compass of 'this period; it must be a resumption of the same sub'jects, and this latter part may most properly be con'sidered as an enlargement and illustration of the former. 'Several things, which before were only touched upon, 'require to be more copiously handled, and placed in a 'stronger light.' It was said, that "the beast should make "war against the witnesses, and overcome them;" 'but 'who, or what, *the beast* is, we may reasonably conjec'ture, but the apostle himself will more surely explain. 'The transactions of the seventh trumpet are all summed 'up and comprised in a few verses, but we shall see the 'particulars branched out and enlarged on into as many 'chapters. In short, this latter part is designed as a 'supplement to the former, to complete what was de'ficient, to explain what was dubious, to illustrate what 'was obscure; and as the former described more the des'tinies of the Roman empire, so this latter relates to the 'fates of the Christian church.' (*Bp. Newton.*) Nothing more fully confirms my opinion, that bishop Newton's outline is the true interpretation, than the dissatisfaction

7 ¶ And there was [t] war in heaven; [u] Michael [x] and his angels fought against [y] the dragon; and the dragon fought and [z] his angels,

8 And [a] prevailed not; neither was [b] their place found any more in heaven.

9 And [c] the great dragon was cast out, [d] that old serpent, called [e] the Devil, [f] and Satan, which [g] deceiveth the whole world: [h] he was cast out [i] into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

10 And [k] I heard a loud voice, saying in heaven, Now is come salvation and strength, and [l] the kingdom of our God, and [m] the power of his Christ: for [n] the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

11 And [o] they overcame him by [p] the blood of the Lamb, and by [q] the word of their testimony; and [r] they loved not their lives unto the death.

12 Therefore [s] rejoice, *ye* heavens, and ye that dwell in them. [t] Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, [u] because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

t xiii. 7. xix. 11—20. Is xxxiv 5 Eph. vi. 12 *Gr.*
u Is lv. 4. Dan. x. 13. 21. xi. 1. Heb. ii 10. Jude 9.
x Matt. xiii. 41. xvi. 27 xxiv. 31. xxvi. 53. 2 Thes i 7.
y *See on*, 3, 4
z 9 Ps lxxviii. 49. Matt xxv. 41. 2 Cor. xii. 7. *Gr.* 2 Pet ii. 4
a 11. Ps. xiii 4. cxviii. 10—13. cxxix. 2. Jer. i. 19. v. 22 Matt xvi. 18 Rom. viii 31—39.
b Job vii. 10. viii. 18. xx. 9. xxvii. 21—23. Ps xxxvii 10 Acts i. 25. Jude 6 ——c iii. 7.——d 14, 15. xx. 2 Gen. iii 1 4 13 Is xxvii. 1. lxv. 25
e ix. 20 xvi 14. xviii. 2 Matt. iv. 1 v 8 xiii. 39. Luke viii. 12. John iii 44. 1 Tim iii 6, 7. Heb ii. 14. 1 John iii 8—10. Jude 9.——f ii. 9. 13. 24 iii 9. 1 Chr xxi. 1 Job i. 6. 12 ii. 1 Ps. cix. 6 Zech. iii. 1, 2. Matt. iv. 10. Luke xiii. 16 xxii. 3. 21. Acts v. 3 xxvi 18. Rom. xvi. 20. 2 Cor ii. 11. xi. 14 xii. 7. 2 Thes. ii. 9.——g xiii. 14 xviii. 23. xix. 20. xx. 3. 8. 10. Matt. xxiv. 24. Rom. xvi. 18. 2 Cor. xi. 3. Eph. iv. 14 2 Thes. ii. 2. 9—11. 1 Tim ii. 14. 2 Tim. iii 13. 1 John v. 19 ——h ix. 1. Ez xxviii. 16. Luke x. 18. John xii. 31.——i Job i. 7 ii 2. Is. xiv. 12. lxv. 25. John xiv. 30. xvi. 11. 2 Cor. iv. 4. 1 Pet v. 8.——k *See on*, xi. 15 xix. 1—7.

l 1 Chr xxix 11. Ps xxii 28. xlv. 6. cxlv 11—13. Dan. ii. 44. Matt. vi. 10. Luke xi. 2
m ii. 26 Ps. ii 8—12. cx. 5, 6. Matt. xxvi 64. xxviii. 18 1 Cor. v 4 2 Cor xii. 9.
n Job i. 9. ii 5. Zech iii 1, 2. Luke xxii. 31. Tit. ii 3. *Gr.*
o ii. 7. 11. 17. 26. iii 5 12 21 John xvi. 33. Rom. viii. 34—39 xvi. 20. 1 Cor. xv. 57. 2 Cor. x. 3—5. Eph. vi. 13—18. 2 Tim iv. 7, 8. Heb. ii 14, 15. 1 John ii. 13, 14. iv. 4. v. 5.
p vii. 10—14. xiv. 1—4. xv 3.
q 17. *See on* i 2. 9. vi. 9. xi 7. xix. 10.
r ii. 10 18. xx. 4 Luke xiv. 26. Acts xx 24. xxi 13 Heb. xi. 35—38 ——s xviii. 20. xix. 1—7 Ps xcvi. 11—13 cxlviii. 1—4 Is. xlix 13. lv 12, 13 Luke ii 14 xv. 10.
t viii. 13. ix. 12. xi. 14 ——u x. 6 Heb x. 37. 2 Pet. iii. 8.

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which permanently rests on my mind, after carefully considering those expositions which have been substituted in the place of it. While objections are stated, I hesitate, not at once perceiving how they can be answered: but when the interpretation, substituted in its place, has excited my attention, still more insuperable objections crowd on my mind. 'The man-child is the mystic word of God, 'which is described as the Son of the church, because it 'is the incorruptible seed, from which all true believers 'are born.' (*Faber.*) This mystic word is, then, rather the parent, than the son, of the church; but, waiving this, if the respectable writer here cited could not make out his system, without having recourse to so indefinite and allegorical an interpretation of an event, evidently of primary importance in the prophecy, I cannot but conclude, that his plan of interpretation is, in this respect, erroneous; and though, all things considered, it is with great regret, I must give that of bishop Newton the decided preference. Certainly the subversion of the Pagan persecuting Roman empire, and that of the ancient system of idolatry, as supported by all the genius, influence, and power of Greece and Rome, was no inconsiderable event, in the prophetical history of the Christian church: and had it not been specially and prominently marked, it might have been thought an extraordinary omission. Whatever the character of Constantine, or that of his successors, was, the revolution was wonderful: the whole Pagan system was cast down from its heaven, its authority and persecuting domination, and the ruler or rulers of the nations professed Christianity, and protected the church. Subsequent corruptions, terminating in still more dire and destructive persecutions, indeed followed, and are particularly foretold: but surely it is natural to suppose, that the prophet, if indeed he resumed his subject to give a more particular account of the periods which he had compendiously mentioned, should go back to the first ages, and in few words mark the deliverance of the church from Pagan pesecution, the revolution in the empire from Pagan to Christian. I by no means think, with bishop Newton, that Galerius, or any personal enemy to Constantine, is meant by the red, or fiery, dragon; but the whole Pagan authority and influence, instigated by the devil, (as the papal power and influence afterwards was,) and seeking the destruction of Christianity, and of the Christian rulers and princes who supported it. So that we may understand, as literally as we choose, the language concerning "the old dragon; only remembering that he "works in" and by "the children of disobedience." Christians are spoken of, as exercising the authority of Christ, and ruling the nations with a rod of iron: (ii. 27:) it can therefore be no objection, that the same allusion is made in respect of the first Christian emperors, under whom the most entire revolution, from persecuting idolatry, in full domination, to the establishment of Christianity, as the religion of the Roman empire, took place. Some commentators, indeed, would interpret this *man child* to be Christ himself; but this cannot be meant, for he was born of the Jewish, not of the Christian church; and the apostle spake as a prophet, not as an historian; events future to him must then, exclusively, be intended.

V. 7—12. The events, here foretold, preceded, and made way for, the church's flight into the wilderness. The strenuous efforts of the Pagans against the establishment of Christianity, and the destruction of their idolatrous worship, was, as I apprehend, represented by the dragon and his angels maintaining war in heaven against Michael and his angels; perhaps with some reference to the expulsion of Satan and his adherents from heaven, on their original apostacy. Michael may represent Christ; and the devil, or Satan, the old slanderer, adversary, and murderer of mankind, was the invisible commander of the opposite army. The former employed as his instruments Christian magistrates, faithful ministers, and believers, as well as angels; the latter fought by persecuting emperors, idolatrous priests, and heathen philosophers. The conflict was long and sharp; but it ended in the total defeat of Satan's army, in the deposing of idolaters from all rule and authority, and in their reduction to the most abject condition. This was represented by the devil's being cast out of heaven: for, by the power of idolatrous emperors and magistrates, he had maintained that false religion, by which he had deceived all the world, and seduced them to

13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, [x] he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man *child.*

x 4,5. Ps. xxxvii. 12–14. Gen. iii. 15. John xvi. 33.

14 And [y] to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, [z] that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for [a] a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

y Ex. xix. 4 Deut. xxxii 11, 12 Ps. lv. 6. Is. xl. 31
z *See on*, 6. xvii. 3.
a xi 2, 3. Dan. vii. 25. xii. 7.

15 And the serpent [b] cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

b xvii. 15. Ps. xviii 4 lxv. 7. xciii. 3, 4 Is. viii 7. xxviii. 2. lix. 19.

16 And [c] the earth helped the woman; and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

c Ex. xii 35, 36. 1 Kings xvii. 6, 2 Kings viii. 9.

17 And [d] the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went [e] to make war with the remnant of her seed, [f] which keep the commandments of God, [g] and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

d *See on*, 12. John viii 44. 1 Pet. v. 8
e xi. 7. xiii. 7. xvii. 6. 14. xviii. 20. xix. 19. xx. 8, 9. Gen. iii. 15 Dan vii. 23 –26. xi 36.
f xiv. 12. xxii. 14. Matt. xxviii. 20. 1 John v. 2, 3
g *See on*, 11. i. 2. 9, vi. 9. xx. 4. 1 Cor ii. 1. 1 John v 10.

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be his subjects and worshippers; but, by the subversion of that authority, and the subsequent demolition of idolatry, he was cast down from his dignity, as god and prince of this world, for a time, and in a measure. (*Luke* x. 18.) When the pagan emperors were dethroned, Satan's angels were cast out with him; for both the instruments and ministers of idolatry were laid aside; and even their very idols were destroyed with contempt and execration.—It is remarkable, that Constantine himself, and others of his time, describe these events under the same image of the dethroning of the dragon. 'Moreover, a picture of Constantine was set up over the palace-gate, with a cross over his head, and under his feet the great enemy of mankind, (who persecuted the church by means of impious tyrants,) in the form of a dragon, transfixed with a dart through the midst of its body, and falling headlong into the depth of the sea.' (*Newton.*) This shows how Christians then understood the prophecy; and no doubt they rightly interpreted it.—Upon this great victory, the apostle heard songs of praise in heaven, because salvation and strength were come; the church was delivered from persecution, and its friends advanced to authority; the kingdom of God was openly established, and the power of his anointed Son most gloriously displayed. For the accuser of the brethren was cast out of his dominion, and deprived of his influence; so that he could no longer lay grievous crimes to the charge of the Christians, for which to put them to death; as Satan had accused Job before God himself, and was ready to accuse others continually night and day. (*Marg. Ref.*) But this victory was not ascribed to the sword of war, which was only a subordinate means, when matters were brought to a crisis; for it was acquired through the merit and efficacy of the atoning sacrifice of Christ, by faith in his blood, and a bold and holy profession of his Gospel; together with "the word of *their* testimony," who went forth every where preaching the doctrine of salvation; and "who loved not their lives unto the death," but readily sealed their testimony with blood, when called to it. These were the warriors and the weapons, by which Christianity undermined and subverted the power of the idolatrous empire, and acquired an entire ascendency over their pagan enemies: and if Christians had continued to fight with these weapons, or such as these, their victories would have been more numerous and glorious, and the effects of them more durable. The heavens were, therefore, called upon to rejoice, with all the inhabitants of them, or all who were on the Lord's side in this contest. But at the same time a wo was denounced upon the inhabitants of the earth and the sea, or the nations in general; because the devil and his dethroned agents would not rest in their disgraced condition: though idolatry was suppressed, it was not destroyed, and its partizans would surely excite fresh commotions. Nay, the devil would be the more furious in his opposition to the Gospel, to the ruin of numbers of souls, and to the great distraction of the empire; as he would know that his time was short, that Pagan idolatry would soon be totally crushed, and that the Seed of the woman would at length bruise his head: he would, therefore, take his opportunity of doing all possible mischief to mankind, whilst he had it in his power.

V. 13—17. Whilst the idolatrous party, who were the agents of the devil, were constrained to submti to the power of Christian rulers, they still persisted in their persecuting enmity to the church, and tried various methods of re-establishing their ancient worship. Several attempts were made of this kind, during the reign of Constantine. Julian the apostate left no method untried, by which he hoped to effect it: he endeavoured to hinder the liberal education of the Christians, that their ignorance might expose them to contempt, and render them incapable of defending or propagating their religion; he employed writers, of great learning and ingenuity, to ridicule, revile, and reason against Christianity; he excited Arian princes to persecute their orthodox subjects; and in many other ways he attempted to undermine the cause of Christ. At the same time, the devil and his agents prevailed to corrupt the church with manifold heresies, to deform it with various scandals, and to rend it in pieces with fierce contentions; and these evils grew worse and worse, during the period of the first four trumpets. (*Notes*, viii.) Thus the way was preparing for the erection of another idolatrous persecuting power, which will be shortly considered. In the mean time, two wings, as of a great eagle, were given to the woman, that she might be ready to flee to her place in the wilderness, when the time came. (*Ex.* xix. 4.) These are supposed by some writers to refer to the eastern and western empires, whose standard was an eagle, and whose protection was the means of preservation to the church, till the prefixed time of her obscurity arrived. In the midst of the preceding convulsions and heresies, the church was, as it were, preparing to flee away to her retreat, from the fury of her opposers; where she was at length to be nourished, "for a time, and times, and half

CHAP. XIII.

A vision of a beast rising out of the sea; with an account of its power, rage, and success, 1—10; *of a second beast, rising out of the earth, exercising the power of the former beast, making an image of it, and compelling all to worship it,* 11—17. *The number of the beast,* 18.

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a time," or for three years and a half, forty-two months, or one thousand two hundred and sixty days; but her flight was not completed till the establishment of the antichristian power spoken of in the next chapter. (*Note,* xi. 1, 2.) To prevent her escape, the dragon cast out of his mouth a flood of water, to carry her away. This is explained, with great propriety, of the inundation of the Huns, Goths, Vandals, and other barbarous nations, by which the western empire was overwhelmed; for it is known that the strenuous adherents to paganism encouraged these irruptions, in hopes of subverting Christianity by their means; and no doubt Satan expected to overwhelm the church, when idolaters overturned the empire. But the event proved entirely contrary to all their expectations. "The earth helped the woman, and swallowed "up the flood;" the victorious barbarians united themselves to the vanquished Romans, and formed one people with them, in the several provinces of the empire; they even embraced, in form at least, the Christian religion. Ungodly men of various descriptions, from regard to their secular interests, protected the church, amidst these convulsions: and the subversion and dismembering of the western empire did not at all help the cause of idolatry, nay, it rather tended to the propagation of Christianity. But the dragon, being disappointed in this attempt, was the more enraged, and took another method of making war against true Christians, as the seed of the church.—These were but a remnant, for superstitions and heresies, of various kinds, had long before this increased exceedingly, which afforded the enemy his opportunity for the assault and success predicted in the next chapter. If the plan of interpretation, before laid down, be well grounded, these verses must, as has been stated, predict the events, which made way for the establishment of the persecuting domination of nominal Christians, the flight of the church into the wilderness, and the prophesying of the witnesses in sackcloth, during one thousand two hundred and sixty days. The particulars of these latter events are recorded in the two following chapters, with several things relating to the approach and earnests of the church's delivery, and the destruction of her grand enemy. In the fifteenth chapter there is a solemn pause, as introductory to the subsequent events, and then the prediction proceeds, in regular order, to the Millennium, the day of judgment, and the heavenly world. Thus, from the beginning of this chapter, where the prophet resumes his subject, a series of events, succeeding to each other, is predicted and every part casts light on all that precedes or follows. But if the predictions of these verses be referred to any part of the twelve hundred and sixty years, or to the end of them, this order is, as it appears to me, without necessity, and without proof, disturbed; and indeed an entire new interpretation of the subsequent chapters, as relating to future events, seems indispensably necessary, to preserve the consistency of the interpretation. As I am fully persuaded that the transactions, predicted in the two next chapters, (the concluding part of the fourteenth alone excepted,) are already fulfilled, I must adhere to the outlines of bishop Newton's interpretation, and that of those with whom he coincides, in preference to latter systems of interpretation.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

True Christians, being of heavenly birth, and expecting a heavenly felicity, have put on Christ, are clothed in his righteousness, irradiated by his light, beautified by his image, and taught to put earthly things beneath their feet; and they deem it their honour to profess, adorn, and recommend, the doctrine of the holy apostles. All who are thus minded should pray fervently, and labour diligently, in their several places, for the increase, prosperity, and purity of the church; and ministers should especially abound in these things. For the devil and his instruments are vigilant, united, bold, and unwearied, in their efforts to destroy the religion of Christ, and too generally the kingdoms of the world have been seduced into their service: surely, then, the servants of God ought not to be timid, heartless, or negligent, in opposing their designs!—It is a striking proof of the wretched state of this apostate world, that so large a proportion of its inhabitants have generally been subjected to men, eminent only for tyranny and cruelty; and it is a great mystery in Providence, that these are left to attempt so many things against his church. They cannot, however, prevent the conversion of sinners, or the final salvation of believers; nor can they withstand him, who is exalted to the throne of God, to rule over all nations with a rod of iron; or overcome those who are invested with authority and armed with power by him, for the benefit of his church, and to crush those who persecute it. The Lord does not indeed generally work by the arm of the magistrate; but when he is pleased to raise up rulers, to protect his people, and by *scriptural means* to promote his cause, we should be thankful for them, and avail ourselves of their countenance and assistance, though the church has her place prepared, and her sustenance given her, far more frequently in a wilderness, than in an imperial palace.

V. 7—17.

Whilst Michael our Prince, his angels, and his servants, fight against the dragon and his angels, we need not fear the final prevalence of any enemy, either against the church, or any true believer; the "great dragon, even "the old serpent called the devil, and Satan," while he deceives and rules over all the rest of the world, will as surely be prevented from hurting the true church, as he and his angels were cast out of heaven at first. For "salvation and strength, the kingdom of our God, and the "power of his Christ," will renewedly come, from time to time, till the dominion of every enemy be destroyed, and

AND I stood [a] upon the sand of the sea, [b] and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, [c] having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns [d] ten crowns, and upon his heads the * name of [e] blasphemy.

2 And the beast which I saw [f] was like unto a leopard, [g] and his feet were as *the feet* of a bear, [h] and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and [i] the dragon [k] gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

3 And I saw [l] one of his heads as it were † wounded to death; [m] and his deadly wound was healed: [n] and all the world wondered after the beast.

4 And [o] they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: [p] and they worshipped the beast, saying, [q] Who *is* like unto the beast? [r] who is able to make war with him?

a Jer. v. 22.
b xviii. 21. Dan. vii 2, 3
c x. 7 *See on*, xii. 3 xvii 3 7—2 16. Dan vii 7, 8 19, 20 23, 24.
d xii 3.
* Or *names*
e 5, 6 xvii. 3 5 Dan. vii 25 xi. 36 2 Thes. ii 3 4
f Jer v. 6. xiii. 23. Dan. vii. 6 Hos xiii. 7 Hab. i 8.
g 1 Sam xvii. 34—37 2 Kings ii. 24. Prov xvii 12. xxviii. 15 Dan. vii. 4, 5. Hos. xiii 8. Am. v 19.——h Ps. xxii. 21 Is. v. 29. Hos xi 10 Am iii. 12. 2 Tim iv. 17. 1 Pet v. 8.——i *See on*, xii 3, 4. 9. 13 15.——k xvi 10. xvii. 12 xix. 20. xx 2.
l 1. 14 xvii 10.
† Gr. *slain.*
m 12. Ez. xxx 24.
n 4. xvii. 6. 8, 13. 17. Luke ii. 1. John xii. 19 Acts viii. 10. 11. 13. 2 Thes. ii 9—12
o 2 ix. 20. Ps cvi. 37. 38. 1 Cor. x. 20—22 2 Cor. iv. 4.
p 12, 13. 15. Dan. xi. 36, 37 2 Thes. ii. 4
q xviii. 18 *See on*, Ex. xv. 11 Ps lxxxix. 8.
r Deut ix 2. 1 Sam. xvii. 24.

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the mouth of every "accuser of the brethren," be stopped. But victory in this holy war can be obtained only "by "the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of the testi"mony" of his servants. Faith, prayer, a holy life, patient continuance in well-doing, and a willingness to venture, or suffer, even unto death, have been the weapons by which the saints have always conquered; and we must go forth with the same armour, and fight in the same manner, if we would share their triumphs. Over such victories all heaven rejoices, and all that love the kingdom of Christ. But Satan and his agents, however degraded and baffled, will proceed to bring woes on the inhabitants of the earth; they rage the more, when their plots are defeated, and multitudes are by them deceived and destroyed. Yet the church still maintains its ground on earth, and believers continually enter heaven; when dangers seem to overtake them, they are furnished with eagles' wings, to fly away and be at rest; when heresies, infidelity, or tribulation, appear ready to overwhelm them, the earth opens and swallows up the flood. Even worldly men give assistance to the church, when the Lord is pleased to make use of them, and she will be preserved for ever, with all the remnant of her seed "who keep the com"mandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus "Christ."

NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1. The apostle, standing on the shore, saw a savage beast rise out of the sea, or a tyrannical, idolatrous, and persecuting power springing up out of the commotions which took place in the world. (*Notes, Dan.* vii.) All interpreters agree, that the Roman empire, in some form or other, was here intended; and Papists, continuing such, must contend, though against the most conclusive evidence, that Pagan Rome was meant. Daniel in vision saw the rise of the Babylonian empire, as well as that of the others, though the rise of it preceded his prophecy; (*Dan.* vii. 3—7:) so that the circumstance of John's seeing the rise of this beast, is not alone conclusive in the argument; but the reign of the beast, during twelve hundred and sixty years, from whatever period it be dated, must be so; for the Pagan Roman empire, properly speaking, did not continue three hundred years from the time when this prophecy was delivered, and the very last remains of it were subverted in about four hundred years. Indeed, from the building of Rome to the time of Constantine, the first Christian emperor, was considerably less than eleven hundred years, and even to Augustulus, the last emperor, A. D. 476, that is, from its birth to its death, it lasted at the most only twelve hundred and twenty-eight years; and for the first five or six hundred years of this term, the Romans had not the smallest concern in any thing which respected the church of God. It is, therefore, absolutely certain, that the Roman power, as professing Christianity, and not that of Pagan Rome, is meant. The dragon before-mentioned had "seven crowns on his "heads," but this beast hath "ten crowns on his horns," which plainly showed that a revolution would take place before the time referred to, that the dominion would be removed from the imperial city, and divided among ten kingdoms. The seven heads had indeed lost their crowns, but they had preserved, or acquired, a name, or names, of blasphemy. Imperial Rome was often called The eternal city, and The goddess of the earth, with other blasphemous titles; and altars, temples, and sacrifices, were assigned to her, as a deity: and it will appear in the sequel, how antichristian Rome, after the loss of the royal dignity, obtained, or resumed, similar names of blasphemy.

V. 2—4. This beast was without a name, like the fourth in Daniel's prophecy, (*Notes, Dan.* vii;) but it resembled in divers respects the other three beasts, which that prophet had seen, and thus united the fierceness, cruelty, and terror, of all the rest. It was indeed the same with Daniel's fourth beast, the same empire, but in one special form; for the dragon had now given his power, throne, and great authority, to the beast. The dragon may here mean, either the devil, or the devil's vicegerent, the idolatrous Roman empire; so that when another idolatrous persecuting power had succeeded to that of the heathen emperors, then the dragon had transferred his dominion to the beast, or the devil had appointed another vicegerent; and all the world knows, that this accords to the history of the Roman empire, Pagan and Papal. The project of re-establishing the old idolatry failing, a new species was invented; saints and angels succeeded to gods and demigods, and persecution was the means employed for supporting it. The head of the beast, which was wounded to death, represented the entire subversion of the imperial authority in the time of Augustulus, or when Rome became a dukedom to the Exarchate of Ravenna. (*Note*, viii. 12.) Five of the heads of the beast, or the dragon, (for in this respect they are the same,) were superseded, before the apostle's time, (xvii. 10,) namely, kings, consuls, dictators, decemvirs, and military tribunes, but at the time above-mentioned, the sixth received a deadly wound. It was, however, afterwards healed, by the revival of the imperial name and dignity, in the person of Charles the

5 And there was given unto him [s] a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; [t] and power was given unto him * to continue forty *and* two months.

6 And [u] he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, [x] and his tabernacle, [y] and them that dwell in heaven.

7 And it was given unto him [z] to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: [a] and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

8 And [b] all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, [c] whose names are not written in the book of life of [d] the Lamb slain [e] from the foundation of the world.

9 If [f] any man have an ear, let him hear.

10 He [g] that leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity: [h] he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. [i] Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

[s] Dan. vii. 8. 11. 25. xi. 36.
[t] *See on*, xi. 2, 3. xii. 6. 14.
* Or, *to make war*. 7 xi 7.
[u] Job iii. 1. Matt. xii. 34. xv. 19. Rom. iii. 13.
[x] xxi. 3. John i. 14 *Gr.* Col. i. 19. ii. 9. Heb. ix. 2. 11, 12.
[y] iv. 1. 4. v 13. vii. 9. xi. 12. xii. 12. xviii 20 xix. 1–6. Heb. xii. 22, 23.
[z] xi. 7. xii. 17. Dan. vii. 21. 25 viii. 24, 25. xi 36–39. xii. 1.
[a] x. 11 xi. 18. xvii 15 Ex. ix. 16. Is. x. 15. xxxvii. 26. Jer. xxv. 9. xxvii. 6, 7. li. 20–24. Dan. v. 18–23. John xix. 11.
[b] *See on*, 3, 4. 14, 15.
[c] iii. 5 xx 12 15. xxi 27 Ex. xxxii 32 Is. iv. Dan. xii. 1. Luke x. 20. Phil iv 3
[d] *See on*, v. 6–9. 12. John i 29.
[e] xvii 8. Eph. i. 4. Tit. i 2. 2Pet. i. 19. 20.
[f] *See on*, ii. 7. 11. 29
[g] Ex. xxi. 23–25. Is. xiv 2 xxxiii. 1. Matt. vii. 2.
[h] xvi 6 Gen ix. 5 6. Is xxvi. 21. Matt xxvi 52.
[i] i 9. ii 2 10. iii. 10 xiv. 12. Lam. iii. 26. Hab ii. 3 Luke xviii. 1–8. xxi. 19. Col. i. 11. Heb vi. 12. x. 36, 37. xii. 3, 4. Jam i 2–4 v. 7, 8.

Great, who was proclaimed Augustus, A. D. 800; and this head hath subsisted ever since in the emperors of Germany, or of the holy Roman empire. After this, the temporal and ecclesiastical rulers mutually strengthening each other, the Roman power became again formidable, and all the world was astonished to behold that empire revived, which seemed to be totally extinct: so that a superstitious and idolatrous obedience was rendered to this temporal authority, as engaged to support the ecclesiastical tyranny of the Romish church. Thus they virtually worshipped the dragon, who gave his power to the beast, by submitting without reserve to the same idolatrous persecuting power as before, only in another form; and they worshipped the beast as one who never had his equal on earth, and who would surely crush all that presumed to oppose him. So that the old idolatry was fully re-established, with new names; and the worship of idols, or creatures, is in effect worshipping the devil. Some explain "the deadly wound," inflicted on one head of the beast, to mean the revolution which took place, when Christian emperors succeeded the Pagan persecuting emperors; and the healing of this deadly wound, of the subsequent establishment of another idolatrous persecuting power, bearing the Christian name. The two interpretations agree in the grand outline; and the nature of this work precludes the particular consideration of subordinate questions.

V. 5—7. To this monstrous beast "was given a "mouth, speaking great things and blasphemies." It will soon be stated, that the ecclesiastical power of Rome was the agent, and the Pope the speaking image of the beast; (11—15.) and every one knows what blasphemous and enormous claims of His holiness, Infallibility, Sovereign of kings and kingdoms, Christ's vicegerent on earth, yea, God upon earth," have been spoken by this mouth of the beast. Power also, or the secular empire, was given him to *continue*, or rather to *practise*, or to prosper in his undertakings, for forty-two months, or twelve hundred and sixty years. He would during this period "open his mouth in blasphemies against God," combining with the ecclesiastical power in its usurpations, and in entrenching upon the Lord's peculiar honours and prerogatives. "He would blaspheme the name of God," by requiring all men, at the instigation of the ecclesiastical power, to render that worship to creatures, which belonged to him only, "and his tabernacle," or true Christians, by stigmatizing, anathematizing, and murdering them as heretics, "and them that dwell in heaven," by scandalizing angels and departed saints, as if they sacrilegiously sought, and were pleased with, the worship paid to them, and by ascribing to the latter a variety of ridiculous actions which they never did. It was also given "to the beast to wage war against, and overcome, the "saints;" and no computation can reach the numbers who have been put to death, in different ways, on account of their maintaining the profession of the Gospel, and opposing the corruptions of the church of Rome.' A million of the poor Waldenses perished in France; nine hundred thousand orthodox Christians were slain in less than thirty years after the institution of the Jesuits; the duke of Alva boasted of having put thirty-six thousand to death in the Netherlands, by the hands of the common executioner, during the space of a few years; the inquisition destroyed by various tortures one hundred and fifty thousands Christians, within thirty years; these are a few specimens, and but a few, of those which history hath recorded; but the total amount will never be known, till "the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more "cover her slain." These were put to death by the *secular* arm, by that power, of which the empire was the head, and which subsisted in ten kingdoms. Mr. Faber has here very justly pointed out an inaccuracy in bishop Newton, who seems to confound this beast, or the secular empire in all the ten kingdoms, with the little horn predicted by Daniel, which accords to the second beast, afterwards mentioned. Yet, as the secular power executed the persecuting decrees of the ecclesiastical, and gave its power to that beast, the things stated by bishop Newton, as accomplishments of this prophecy, were evidently such, though he has not, with his usual accuracy, marked the manner in which this took place.

V. 8—10. By the means above-mentioned, the beast maintained his dominion over all the inhabitants of the western world, who all worshipped him, by the most abject submission of body, soul, and conscience, except "the remnant according to the election of grace," "whose "names were written in the book of life," belonging to "the Lamb that had been slain from the foundation of "the world." It is not quite clear whether Christ be here said to "have been slain from the foundation of the "world," in the purpose of God, and the efficacy of his blood to the salvation of all believers; or whether the names of the persons spoken of were written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, as the elect of God; but both amount to the same thing. This prophecy

11 ¶ And I beheld another beast, [k] coming up out of the earth; [l] and he had two horns like a lamb, [m] and he spake as a dragon.

12 And [n] he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, [o] and causeth the earth, and them which dwell therein, to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

13 And [p] he doeth great wonders, so that [q] he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

14 And [r] deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by *the means of* those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them [s] that dwell on the earth, [t] that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

15 And he had power to give * life

k 1. xi. 7. xvii. 8.
l Matt. vii. 15. Rom. xvi. 18. 2 Cor. xi. 13—15.
m 17. xii 3. 4. 17 xvii. 6 Dan. vii. 8. 24, 25 2 Thes. ii. 4
n 1—8
o 3. 14—17 xvii. 10, 11. 2 Thes. ii. 4.
p xvi. 14. xix. 20 Ex. vii. 11. 12. 22 viii 7 18, 19. ix. 11 Deut. xiii. 2. 3. Matt. xxiv. 24 Mark xiii. 22. Acts viii. 9—11. 2 Thes. ii. 9, 10.
q xi 5 Num. xvi. 35 1 Kings xviii. 38. 2 Kings ii. 10—14. Matt xvi. 1. Luke ix. 54—56. 2 Tim. iii. 8.
r xii. 9 xviii. 23. xix 20. xx 3. 10 1 Kings xxii. 20. *Marg.* Job xii. 16 Is xliv. 20 Ez. xiv 9. 2 Thes ii 10—12.
s *See on*, 3. 8.
t 3, 4. 11 15 xiv. 9. 11. xv 2. xvi. 2. xix 20. xx. 4 Ez viii 10 xvi. 17 Dan. vi. 7 xi. 36. 2 Thes. ii 4.

* *Gr. breath:* Gen. ii. 7. Ps. cxxxv. 17 Jer. x. 14. li. 17 Hab. ii. 19 Jam. ii. 26 *Gr.*

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was of that importance to the encouragement and direction of believers, during the reign of the beast, as well as for the due understanding of the greatest part of this book, that the attention of every one was especially called to it. For though the persecutors would assuredly be destroyed, in the same manner as they had destroyed others, yet here would be the trial of the faith and patience of the saints, to bear up under such complicated dangers and sufferings, and of so long continuance, beyond the example of all former times, and to persevere in faith and obedience through them.

V. 11, 12. This second beast did not come up out of the sea, or from wars and tumults, as the first did, but out of the earth, silently and gradually, as plants spring up, (2 *Pet.* ii. 1.) and it had two horns like a lamb, denoting that it was a spiritual dominion, professedly derived from Christ, and exercised in a gentle manner. This beast was, therefore, the emblem of the Roman hierarchy, and his two horns have, very probably, been supposed to signify the *regular* and *secular* clergy of that church; as the other beast was of the temporal authority exercised in the ten kingdoms of the empire, in support of that spiritual tyranny. The second beast is elsewhere called "the false prophet." (xvi. 13. xix. 20.) which abundantly confirms this interpretation. 'In the 'language of *symbols*, *horns* are *kingdoms*, consequently 'the horns of an ecclesiastical beast must be ecclesiastical 'kingdoms. Now I know not what idea we can annex 'to an ecclesiastical kingdom, subservient to the head of 'an ecclesiastical empire, except that of a regularly organ'ized body of ecclesiastics, subject primarily to their 'own immediate superior, and ultimately to the head of 'the whole empire.' (*Faber.*) Thus the regular clergy, or the different orders of monks, are subject to the principal of their order, who himself is subject to the church and bishop of Rome; and, in like manner, the secular clergy, or parochial ministers, and others connected with them, are subject primarily to their ordinary, or diocesan bishop, he to the archbishop, primate, metropolitan, or patriarch, but all to the church and bishop of Rome.—And as they are enjoined celibacy, this subjection, and their devotedness to the common cause of that church, are most entire and efficacious. But though the beast had horns as a lamb, yet he spake as a dragon, or with all the tyranny and cruelty of the persecuting Roman emperors; and the high claims of authority, and the peremptory commands, menaces, and decisions of the Roman hierarchy, are well known. The second beast is likewise the minister, adviser, or agent of the first beast, and "exerciseth all his "power before him;" accordingly, the different orders of monks, as well as the secular clergy of Rome, have always possessed immense influence in the affairs of the kings and nations belonging to that communion; their principal ministers of state have generally been cardinals, or other ecclesiastics; the magistrate has been engaged to use his sword to enforce their decrees, or execute their sentences against heretics, and bloody wars without number have been waged in support of their antichristian dominion. In return for these services, they "cause the earth to worship "the first beast;" they have always been the enemies of civil liberty, and the supporters of tyranny, and even of the *unlawful* commands of those princes who supported their authority, which is a kind of idolatry, as it exalts the will of man above that of God. So that tyranny upholds them, and they uphold tyranny; they enslave men's consciences, and help kings to enslave their persons; and in both respects enforce idolatry. The ecclesiastical power 'is the common centre and cement, which unites 'all the distinct kingdoms of the Roman empire, and, by 'joining with them, procures them a blind obedience from 'their subjects, and so it is the occasion of the preserva'tion of the old Roman empire, in some kind of unity, 'and name, and strength.' (*Whiston.*) Implicit obedience, however, to the authority of the beast, as supporting idolatry, and requiring men to worship creatures and images, under heavy penalties, must be especially meant. 'Here we have a plain prediction of some spi'ritual power, which should arrogate to itself universal 'or catholic authority in religious matters, which should 'co-exist upon the most friendly terms with the ten-horned 'temporal empire, instigating it to persecute, during the 'space of forty-two prophetic months, all such as 'should dare to dispute its usurped domination, and which 'in short should solve the symbolical problem of two con'temporary beasts, by exhibiting to the world the singular 'spectacle of a complete empire within an empire. 'Where we are to look for this power, since the great 'Roman beast was divided into ten horns, let the im'partial voice of history determine.' 'Daniel, who fully 'delineates the character of the little horn, is entirely 'silent respecting the two-horned beast. John, who as 'fully delineates the character of the two-horned beast, is 'entirely silent respecting the little horn. The little horn 'and the two-horned beast, act precisely in the same 'capacity; each exercising the power of the first beast 'before him, and each perishing in one common destruc'tion with him.' (*Faber.*) (*Notes, Dan.* vii.)

unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both [u] speak, and [x] cause that as many, as would not worship the image of the beast, should be killed.

16 And he causeth all, [y] both small and great, [z] rich and poor, [a] free and bond, to * receive [b] a mark in their right hand, [c] or in their foreheads:

17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had [d] the mark, or [e] the name of the beast, [f] or the number of his name.

u Ps. cxv. 5. cxxxv. 16. Jer. x 5.
x *See on*, 14. xvi. 5, 6. xvii. 6. 15. 17. xviii 20. 24. xix. 20. Dan. vii. 20, 21. 25.
y xi. 18. xix. 5. 18. xx. 12. 2Chr xv. 13. Ps cxv. 13. Acts xxvi. 22.
z Job xxxiv. 10. Ps. xlix. 2——a vi. 15. xix. 18. 1 Cor. xii. 13. Gal. iii. 28. Eph. vi. 8 Col. iii. 11
* Gr *give them.*
b xiv. 9—11 xv. 2. xix. 20. xx 4. Zech. xiii 6
c vii 3. Ex. xiii. 9 Deut. vi. 8. xi. 18. Ez ix 4 2 Tim iii 8.
d *See on*, 16.
e iii 12. xiv. 11 xvii. 5 xxii. 4
f 18. xv. 2.

V. 13—17. The second beast maintains his power by “doing great wonders, &c.” (*Notes*, 2 *Thes.* ii. 1—9.) These, whether they be human impostures, or wrought by the agency of Satan, he doeth in the sight of men to deceive them, and in the sight of the first beast to serve him; but they are neither performed by the power, nor for the glory of God. The fire may allude to the miracles wrought by Elijah, (*Marg. Ref.*) and predict the vain pretences of the beast to miracles of the same kind; but some interpret it thus: ‘*Heaven* is a symbol of the church, and the earth of the Roman empire. The darting forth of fire out of the church upon the secular empire must mean solemn interdicts and excommunications, pronounced against those who dared to oppose the authority of the beast.’ (*Faber.*) Thus the miracles, of which the advocates for popery boast as certain marks of a true church, are here shown to be the distinguishing stigma of antichrist; that is, such ambiguous and suspicious miracles, or indeed any miracles, if wrought in support of idolatry, in opposition to the doctrines of scripture, and to justify the persecuting cruelty of those who profess them. (*Notes*, *Deut.* xiii.) By these means the two-horned beast, or the regular and secular clergy, deceived the inhabitants of the earth to make an image of the first beast, or the temporal authority of the empire, as it formerly subsisted in the reigning emperor at Rome. This image has indeed been variously interpreted. But is not the pope, as a temporal prince, the very image of the ancient emperors? Is he not, as the pretended infallible head of the church, the great idol of all zealous papists? and is he not, in both respects, the representative of the whole antichristian tyranny? Can we then doubt who this image is? Or can we help being amazed at this exact and circumstantial prediction of such improbable events, so many hundred years before they took place? The two-horned beast, or the Roman clergy, as represented by the consistory of cardinals, which assembles at the death of a pope, makes the image, when they elect a private person to that exalted station; and, by putting him in possession of the supreme authority, they give life to him as the image of the ten-horned beast, and enable him to speak, by uttering his bulls and mandates, as well as to use the names of blasphemy before-mentioned. But before this, they robe and crown the image which they have made, they place him on an altar, and kiss his feet, and they call this ceremony *adoration!* Like other idolaters, they make their idol, and then worship him; and an ancient medal, struck on that occasion, has this motto, *Quem creant, adorant*, ‘Whom they create, they adore!’ Then they use all their power and influence to support his authority through all the nations of their communion; and concur in persecuting even unto death all those, who will not join in the same idolatrous observance of it. ‘The pope is the principle of unity to the ten kingdoms of the beast, and he causeth, as far as he is able, all who will not acknowledge his supremacy to be put to death. In short, he is the most perfect resemblance of the ancient Roman emperors, is as great a tyrant in the Christian, as they were in the heathen world, presides in the same city, usurps the same powers, affects the same titles, and requires the same homage and adoration. So that the prophecy descends more and more into particulars, from the Roman state, or the ten kingdoms in general, to the Roman clergy in particular, and then to the pope, the head of the state, as well as of the church, the king of kings, as well as the bishop of bishops.’ (*Newton.*) The second beast likewise performeth other offices to the first beast, by excommunicating all those who refuse subjection to its usurped dominion, and conformity to the established worship, and thus exposing them to various temporal incapacities and punishments, as outlawed persons; so that, of whatever rank they be, they must either be marked in their right hands and their foreheads, with the mark, name, and number of the beast, as slaves and cattle are branded and numbered; that is, they must openly profess the religion of the church of Rome, and conform to its idolatries and superstitions, as the bond slaves of the beast and his image, in body, soul, and conscience, (and so be marked with the name of the beast,) or they must be inhibited from all commercial dealings, and even excluded from the most needful intercourse with mankind. Many instances of this sort are recorded in history. Thus the second beast, though, appearing as a lamb, spake like a dragon. By the mark of the beast, some understand the sign of the cross, which is used, not only in a most superstitious, but even an idolatrous manner, continually, as discriminating, and as required by authority in the church of Rome. Some explain the making of the image to mean the establishment of image-worship, and the various impostures, by which the deluded votaries were induced to suppose that the images lived, and moved, and spake. But whoever consults the marginal references will perceive such a contrast between this image, and all others mentioned in scripture, (and doubtless other priests have possessed ingenuity, and bestowed pains, in deluding the people,) that he will hesitate at a conclusion, which makes this image, in no respect, essentially different from the others. If, however, *life* and *speaking* might be interpreted to mean the priestcraft, which made the people think the images lived and spake, surely what follows must be interpreted in a most unnatural manner, when the occasion taken by the priests to persecute, is spoken of in this language; “and the image of the beast shall both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast, should be killed, &c.” It is indeed argued, that the original g i.3. xvii 9. Ps. cvii.43. Dan xii. 10. Hos. xiv. 9. Mark xiii. 14.

18 [g]Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding, count the number of the beast: for it is [h] the number of a man; and his number *is* six hundred threescore *and* six.

h xxi.17. Deut. iii. 11. Rom. iii. 5.

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should be rendered, "made an image *to* the beast, or, for " his use," and not *of* him; but instances may be brought from the Greek writers of exactly similar expressions, where the meaning is indisputably according to our translation of this passage. Indeed, if a *literal* image, or *literal* images, be meant, and yet the beasts are not supposed to be *literal* beasts, or the horns to be *literal* horns, this blending of the *literal* with the *figurative*, in the same prophecy, is not only contrary to the rules of sound interpretation, but a direct violation of that laid down by the respectable writer who has adopted this interpretation. 'The whole book, excepting those few passages, 'which are avowedly descriptive, must be understood 'either *literally* throughout, or *figuratively* throughout; 'otherwise it will be impossible to ascertain the meaning 'designed to be conveyed.' (*Faber.*) But if the pope be really this image, the language is both natural, and extremely expressive; and it has been literally verified in numerous instances, by papal interdicts, excommunications, and similar measures. I own, that the objections brought against this interpretation only lead me to perceive, that, if preceding expositors could have foreseen what their successors would have objected to their statement, they would have expressed themselves more cautiously and accurately. It is true, that the pope may be considered as in some sense the head also of the two-horned beast; yet the beast continues to exist, when there is no pope; and the cardinals, as representing the whole ecclesiastical power, are, during that vacancy, the head of the beast, and in that character they create the pope, to be the image, both of the secular and the ecclesiastical, idolatrous, persecuting power, the representative of the whole. He does not derive his dominion from any hereditary right, or from popular election, or from regal appointment; but he is the *creature* of the Romish clergy; yet, being *created* by them, he is the object of their worship, and exercises, or at least claims a right to exercise, absolute authority over both them and the kings of the earth. Indeed this claim was long generally admitted by the ten horns of the beast, though in some instances it was disputed. (xvii. 12—18.) This seems sufficient for the purpose, and, amidst so many emblems, it could hardly be supposed that no shadow of coincidence should appear. —'It may be observed, that when the first, or secular, 'beast is represented as making war with the saints and 'overcoming them, it is no where said, that the second, 'or ecclesiastical, beast should do more than cause them 'to be killed. The little horn has always worn out the 'saints, by delivering them over to the secular arm, not 'by slaying them itself. The inquisitors, with a disgusting affectation of lamb-like meekness, are wont to 'beseech the civil magistrates to show mercy to those 'unfortunate victims, whom they themselves have given 'up to be consigned to the flames.' (*Faber.*) (*Note*, 5—7.) There are various other interpretations, by different writers, of several things in these chapters, chiefly explaining them of recent events in France; but not judging any of them either well grounded, or even supported by probable arguments, I did not think it needful to introduce them in this work. The books, written expressly on the subject, must be referred to; and, in general, the writers succeed better in attempting to refute each other's interpretation, than in establishing their own, where they materially differ from the expositors, who wrote before these late transactions.

V. 18. Mention having been made of the number of the beast, or that *of his name*, the apostle next proposed to men's consideration the number itself; introducing it by saying, "Here is wisdom:" or intimating that the discovery of the *name of the beast, from the number*, would be a proof of a man's discernment; let such, therefore, as had understanding, count the number of the beast; and who then shall censure or ridicule those who attempt to do it? For it was the number of a man, either such a number as men use, or a number implying in it the name, title, or distinguishing characteristic, of a man. Now the Greek word *Lateinos* signifies the *Latin man*, or *the man of Latium*, from which place the Romans derived their original and their language; and this word, according to the genuine orthography, contains, in numerical letters, exactly the number six hundred and sixty-six. The church of Rome is properly the Latin church, and they use the Latin language in every thing; and so the beast, or the authority exercised through the ten kingdoms in support of that church, of which the pope is the living image, may well be called *Lateinos*. But though the apostle wrote in Greek, he yet used some Hebrew names in this book; so we may perhaps think he alluded to a name in that language; and it is most astonishing that the word *Romiith* in Hebrew, which answers to *Lateinos*, signifies *Roman*, contains in numeral letters exactly six hundred and sixty-six. Nor can any other two words be produced, from two different languages, which so nearly coincide together in meaning, and exacly stand for, the same number in numerical letters; the coincidence is really most surprising. As John could only refer to the Greek or the Hebrew language in this matter, and as the number of *the name* of the *Latin man*, or *the Roman*, in both languages is exactly the number of the beast, so I see no occasion to doubt any more, either about the beast or his number, especially as Ireneus in the second century put the same construction on it. *Romiith* is indeed feminine; but it may signify either the Roman *church*, or *kingdom*, the Hebrew words for both which are feminine. The word *Latinus*, or *Lateinos*, is, however, in all respects the most satisfactory, notwithstanding this coincidence. 'No name, 'though it may possibly comprehend the number six hundred and sixty-six, can be the name of the beast, unless 'it equally answers in all other particulars to the prophetic description of that name. *Lateinos* is at once 'the name of a man, (the ancient king of Latium, whence 'Rome had its origin,) the title of an empire; and the 'distinguishing appellation of every individual in that 'empire; and when the sum of its numerical letters is 'taken in the Greek language, it amounts to six hundred 'and sixty-six. On these grounds, then, I do not hesitate

CHAP. XIV.

A prophetical view of the remnant of believers, during the reign of the beast, 1—5. The progress of the reformation; the dreadful punishment of obstinate anti-christians; and the immediate felicity of those, who die in the Lord, 6—13. A figurative prediction of future terrible judgments, upon the antichristian kingdom and its subjects, 14—20.

AND [a] I looked, and, lo, [b] a lamb stood on the [c] mount Sion, and with him [d] an hundred forty *and* four thousand, [e] having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

2 And I heard [f] a voice from heaven [g] as the voice of many waters, and as [h] the voice of a great thunder: and I heard [i] the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

3 And they sung as it were [k] a new song [l] before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders; and [m] no man could learn that song but the hundred *and* forty *and* four thousand, which were [n] redeemed from the earth.

4 These are they which are not defiled with women; [o] for they are virgins. [p] These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These [q] were * redeemed from among men, *being* [r] the first-fruits unto God, and to the Lamb.

5 And [s] in their mouth was found no guile: for they are [t] without fault before the throne of God.

a 14. iv. 1. vi. 8. xv. 5. Jer i. 11—14. Ez i. 4. ii. 9. viii. 7. x. 1. 9. xliv. 4. Dan. xii. 5. Am. viii. 2. Zech. iv. 2.
b *See on*, v. 6—9. 12, 13. vii. 9—17.
c Ps ii 6. cxxxii. 13, 14. Is xlix. 14. Joel ii 32. Mic iv. 7. Rom. ix 33. Heb. xii. 22—24.
d *See on*, vii. 4—8.
e iii 12. vii. 3. xiii. 16. 17. Luke xii. 8.
f 10. 4. xi. 12. 15 xix 1—7.
g i. 15. xix 6 Ps. xciii. 4 Is. xvii. 13. Ez xliii. 2
h i. 10. vi 7—13 ix. 1 x. 3, 4 xi 15. Ex. xix. 16. xx. 18. Zech. ix. 14.
i *See on*, v. 8. xv. 2. xviii 22. 2Sam. vi. 5. 1Chr xxv. 1—7. Ps. xxxiii. 2. xliii. 4 lvii. 8. xcii 3 xcviii. 5. cxlvii. 7. cxlix. 3. cl 3—6
k *See on*, v. 9. xv. 3. Ps. xxxiii. 3 xl. 3. xcvi. 1. xcviii. 1. cxliv. 9. cxlix 1. Is. xlii. 10
l *See on*, iv. 2—11.
m ii. 17. Ps xxv. 14. Matt. xi 25—27. 1Cor. i 18. ii. 14.
n *See on*, v. 9
o Ps. xlv. 14. Cant. i. 3. vi. 8. Matt. xxv 1 1Cor. vii. 25, 26 28. 2 Cor. xi 2. 1Tim iv. 3.
p iii. 4. vii. 15—17. xvii. 14 Matt. viii. 19 Luke ix. 57—62 John viii. 12 x 27. xii. 26. xiii. 37
q v. 9.
* Or *bought*. Ps. lxxiv 2. Acts xx. 28. 1 Cor vi. 20. Eph i. 14 1 Pet. ii. 9 *Marg.*——r Jer. ii. 3. Am vi. 1. *Marg* 1 Cor. xvi. 15. Jam. i 18.
s Ps xxxii. 2. xxxiv 13. lv 11. Prov. viii 8. Is. liii. 9. Zeph. iii. 13. Matt. xii. 34. John i. 47. 1 Pet. iii. 10 ———t Cant. iv. 7. Dan vi. 4. Hos. x. 2. Luke xxiii. 4. Eph. v. 27. Col. i. 22. Jude 24.

'to assert, that *Latinus*, and nothing but Latinus, is the 'name of the beast, for in no other word, descriptive of 'the revived temporal beast, or the papal Roman empire, 'can such a fatal concurrence of circumstances be found.' (*Faber.*) The mark of the beast is the sign of the cross, used in endless superstitions.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The enemies of the church carry on their designs under a variety of odious and terrifying forms, and they often unite, or divide among them, the fierceness and cruelty of savage beasts, with the subtlety and poison of serpents; and, if it will answer their purpose better, they appear as gentle lambs, in order that, when they have opportunity, they may speak as dragons, and "lord it over God's heritage" with cruel tyranny. They have commonly possessed great power; and when any of the heads of this Leviathan have seemed to be broken in pieces, they have been again healed, and in another form they even to this day return to the combat. Indeed, they have much encouragement from the world, for men are far more disposed to wonder, and to celebrate the praises of these monsters of iniquity, (as if none were like them, or could stand before them,) than to hear the word of God from his faithful witnesses, or even to adore and submit to the Son of God himself! But the mouths, even of those who open them in blasphemy, were given by that God whom they thus affront, and that power is derived from him, which men use in making war against his saints; nor can men of any description reign over the nations, or practise against the church, further than he sees good to permit. All will, in one way or other, be deceived, whose names are not written in the "book of life of the Lamb that was slain," "according to the eternal purpose which he hath purposed "in himself." The vengeance that is written will surely be executed on all persecutors and wicked oppressors, but the saints need much faith and patience, when their lot is cast in evil times, and they should cry unto God continually, that they may be faithful unto death, and so receive the crown of life. Ungodly priests and tyrannical rulers support each other's usurpations, iniquities, exactions, and oppressions; whilst the one, by war, or cruel executions, destroy all opposers, and the other deceive or terrify men by lying miracles, false doctrines, anathemas, and ecclesiastical censures. But all these evils should be considered as illustrative of the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the human heart, and as endearing to us the love of God in Christ Jesus. The review ought also to make us thankful for our civil and religious liberties. We are exposed to no interdicts, no prisons, no cruel tortures or death, for not worshipping after the manner, or at the dictate, of either prince or priest; nor are we tempted, by circumstances of danger, to profess and subscribe what we do not believe, or conform to what we do not approve, though, alas! numbers choose to do it, "for filthy lucre's sake!" We shall therefore be doubly inexcusable, if we do not embrace and profess the truth of Christ and worship the Father according to his appointed ordinances; or if we do not pray for the peace of those, under whose mild government we enjoy so many privileges, observing the rule of the wise man, to "fear "God and the king, and not to meddle with those that "are given to change." But he, that hath wisdom and understanding in these things, will see that all the enemies of God are numbered and marked out to destruction, that the term of their power will soon expire, and that all nations shall at length submit to our "King of righteous-"ness and peace."

NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 1—5. The apostle having been shown the foregoing particulars concerning Papal Rome, with its idolatry and tyranny, had next a vision of the true church in the wilderness, during the same period, with special reference to the darkest times, previous to the dawning of the reformation. He looked, and behold a Lamb, the emblem of Christ, stood on mount Sion, where the temple was built, which was a type of the true church u 8, 9. viii. 13. Is. vi 2 6, 7. Ez. i. 14 Dan. ix 21.——x Gen. i. 6.

6 ¶ And I saw [u] another angel fly [x] in the midst of heaven, having [y] the ever-

y 2 Sam. xxiii 5. Ps. cxix. 142. cxxxix. 24. cxlv. 13. Is. xlv. 17. li. 6, 8. Eph. iii 9, 11. 2 Thes. ii. 16. Tit. i. 1–3. Heb. xiii. 20.

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and of heaven itself, and with him were a hundred and forty-four thousand persons. (*Notes*, vii. 1—8.) This seems a mystical number, the twelve patriarchs multiplied by the twelve apostles, and both multiplied by a thousand, as if the hundred and forty-four were leaders of thousands; so that there was a considerable number of true Israelites, and of those who held the apostle's doctrine, and marched under their banner, in the most degenerate times; being the successors of that remnant, which was found in the first three centuries, during the persecutions of the heathen emperors. As the worshippers of the beast were marked with his name and seal, so these disciples of Christ had the name of his Father written in legible characters on their foreheads; they were his worshippers, they bore his image, they avowed and evidently showed that they belonged to him. (xiii. 8.) It is evident from history that there were such persons, in the darkest times, who ventured, nay, laid down their lives, for the truth and worship of the Gospel; for these were the same as the two witnesses during the times in which they lived, only represented under another emblem. This multitude were singing a new song before the throne, with a voice loud as that of mighty rushing waters, or that of thunder, yet exquisitely melodious, and accompanied with the music of harpers of consummate skill. No doubt the new song which they sang was the same for substance with that which has been already considered, (v. 9—14. vii. 9—12.) This was sung in the presence of the emblematic representatives of the church and its ministers, and none could learn it but the redeemed. For, as it related immediately to redemption, the proud, the impenitent, the unbelieving, and the carnal, could not understand the nature or the glory of this subject, nor could angels join in it, not being redeemed to God by the blood of the Lamb, though they unite in worshipping him, as worthy to receive all honour and blessing. The antichristian church soon discouraged and reviled marriage, enjoined celibacy on priests, immured numbers of both sexes in convents, extolled virginity as almost essential to piety and purity, and ranked its virgins with the saints and martyrs of the primitive times. (*Note*, 1 *Tim.* iv. 1—3.) But these unnatural restrictions, and attempts to introduce a kind of life on earth, which in general only suits the inhabitants of heaven, made way, not only for exorbitant spiritual pride, but also for the most unnatural and detestable licentiousness, and for crimes too horrid to be specified; and at the same time the church was polluted with the most manifest and abominable idolatry, or spiritual fornication. But, says the apostle by the Spirit of prophecy, these true Christians are they, who are not defiled with women; "marriage being honourable in all, and the bed undefiled," the clause may be understood even in the literal sense. For, says he, "they are virgins," even such as the scripture commends, who are espoused to and love Christ, who are faithful and obedient to him, and deeming themselves his alone and wholly, wait for the completion of their sacred union with him, and in the mean time prefer suffering and death to the spiritual fornication and adultery, to which all others are given up. (*Note*, 2 *Cor.* xi. 1—3.) They, therefore, followed him, whithersoever he went, through persecutions and tribulations, into obscurity, or into prisons, with self-denial, obedient faith, and patient hope, taking up their cross, and copying his example of meekness, purity, and love. These were the persons who had been redeemed from among men, being actually interested in the atonement of Christ, and they were consecrated to God as first fruits, (for whose sake he spared others,) and to the Lamb, "as purified unto him, to be his peculiar people, zealous of good works." They were not hypocrites, but upright in their repentance, faith, and love, and they held, professed, and preached the true doctrine of Christ, so that they were accepted and sanctified persons, against whom no charge could be alleged before the throne of God. 'The hundred and forty-four thousand appeared to the apostle as standing on the *mount Sion*, or in *the true church*, because they constituted the *persecuted* church in the wilderness; (*Rev.* xii. 6—14.) and as the *followers of the beast* have *the mark* and *name of the beast*, so have these *the seal of God* impressed, (*Rev.* vii. 3.) and *the name of God* written on their foreheads. They alone are able to learn the new song of the heavenly harpers, because they alone are the worshippers of the one true God, through the one true mediator Jesus Christ, the adherents of *the apostacy* offering up their devotions to other objects, and through other mediators. They are virgins, undefiled with women, inasmuch as they are free from the pollutions of idolatry, which is spiritual whoredom and adultery. They follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, resolutely adhering to the religion of Christ in troublesome times, as well as in prosperous ones, and fleeing into sequestered valleys and wild deserts, rather than relinquish their profession of the Gospel. They are redeemed from among men, being rescued by the almighty power of divine grace from the corruptions and abominations of Babylon; and they are consecrated as the first-fruits of Christianity, unto God and the Lamb, an earnest and assurance of a more plentiful harvest; first, at the era of the reformation, and afterwards at the yet more glorious era of the Millennium. In their mouth was found no guile; inasmuch as they handle not the word of God deceitfully, like popish venders of indulgences, and preachers of purgatory, human merit, and idolatry; but faithfully and simply declare the way of everlasting life. And they are without fault before the throne of God, having washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, God not imputing their trespasses unto them, but accounting them as if they had never sinned, through the imputed righteousness of Christ, who was "made sin for them," in order that they might "be made the righteousness of God in him." By these hundred and forty-four thousand, I understand peculiarly *the depressed church in the wilderness*, previous to the time of *the Reformation*; for history sufficiently demonstrates, that there have been in every age some faithful worshippers, who consented not to *the general apostacy*, but who prophesied, although in sackcloth, against its abominations.' (*Faber*.)

lasting Gospel [z] to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to [a] every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

7 Saying, [b] with a loud voice, [c] Fear God, [d] and give glory to him; for [e] the hour of his judgment is come: and [f] worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

8 And [g] there followed another angel, saying, [h] Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, [i] because she made all nations drink of the wine of [k] the wrath of her fornication.

z Matt. x. 27. Mark xvi. 15. Rom. xvi. 25. Col i. 23
a x. 11. xiii. 7. Dan. iv. 1. vi. 25, 26.
b Is. xl. 3 6. 9. xliv. 23. lii 7, 8. lviii. 1. Hos. viii. 1.
c *See on*, xi. 18 xv. 4. xix. 5. Gen xxii 12 Ps. xxxvi 1. lxxxix. 7. Ec. xii. 13, 14 ——d iv 9 xvi 9. Josh. vii. 19. 1 Sam. vi. 5 Is. xlii. 12. Mal. ii. 2. Luke xvii 18 ——e xi 18 xviii. 10. 17. 19. Ez vii. 2, 3. 6. Dan viii. 19. Matt. xxv. 13. John v. 25—29. 1 Pet. iv. 7.
f iv. 11. Ex. xx 11. Neh. ix. 6. Ps. xxxiii. 6. xcv. 5 cxlvi. 5, 6 Prov. viii. 22—31. Jer x. 10—12 Acts xiv. 15. xvii 23—25.
g *See on*, 6.
h xvi. 19. xvii. 5. 18. xviii. 2. 10, 11. 18—21 Is. xxi. 9. Jer. li. 8. 64
i xvii. 2—4 xviii. 3. xix. 2. Jer. li. 7. Ez. xvi. 15, &c. Nah. iii. 19.——k xiii. 15—17. xvii. 6.

V. 6, 7. It is generally admitted by the best interpreters, that the three angels, in these and the following verses, were emblematical heralds of the progressive reformation from popery. When, therefore, the extent and prevalence of the power of the beast, at its full height, had been predicted in the foregoing chapter, the diminution and weakening of it, as introductory to the destruction, is intimated in this. Some explain the proclamation of the first angel, of the ninth, tenth, or eleventh centuries; and no doubt there were then both princes, bishops, and councils, who struggled against the worship of images, and other abominations of the church of Rome. Yet they generally concurred in supporting the dominion of the beast, though they wanted to have it exercised in a different manner as to some particulars. Such, however, as were real Christians, and entered a proper protest against the prevailing corruptions of the church, whether in the imperial palace, or in the conclave, (if that was ever done,) may properly be ranked in the number mentioned in the former verses; for these evidently relate to a more public and general protestation. But others seem to fix the time of their accomplishment too late, and so leave a large gap in the series of predicted events, and then crowd too many into the remaining periods. We may, therefore, I apprehend, interpret this first angel, or herald, of those who first publicly erected the standard of reformation, and who contended for the everlasting Gospel of Christ, in opposition to all the innovations and usurpations of the beast, his image, and the false prophet. This honour seems to belong to the Waldenses and Albigenses, who had the true Gospel among them, avowed its everlasting obligation and excellency, opposed it to the authority of popes, councils, and persecuting princes, declared the pope to be antichrist, propagated their doctrines with zeal and success, and multiplied into a vast number of churches; and after immense slaughter had been made of them by persecutions and bloody wars, they still retained their tenets, and being dispersed into other countries, they rapidly carried the everlasting Gospel with them; (as an angel, a messenger of peace to men, flying through the midst of heaven;) so that the Lollards in England, and the Bohemians, and many others in different places, seem to have principally learned the Gospel from them; and the reformation itself appears to have sprung from the seed which they sowed, and watered with rivers of their blood. So exact was the prophecy, that they had the everlasting Gospel to preach to the inhabitants of the earth; and that they loudly called on men to fear and glorify God, as the hour of his judgment was at hand; and to worship the Creator of all things, as revealed in the Gospel, by refusing to join in the worship of idols, and that of the beast and his image. Some respectable commentators explain these verses of Luther, almost exclusively, and suppose that many things, in his situation, character, and testimony, remarkably answered to it. I cannot, however, think that the previous *public* testimonies against the beast are wholly passed over, or that an individual occupies so conspicuous a station in this concise prophecy. Nor am I convinced that more modern events, or the present zeal for missions is meant, because the testimony of the angel, or messenger, was evidently borne against popery, not heathen idolatry. *Everlasting*, &c. (6.) 'It is styled, "The everlasting Gospel;" 'being, like its divine Author, "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever;" 'in opposition to the doctrines of the beast, and the false prophet, 'which shall be "rooted up, as not of the heavenly "Father's planting." (*Matt.* xv. 13.) (*Bp. Newton.*)

V. 8. If we explain the first angel as the herald of the dawning of the reformation, in the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, we may properly explain this of the Bohemians and others in the fifteenth, who were their genuine offspring and successors. Some of these persons, with still greater confidence and vehemence than the Albigenses, declared Rome to be mystical Babylon, and the pope and church there to be antichrist: and they endured severe persecutions for these protestations, and for their profession of the Gospel. John Huss and Jerom of Prague, especially, were perfidiously and cruelly burned by the council of Constance, which council was in fact the united power of the whole antichristian beast. These heralds announced the fall of mystical Babylon, as the ancient prophet had done that of literal Babylon, long before the event; (*Marg. Ref.*) nor was this doom more certain than it would be just, as she had corrupted and intoxicated the nations, not only with her love-potions, as a seducing harlot, but by the wine of the *wrath* of her fornications, terrifying men into idolatry by fierce persecutions. As Rome was mentioned under the name and emblem of a *Gentile* city, so her idolatry was called *fornication*, rather than *adultery*, as it generally was, when committed by the professed worshippers of God. (xvii. 2.) Bishop Newton explains this verse of the Waldenses, and the foregoing verses of more ancient events; on the contrary, Mr. Faber interprets those verses of Luther, and this of Calvin and his associates. This, however, seems to me to render individuals too prominent in this concise prophecy. Nor should I have mentioned the names of John Huss and Jerom of Prague, except as they were the mouth, or voice, of a very large body of men, delivering its testimony in the most public manner conceivable, and sealing it by their martyrdom. Still I observe that the grand outlines are clear, and commentators in general are agreed

9 And [l] the third angel followed them, saying, with a loud voice, [m] If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive *his* mark in his forehead, or in his hand,

10 The same shall [n] drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture [o] into the cup of his indignation; and he shall [p] be tormented with fire and brimstone [q] in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

11 And [r] the smoke of their torment ascendeth up [s] for ever and ever: and they have [t] no rest day nor night, [u] who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

[l] *See on,* 6—8. Jer. xliv. 4

[m] 11. *See on,* xiii. 3—6. 11—17.

[n] xvi. 19. xviii 3. Job xxi 20 Ps xi. 6 lx. 3 lxxv. 8. Is. xxix. 9 li. 21, 22. Jer. xxv. 15—17. 27. li 57.

[o] xviii. 6. Ps lxxiii 10 Is. li 17. Jer xlix 12. Lam. iv. 21 Hab. ii. 16. Matt. xx. 22. xxvi. 39.

[p] ix. 17, 18. xix. 20. xx. 10. xxi. 8. Gen. xix. 24. Deut xxix. 23. Job xxvii. 15. Ps. xi. 6. Is. xxx. 33 xxxiv. 9. Matt. xxv 41. Jude 7.

[q] Ps. xxxvii. 34. lii. 6 xci 8 Ez. xx 48. Matt. xiii. 41, 42. 48, 50. 2 Thes. i. 8, 9.

[r] xviii. 18. xix 3. Gen. xix. 28. Is. xxxiii 14 xxxiv. 10. Joel ii 30 Luke xvi. 23, 24.

[s] iv. 9, 10. v. 13, 14. vii. 12. xi. 15. xx 10. xxii. 5 Ex. xv. 18. Ps x. 16. cxlv. 1. Matt xxv. 41. 46. Heb. i 8.——[t] Deut. xxviii 65. Is. lvii. 20, 21. Matt. xi. 28, 29. Mark ix. 43—49. Luke xvi. 24, 25.——[u] 9 xiii. 15—18.

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about them; so that the subordinate differences of opinion do not affect the main argument. Some indeed would explain this verse of future times, because Babylon is not yet totally fallen; but this deranges the whole plan of interpretation adopted by the ablest expositors, which is the only clue that can lead us through its mazes, and so introduces perplexity and uncertainty. Nothing is more common in prophecy, than for future events, as absolutely determined, to be spoken of in the present or past time. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'The clue that has principally conducted me through both parts of the Revelation is, following the series of history, and the successive order of events. After the description of the two beasts, secular and ecclesiastical, whose power was established according to my hypothesis in the eighth century, but, according to most commentators, much sooner, there would be a very large chasm, without the prediction of any memorable event, if these prophecies relate to the time immediately preceding the fall of Antichrist, and the Millennium. What a long interval would there be without any prophecy, and how thick would the events follow afterwards! For all the particulars to the end of the nineteenth chapter, must be fulfilled before the Millennium.' (*Bp. Newton.*) It is also worthy of notice, that, about the era above-mentioned, the opinion began to be publicly avowed by several persons, that the church, court, and city of Rome, were Babylon, and so inevitably doomed to destruction.

V. 9—11. This third angel and his proclamation, may be explained of Luther, and his loud, rough, and vehement protestation against the idolatries of the church and bishop of Rome, and that whole antichristian fabric; yet we must also take in all his coadjutors and successors, and all the effects of this combined and persevering protestation to this day, and even beyond it. His voice, and that of those who were raised up in divers countries to join him, and to follow up the assault, was indeed very loud. They attacked the beast with far more vehemence than any that went before had done: they not only declared him to be antichrist, but they carried their researches into the idolatries, iniquities and impostures of the whole system, and showed that it was utterly incompatible with the religion of the Scriptures, and founded in ignorance, usurpation, avarice, and hypocrisy; and they insisted on the necessity of separating from so corrupt a church, boldly retorting the charge of heresy and schism, and fully proving it. Thus they induced whole nations to cast off all regard to the church of Rome, and engaged vast multitudes to protest against popery as a *damnable* religion, not only in the persecuting tyrants who imposed, but in all who, even from dread of persecution, or from still worse motives, conformed to it; and this was exactly the purport of the third angel's proclamation. They loudly insisted upon it, that all who adhered, with a blind and devoted attachment, to the beast and his image, professing their abominable doctrines, conforming to their idolatries, concurring in their cruelties, and reducing their principles to practice, (being intoxicated with "the wine of *the wrath* of her "fornication,") would drink of the unmingled wine of God's wrath, from the cup of his indignation; yea, that they would be tormented with fire and brimstone, or be cast into hell, to be tormented in that flame; that this would be in the presence of the holy angels, who would applaud the justice of their punishment; and in the presence of the Lamb, who would pronounce and execute the sentence upon them, for their opposition to his Gospel, and for giving his mediatorial glory to saints and angels; and "that the smoke of their torment would ascend up for "ever and ever." The words translated "for ever and "ever," are the most energetic that are found in the whole Greek language to signify *eternity*, and seem incapable of any other meaning. The passage, therefore, evidently predicts the clear and strong manner, in which the reformers protested and argued against purgatory, and insisted upon it that the wicked would be tormented in hell for ever; and a subsequent verse evidently opposes the same doctrine, by showing the immediate happiness of believers after death. (13.) Every one that is at all conversant with the writings of the reformers, and their successors, knows that they generally declared, without hesitation, that popery was a damnable religion. Mr. Hooker, in Queen Elizabeth's time, brought himself into suspicion, and was engaged in a dispute, because he asserted, with much caution, and many distinctions, that papists might be saved; and, whatever contempt may be cast on their bigotry, in this day of false candour, liberality, and disregard to the Scriptures, it is worthy of serious consideration, whether this passage does not warrant most of what these reformers advanced on that subject, though they might not always properly distinguish between those who hated the light, and those whose eyes were too weak to endure its effulgence, when it broke in upon them all at once. To explain this most energetic passage, which beyond doubt predicts a *general* and most awful protestation against the leading tenets of popery as *damnable*, in all who embrace and adhere to them, as well as in the inventors and imposers of them, to signify any testimony, or protest, made in a single kingdom, (as for instance, in England,) seems to me a departure from the

12 Here [x] is the patience of the saints: [y] here *are* they that keep the commandments of God, and [z] the faith of Jesus.

13 And I heard [a] a voice from heaven, saying unto me, [b] Write, [c] Blessed *are* the dead which [d] die in the Lord * from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may [e] rest from their labours; [f] and their works do follow them.

14 ¶ And I looked, and [g] behold, a white cloud, and upon the cloud *one* sat [h] like unto the Son of man, having on his head [i] a golden crown, and in his hand [k] a sharp sickle.

15 And another angel [l] came out of the temple, [m] crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, [n] Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; [o] for the harvest of the earth [p] is † ripe.

x *See on,* xiii. 10.
y *See on,* xii. 17
z iii. 8 10, 2 Tim. iv. 7.
a xi. 15, 19. xvi. 17. Matt. iii. 17.
b i. 11 ii 1. x. 4. xix. 9. xxi. 5.
c xx. 6. Ec. iv. 1, 2. Is. lvii. 1, 2. 2 Cor. v. 8. Phil i. 21—23.
d Rom. xiv. 8. 1 Cor xv. 18 1 Thes. iv. 14. 16. v. 10.
* Or, *From henceforth saith the Spirit; yea.*
e vi. 11. vii 14—17. Job iii. 17—19 Is. xxxv 10. lvii 2. Luke xvi. 25. 2 Thes i. 6, 7. Heb. iv. 9—11.
f Ps. xix. 11. lxxxv. 13 Matt. xxv. 35—40 Luke xvi 9. 1 Cor. xv. 58 Gal. vi 7, 8 Phil. ii 17. 2 Tim iv. 7, 8. Heb vi. 10, 11.
g 15, 16. i. 7 x. 1 xx. 11 Ps xcvii. 2. Is xix. 1 Matt. xvii. 5. Luke xxi. 27.
h i. 13. Ez i. 26. Dan. vii. 13
i vi. 2. xi. 17. xix. 12 Ps. xxi. 3. Heb. ii. 9 ——k 15—17 Joel iii. 12, 13. Matt. xiii. 30 Mark iv 29.——l 17. xvi. 17.——m vi. 10 Is. lxii 1. 6, 7 ——n *See on,* k 14. o Jer. li. 33. Joel. iii 13 Matt. xiii 30 39.——p 18 Gen. xv. 16. Zech. v. 6—11. Matt. xxiii. 32. 1 Thes. ii 16.——† Or, *dried.*

16 And [q] he that sat on the cloud [r] thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.

17 And another angel [s] came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

18 And another angel [t] came out from the altar, [u] which had power over fire; [x] and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes [y] are fully ripe.

19 And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, [z] and cast *it* into the great wine-press of the wrath of God.

20 And [a] the wine-press was trodden [b] without the city, [c] and blood came out of the wine-press, even unto the horse-bridles, by the space of a thousand *and* six hundred furlongs.

q 14 Matt. xvi 27. John v. 22, 23.
r 19. xvi. 1, &c.
s 14, 15 18. xv. 5, 6. xvi. 1.
t vi. 9, 10.
u xvi. 8.
x *See on,* 15, 16.
y *See on,* p 15.
z xix. 15—21, Deut. xxxii 32. 33.
a Is. lxiii. 1—6. Lam. i. 15.
b xi. 8. Heb. xiii. 12.
c xix. 15—21 Is. xxxiv. 5—7. lxvi. 24. Ez. xxxix. 17—21.

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grand scale, on which these prophecies should be interpreted; and as totally inadmissible.

V. 12, 13. When the doctrines above-mentioned began to be openly propagated, terrible persecutions were raised: it was therefore added, "Here is the patience of the "saints." They would have abundant need to exercise patience, in obeying God and holding the true doctrine of Christ, amidst the bloody race of inquisitors and persecutors, who kindled fires on earth to torture and burn them, though they called in vain for fire from heaven to destroy them; (xiii. 13;) and who, by such cruelties, together with wars and massacres, destroyed incredible multitudes, in opposing the progress of the reformation. To encourage the saints to patience, in suffering for the truth even unto death, the apostle showed, that he heard a voice from heaven, ordering him to write, "Blessed are the "dead which die in the Lord," or in the true faith and hope of the Gospel; even "from henceforth." This verse hath much perplexed commentators, in respect of its prophetical meaning and connexion: but upon the plan which we are pursuing nothing can be more obvious. The doctrine of purgatory, with indulgences, human merits to be sold by the church, masses, and prayers for the dead; was one principal source of wealth, influence, and authority to the clergy of the church of Rome. This also first stirred up the spirit of Luther, who began his attack by protesting against these abuses: and, by examining the scriptures, he and his followers established it, as a certain truth, in the judgment of vast multitudes, that there was no such place as purgatory; but that the wicked when they die go directly to hell, and believers immediately enter heaven. Now what words could more aptly predict this change in men's sentiments, than these do? It is most evident, from the internal chronology of the book, and from the series of predicted events, that the reformation was here intended; and the apostle was ordered to write, just in this place, (probably he knew not on what account,) "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, from hence-"forth;" that is, from this period believers would generally understand that encouraging truth; and not have to encounter the fears of purgatory, or to apprehend a delay of their felicity, when seized with the agonies of death, or called to suffer martyrdom for Christ's sake. And in fact the expectation of immediate happiness, was the joy and support of those numbers, who were burned alive, or otherwise cruelly martyred, during those times. This voice from heaven was attested by an internal impulse of the Holy Spirit, who assured the apostle, that believers rested after death from all their labours and sufferings, and had no purgatory to fear; and that their works followed them, to prove the sincerity of their faith, and to ensure a gracious reward.

V. 14—20. Thus far we have generally proceeded by the guidance of past events, and have obtained considerable satisfaction in explaining these prophecies; but here, I apprehend, that direction almost wholly fails us. This supposition is confirmed by the evident inability of expositors to make any regular and consistent application of the subsequent chapters, except as coincident with those things which have been already considered. (xiv.) Under this persuasion, of which further reasons will be afterwards assigned, I shall not obtrude mere conjectures on the reader, nor attempt to pry into things not seen as yet. Hitherto, in general, the ground hath seemed good, and the road plain; and I have felt some confidence, as well as used caution, in the progress: but caution must be almost my only companion and monitor in what now remains; for the country is unknown, and no guide is to be found, who understands any thing certainly of the road. The exact and surprising fulfilment of many, and complicated

CHAP. XV.

A vision of seven angels, prepared to execute judgments; with the triumphant song of the church on that occasion, 1—4. Seven vials given to the angels for that purpose, and the temple is filled with smoke, 5—8.

predictions, through the course of seventeen hundred years, has been shown, which is a real demonstration of the truth of the Scriptures; but we must bequeath to posterity the satisfaction of understanding, and being filled with adoring wonder at witnessing the accomplishment of the rest. The prophecy hath been evidently traced down to the reformation, and this may include all that has intervened to this day, or shall intervene, till the slaying of the witnesses and their resurrection. (*Notes*, xi. 7—14.) Whether the events here predicted precede, or follow, the sounding of the seventh, or third, wo trumpet, I cannot absolutely determine; but they seem evidently to relate to the fall of popery, and perhaps give a succinct intimation of what is more fully predicted in the next and following chapters. The preceding events not having produced a voluntary and effectual reformation in the kingdom of the beast, the iniquity of those nations will be filled up, and they will become ripe for judgments, which are emblematically described as a harvest and a vintage; and as the latter succeeds to the former in the course of nature, so it is subsequent to it in the prophecy, and will be far more terrible. Christ appeared to the apostle in vision, like to the Son of Man in human nature, upon a white cloud, the emblem of his holy, righteous, and mysterious dispensations; his golden crown signified his super-eminent authority, and his sharp sickle his terrible vengeance on his enemies. The angel out of the temple, may signify the ministers of the Gospel, as employed to announce the approach of these judgments; and the second angel coming out of the temple, to reap the vintage, may represent some executioner, or succession of executioners, of the wrath of Christ on the opposers of his authority; whilst the third angel from the altar, who had power over fire, giving orders to the second angel to reap the vintage, implies that these judgments would render a sacrifice to divine justice, and consume, as with fire, those who had despised or abused the atoning sacrifice of Christ. The casting of the vintage into the wine-press of God's wrath, and the treading of it *without* the city, (as being no part of the true Church,) can only be explained by the event. But it is remarkable, that sixteen hundred furlongs, or two hundred miles, is exactly the length of the papal dominions in Italy, and probably these will be deluged with blood, in a most awful manner, which is represented by language most tremendously hyperbolical. Some expositors, who have written since this interpretation was first made, decide, with confidence, that the bloody scenes lately exhibited in France and on the continent, are the fulfilment of the prophecy concerning "the harvest," though the vintage is yet future; nor do I at all doubt, but that posterity will clearly see that these events began to accomplish the prediction. I cannot, however, think, either that, at so early a stage, we are capable of determining on the subject, or that a more general and almost universal display of divine vengeance, on *all* the kingdoms of the beast, (those only excepted who have fully and decidedly cast off its dominion,) is intended by the harvest.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

The Lord reserves a remnant to himself in the worst of times, who dissent from the prevailing idolatries and abominations; who profess his truth and bear his image; who sing the praises of redeeming grace, in strains which none else can learn; who cordially love and devotedly cleave to him; who follow the Lamb, whithersoever he goeth, being the first fruits of the earth; who are Israelites indeed, in whose mouth is found no guile; and who are without fault, being fully accepted, and really sanctified before the throne of God. May it be our prayer, our endeavour, yea, our ambition, to be found in this honourable company! If we have a good hope that we are thus distinguished, we ought to *do* every thing in our power, as well as to beseech the Lord continually, that faithful ministers, like beneficent angels, "flying through the midst of heaven," may carry "the everlasting Gospel," and preach it to all people, nations, and languages; that so sinners may fear and glorify God, and turn from all their idols and iniquities, to worship the great Creator, and to wait for his Son from heaven, who shall speedily come to be our Judge. These events faith anticipates, as if they were already accomplished.

V. 9—20.

Crafty deceivers, and they who have been betrayed into their delusions by pride, unbelief, a carnal mind, love of sin, and fear of man, will ere long drink together of the wine of God's wrath, from the cup of his indignation; and, however men may flatter or excuse themselves, in conforming to corrupt and sinful customs or impositions, they will find at last that the Lord abhors such prevarication.—Let, therefore, such as fear the reproach or the wrath of men, and are tempted to disobey God, remember that awful torment, the smoke of which ascendeth up *for ever and ever*. For the modern *quietus* of a purgatory, *after* the day of judgment, is as destitute of scriptural foundation, as the purgatory before that awful season, as maintained by the Church of Rome; and they who die in their sins, will too late find that the punishment of hell will endure for ever and ever. Here then is the patience of the saints to venture or suffer any thing, in obeying God's commandments, and professing the faith of Jesus; may God bestow this patience upon us, that we may be ready, should times of persecution overtake us! We have the best reasons in the world for this conduct; as a voice from heaven, attested by the Holy Spirit, assures us, that "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, that they "immediately rest from their labours, and that their works "follow them," to ascertain their title to, and the degree of, their unspeakable felicity; whilst their persecutors, and all wicked men, are ripening for the harvest and vintage of divine vengeance, and will soon be cast into the wine-press of the wrath of God.

AND [a] I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, [b] seven angels having the seven [c] last plagues; for in them [d] is filled up the wrath of God.

2 And I saw, as it were, [e] a sea of glass [f] mingled with fire: and them [g] that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, *and* over the number of his name, [h] stand on the sea of glass, [i] having the harps of God.

3 And they sing [k] the song of Moses, [l] the servant of God, [m] and the song of the Lamb, saying, [n] Great and marvellous *are* thy works, [o] Lord God almighty; [p] just and true *are* thy ways, [q] thou King of * saints.

4 [r] Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, [s] and glorify thy name? for [t] *thou* only *art* holy: [u] for all nations shall come and worship before thee; [x] for thy judgments are made manifest.

5 ¶ And after that I looked, and behold, [y] the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened:

6 And [z] the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, [a] clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.

a xii. 1–3 Dan. iv. 2, 3 vi. 27.
b 6. viii. 2, 6. x. 3. xvi. 1–17. xxi 9. Matt xiii. 41, 42. 49, 50.
c viii 13 xi. 14. xvi. 17 — 21. xvii. 1.
d 7. xiv. 10. 19 xvi. 19 xix. 15. Dan xii. 6, 7. 11, 12.
e iv. 6. xxi 18.
f Is. iv. 4. Matt. iii. 11 1 Pet. i. 7 iv 12.
g xi. 11, 12. xii. 11. xiii. 14–18. xiv. 1–5.
h Ex. xiv 30, 31.
i *See on*, v 8 xiv. 2. xix 1–7.
k Ex. xv 1–18.
l *See on*, Deut. xxxiv. 5 1 Chr. vi. 49 2 Chr xxiv 6. Neh ix. 14. Dan. vi. 20. ix. 11. John i 17. Heb iii 5.——m v 9–13. vii 10, 11. xiv. 3.——n Ex. xv. 11. Job v 9. Ps lxviii. 12. cv. 5. cxi 2 cxviii. 22, 23. cxxxix. 14 cxlv. 6. Dan. iv. 2, 3.——o *See on*, iv. 8. xi. 17. Gen. xvii 1.

p xvi. 5–7. xix. 2 Deut xxxii. 4. Ps lxxxv. 10, 11. xcix. 4. c 5 cxlv. 17 Is. xlv. 21 Hos. xiv. 9. Mic vii. 20 Zeph. iii. 5.
q Is. ix. 6, 7. xxxii. 1, 2. xxxiii. 22 Zech. ix. 9
* Or, *nations*. or; *ages*. xvii. 14 xix 16.
r Ps lxxxix. 7. Is. lx 5. Jer. v. 22. x. 7 Hos. iii 5 Luke xii. 4, 5
s Ps. xxii. 23. lxxxvi 9. Is. xxiv. 15. xxv. 3. Rom. xv. 9. 2Thes i 10–12.
t iii 7 iv 8. vi. 10. 1 Sam. ii. 2 Ps xxii 3. xcix. 5 9. cxi 9. Is. vi 3. lvii. 15 Hab. i. 12. 1 Pet. i 16——u xi. 15. Ps xxii. 27. lxxxvi. 9 cxvii. Is. lxvi 18–20. Jer. xvi. 19 Zech ii 11. viii 20–23 xiv 16 Mal. i 11.——x xvi 7 xix 2 Ps xcvii 8 cv. 7. Is. xxvi 9.——y *See on*, xi. 19. Ex. xxv 21. Num i. 53 Matt. xxvii. 51.
z *See on*, 1.——a *See on*, i 13 Ex xxviii, 5–8. Ez. xliv. 17, 18. Luke xxiv 4.

NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 1—4. This chapter introduces the seven vials, all of which fall under the seventh trumpet, as the seven trumpets were included under the seventh seal: for they contain the ***seven last plagues***, in which the wrath of God is filled up, or accomplished, on the persecuting idolatrous power, assuming and disgracing, beyond expression, the sacred name of CHRISTIAN. These plagues must therefore be coincident with the last wo trumpet; in great measure at least. The second part of this prophecy has been traced from the latter part of the sixth trumpet to the reformation, nay, to the present æra; and to go back into former ages, to find out events which may answer to the ***subsequent*** predictions, deranges the whole plan of the book, and reduces things to ambiguity and uncertainty. Our key has hitherto opened the most intricate wards of these predictions without violence; that is, as far as to the latter part of the sixth trumpet: but no writer has succeeded in what follows; for the commencement of it is, precisely, the time in which we live; as is evident from a due consideration of the twelve hundred and sixty years of the reign of the beast. Different computations indeed have been made of the period when these years will end: but none, as it appears to me, suppose that they will terminate sooner than A. D. 1866, while many think they will not end till A. D. 2000. But, whether sooner or later, it seems evident that the time is not yet arrived; and, therefore, that the pouring out of the vials has not yet begun. The apostle had mentioned great woes, which would come under the three last trumpets: (viii. 13. x. 7. xiv. 19:) yet, when the seventh trumpet was sounded, he mentioned, almost exclusively, the happy effects of it to the end of time, without speaking particularly about the woes. But he here resumes that subject, and prophetically shows what woes would follow the sounding of that trumpet. Nothing seems more important, in explaining prophecies, than to determine, as far as we can, which events are past, and which are to come: under this conviction, I must proceed to consider what follows, in general, as yet in futurity; and shall, therefore, not *detail* any of the interpretations, or conjectures, that have been made of them, ***with relation to past events;*** because I cannot myself find any satisfaction from them. The great and marvellous sign which the apostle saw in heaven, the scene of his visions, implied that very interesting and extraordinary events were about to be revealed: for seven angels appeared, who had it in charge to inflict the seven ***last plagues***. But before he saw the effects of their ministry, he records an introductory vision, representing the joy and triumph which the church would express on that occasion. The sea of glass, mingled with fire, (iv. 6.) is very differently explained; but as the persons referred to stood ***upon*** it, we cannot well understand it of the Fountain, in which they had washed away their sins; perhaps it was emblematical of the tempestuous times, during which believers then lived, the slippery and fragile nature of their standing considered in itself, and the fiery trials which they endured. They, however, who were conquerors over the beast, who had cleaved to the truth and will of God, and had refused subjection to the spiritual tyranny of antichrist, or to be branded as his slaves, stood on this brittle, slippery, sea of glass mingled with fire, unhurt and undismayed; as the children of Israel passed through the Red Sea, or, standing on its shore, saw their enemies dead before them. Feeling, therefore, a holy assurance of their own safety, and a triumphant joy in the prospect of the destruction of their persecutors, they sang the song of Moses, the servant of God; they praised the Lord for their deliverance, as Israel by orders from Moses had done; and they sang the song of the Lamb, the new song before mentioned. (***Marg. Ref.***) Thus they celebrated the great and marvellous works of God, the almighty Lord of all; and his justice and faithfulness, as in Christ Jesus, the King of saints, the Protector, Comforter, Ruler, and Portion, of all his redeemed people.—In this view, they inquired, who would not, or ought not, to fear, adore, and glorify the name of JEHOVAH, seeing he only was holy; and neither the worship of idols, nor the names of blasphemy used by the beast and his image, were to be endured: for the time was arrived, in which all should come and worship before the Lord, as his judgments were then about to be made manifest? (***Marg. Ref.***)

7 And [b] one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels, [c] seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, [d] who liveth for ever and ever.

8 And [e] the temple was filled with smoke [f] from the glory of God, and from his power; and [g] no man was able to enter into the temple, [h] till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.

b *See on*, iv. 6—9.
c v 8. xvi. 2, &c. xvii. 1. xxi 9. Ps. lxxv 8 Jer. xxv. 15
d *See on*, iv. 9 x. 6. 1 Thes. i 9.
e Ex. xl. 34 1 Kings. viii. 10. 2 Chr. v 14. Ps xviii. 8—14 Is. vi 4
f 2 Thes. i. 9.
g Jer. xv 1. Lam. iii. 44. Rom xi 33.
h *See on*, 1.

CHAP. XVI.

The first angel pours out his vial on the earth; and the worshippers of the beast are plagued with a noisome sore, 1, 2: the second, on the sea, which becomes blood, 3: the third, on the rivers and fountains, which also become blood; and the angel of the waters celebrates the justice of God, in thus visiting bloody persecutors, which is confirmed by one from the altar, 4—7. The fourth angel pours his vial on the sun; and men scorched with fire blaspheme God, 8, 9: the fifth on the seat of the beast, with the miseries caused, and the blasphemies excited, 10, 11. The sixth angel pours his vial on the Euphrates, to prepare the way of eastern kings, 12. Three unclean frogs, from the mouth of the beast, stir up kings to war against God, 13, 14. A warning to Christians, 15. The seventh angel pours his vial into the air, and the last plagues are tremendously finished on Babylon, &c. 16—21.

AND [a] I heard a great voice out of the temple, saying to [b] the seven angels, Go your ways, [c] and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

2 And the first went, and poured out his vial [d] upon the earth: and there fell [e] a noisome and grievous sore upon the men [f] which had the mark of the beast, and *upon* them which worshipped his image.

a xiv. 15 18 xv. 5—8.
b *See on*, xv. 1 6.
c 2—12 17 xiv. 9—11. xv. 7. 1 Sam. xv. 3. 18. Ez ix 5—8. x. 2. Matt. xiii. 41, 42
d viii. 7. xiv. 16
e Ex. ix. 9—11. Deut. vii 15. xxviii. 27 1 Sam. v. 6. 9. 2 Chr. xxi. 15. 18. Job ii 7, 8. Ps. lxxviii. 66. Is. i. 5. 6. iii 17. 24. Luke xvi. 20—22. Acts xii. 23
f *See on*, xiii. 15—18

V. 5—8. (xi. 19.) The appearance of glory above the mercy-seat in the most holy place, the tabernacle of God in the temple, was an emblem of his appearance in heaven, as reconciled to sinners through Jesus Christ: the seven angels, coming forth from thence, showed, that these judgments would be executed on the enemies of the church, in mercy to God's people: while their white clothing and golden girdles represented their holiness, and the righteousness and excellency of these awful dispensations. The living creature, an emblem of the Gospel-ministry, giving the vials to the angels, implied, that the preaching of the truth would be instrumental in bringing the judgments which were written upon antichristian opposers; and the temple being filled with smoke, showed the darkness of these dispensations, and the horror which would envelope the enemies of God, whilst these plagues were executing. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The many plagues which the wrath of God inflicts on the wicked, contain things great and marvellous; but none can fully understand them, till they have passed through the waves and fiery trials of this evil world, and are made victors over all their adversaries. Yet, whilst we stand upon "the sea of glass mingled with fire," we should anticipate the triumphs which await our final deliverance, and attempt the song of Moses, and of the Lamb: and new mercies continually demand new hymns of praise.—The fuller knowledge we acquire, concerning the wonderful works of God, the more zealously we shall celebrate his infinite greatness and excellency, as the Lord God almighty, the Creator and Ruler of all worlds; but his title of Emmanuel, the King of saints, will peculiarly endear him to us. Who, that considers the power of his wrath, the value of his favour, or the glory of his holiness, would refuse to fear and honour him alone? For his praise is above heaven and earth. May all nations, therefore, come and worship before him, and accept of his salvation! This prayer will be answered, when his tabernacle shall be opened, the instruments of his vengeance on obstinate rebels commissioned, and the seven vials poured out. In the mean time, let us adore his justice and truth, and not dare to object to his deep designs: for when we shall witness the completion of the whole, we shall see him perfectly glorious, both in mercy and in judgment.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1, 2. The angels were ordered, by a voice from the temple, to pour out the contents of the vials, censers or cups, that they had received, which were emblems of the wrath of God to be poured out on the antichristian empire, and all who adhered to it. As the four first trumpets were so many stages in the destruction of the western empire, and the fifth and sixth showed the extinction of the eastern empire, so these vials marked the gradual desolation of the Roman church; the one being the *pagan* idolatrous persecuting power, the other the *papal* idolatrous persecuting power; the beasts to whom the dragon had given his seat and empire. This circumstance occasions a similarity of some of the vials to the trumpets. A resemblance also is found between these vials and several of the plagues of Egypt, to which Rome may be compared for tyranny, cruelty, and enmity to the people of God. (xi. 8.) Whether the sores, produced by the pouring out of the first vial, are to be understood literally, with respect to terrible pestilences, or in a figurative meaning, the event must determine. But they will be peculiar to the avowed and devoted adherents of the beast and his image; which seems to be intended of the others, 3 ¶ And the second angel poured out his vial [g] upon the sea; and [h] it became as the blood of a dead *man:* [i] and every living soul died in the sea.

4 ¶ And the third angel poured out his vial [k] upon the rivers and fountains of waters; [l] and they became blood.

5 And I heard [m] the angel of the waters say, [n] Thou art righteous, O Lord, [o] which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.

6 For [p] they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; [q] for they are worthy.

7 And I heard another [r] out of the altar say, [t] Even so, Lord God almighty, true and righteous *are* thy judgments.

8 ¶ And the fourth angel poured out his vial [u] upon the sun: [x] and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.

g viii 8. x 2. xiii. 1.
h xi 6. Ex vii. 17—21. Ps lxxxviii. 44 cv. 29 Ez. xvi 38.
i viii. 9. Gen vii. 22
k viii. 10, 11
l 6. xiv. 7. Ex. vii. 20. viii. 5. Is. l. 2. Ez. xxxv. 8. Hos. xiii 15.
m 4.
n 7. *See on*, xv. 3. xix 2. Gen. xviii. 25. Ps cxxix. 4. cxlv 17. Lam. i. 18. Dan. ix 14. Rom ii. 5. iii. 5. 2 Thes i. 5, 6.
o *See on*, i. 4. 8. iv 8. xi 17
p vi. 10, 11. xiii 10. 15 xvii 6, 7. xviii. 24. xix. 2. 2 Kings xxiv. 4 Is. xlix. 26 li. 22, 23 Jer. ii. 30. Lam. iv. 13. Matt. vii 2 xxi 35—41. xxiii. 30—37.
q xi. 18. xviii. 20. Jer xxvi. 11 16. Luke xii 48 Heb x. 29.
r *See on*, vi 9. viii. 3—5. xiv 18. Is. vi. 6. Ez. x. 2. 7.
t *See on*, 5. xv. 3, 4.
u vi. 12. viii. 12. ix. 2. Is. xxiv. 23. Luke xxi. 25. Acts ii. 20.——x vii. 16. ix. 17, 18. xiv. 18. Jon. iv. 8. Matt. xiii. 6.

9 And men were * scorched with great heat, and [y] blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: [z] and they repented not [a] to give him glory.

10 ¶ And the fifth angel poured out his vial [b] upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was [c] full of darkness; and [d] they gnawed their tongues for pain,

11 And [e] blasphemed [f] the God of heaven [g] because of their pains and their sores, [h] and repented not of their deeds.

12 ¶ And the sixth angel poured out his vial [i] upon the great river Euphrates: [k] and the water thereof was dried up, [l] that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

13 And I saw [m] three unclean spirits [n] like frogs, *come* [o] out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the

* Or, *burned.*
y 10. 11 21. 2 Kings vi 33 2 Chr xxviii 22. Is i 5 viii 21. Jer. v. 3. vi 29, 30. Ez. xxiv. 13.
z 11. ii. 21 ix 20. Dan. v. 22, 23. Luke xiii. 3. 5. 2 Cor xii 21
a xi 13. xiv. 7. Josh. vii 19 Jer. xiii. 16. Am. iv. 6—12.
b xi 2. 8. xiii. 2. xvii. 9. 17, 16. xviii. 2, 3. 21—23.
c ix. 2 xviii. 11—19. Ex. x. 21—23 Ps. lxxviii. 49. Is. viii. 21, 22. Matt. viii 12. xxii 13. 2 Pet. ii. 17.
d xi 10. Matt xiii. 42. 50. xxiv 51. Luke xiii. 28.
e *See on*, 9.
f 2 Chr. xxxvi. 23. Ezra i. 2. v. 11, 12 vi 10 vii. 12. 21. 23. Neh. i. 4. ii. 4. Ps. cxxxvi. 26 Dan. ii. 18, 19. 44. Jon i. 9.
g 2 9.
h *See on*, 9. 2 Tim. iii. 13
i ix. 14. Is. viii. 7, 8.——k xvii. 15. Is. xi. 15 xlii 15 xliv 27. Jer. l. 38—40. li. 36.
l Is. xli 25 Ez. xxxviii. xxxix Dan. xi 43—45.——m 14. 2 Thes. ii. 9—11. 1 Tim iv. 1—3. 2 Tim. iii 1—6. 2 Pet ii 1—3. 1 John iv. 1—3.——n Ex viii. 2—7. Ps. lxxviii. 45. cv. 30.——o xii. 3, 4. 9—13. xiii. 1—7. 11—18.

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though not so expressly mentioned. (*Marg. Ref.*) Mr. Faber, without hesitation, interprets this plague of the *atheistical* spirit, which has long secretly pervaded the nations adhering to the Roman church, and which has broken out so extensively and fatally in these late years. I am by no means disposed to object to this interpretation; yet I am not able to adopt it, without great hesitation, even as *a probable opinion*, if indeed the pouring out of the vials may, in the order of the predicted events, be allowed to begin at so early a period.

V. 3—7. (viii. 8—10.) Seas and rivers turned into congealed blood, are proper emblems of vast slaughter and devastation. Yet the angel of the waters, who was appointed to preside over them, or to be a ministering spirit in these dispensations, celebrated the justice of the eternal Lord, who had determined to punish with such calamities the blood-thirsty murderers of saints and prophets, and in appointing them, as it were, blood to drink. And another angel, from under the altar, (vi. 9.) as speaking in the name of the holy martyrs, concurred in these praises, and also declared the truth of the Lord God almighty, in thus fulfilling his ancient predictions, and his promises to his church. If the events here predicted, be still future, the fulfilment of the prophecy alone can fully explain it. Mr. Faber, however, interprets the whole passage of the bloody transactions in France and on the Continent, which have occurred during these last eighteen or twenty years. I confess myself incompetent to decide, whether his opinion be well grounded or not; yet I hesitate for these reasons. 1st. The stage, on which these tragedies have been acted, seems not large enough for the completion of the prophecy. France, and the countries connected with it, form only part of the kingdom of the beast, and several countries belonging to it have hitherto been little affected by these sanguinary measures, though perhaps they may ere long be involved in them. 2dly. The term, since the commencement of the French revolution, seems too short to answer to the idea excited by this prophecy, of the judgments to be inflicted, when it is considered in how few verses the most interesting events of two or three hundred years are comprehended; yet, very probably, succeeding transactions may remove this objection. 3dly. I have some doubt, whether the time for the pouring out of the vials is arrived, and whether it will arrive till towards the close of this century. I am, however, by no means confident in my opinion.

V. 8, 9. (viii. 12.) Whether burning seasons, producing drought and famine, or some other judgment thus figuratively described, be intended, the event must show. But the extreme distress of the sufferers, instead of inducing them to glorify God, by confessing, repenting of, and forsaking their sins, will irritate them to blaspheme the name of God, and so tend to the increase of their guilt and final condemnation. (*Marg. Ref.*) These verses are interpreted, by Mr. Faber, to mean the present tyranny of the ruler of France over that nation, and the other kingdoms of the beast, on the Continent. I am not disposed to controvert this interpretation, nor yet to subscribe to it. I again observe, that in my view, our posterity, at the end of this century, will be more competent judges of this subject than we can be.

V. 10, 11. This predicts some great calamity to Rome itself, yet of such a nature as will darken the whole antichristian empire. But it will only excite the sufferers to horrid blasphemies, and more desperate defiance of God. Commentators in general allow, that this vial is not yet poured out; and this is a sufficient reason why a commentator should decline giving any conjecture, in what manner so compendious and so *obscure* a prediction will be fulfilled; but, when fulfilled, it will cease to be *obscure.*

beast, and out of the mouth of [p] the false prophet.

14 For they are [q] the spirits of devils, [r] working miracles, [s] *which* go forth unto the kings of the earth and of [t] the whole world, [u] to gather them to the battle of that great day of [x] God almighty.

15 Behold, [y] I come as a thief. [z] Blessed *is* he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, [a] lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

16 And [b] he gathered them together into a place, called in [c] the Hebrew tongue, [d] Armageddon.

17 ¶ And the seventh angel poured out his vial [e] into the air: and [f] there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, [g] It is done.

18 And there [h] were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was [i] a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, *and* so great.

19 And [k] the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and [l] great Babylon came [m] in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

20 And [n] every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

21 And [o] there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, *every stone* about the weight of a talent: and men [p] blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

p xix. 20. xx 10
q xvi. 9 1 Kings xxii. 19—23 2 Chr xviii. 18—22. Ez. xiv 9. John viii. 44. 2 Cor. xi 13—15 Jam. iii 15
r xiii. 13, 14. xix 20. Deut. xiii. 1, 2. Matt. xxiv. 24 Mark xiii 22 2 Thes. ii 9
s 1 Kings xxii. 6. 10, 11. 19—22. Acts viii. 8—10.
t iii. 10. xii. 9. xiii 3. Luke ii 1. Rom. i. 8.
u 16. xvii. 14. xix. 19 xx. 8 Is. xxxiv 1—8. lxiii. 1—6 Ez xxxviii 8—12 Joel iii 11—14
x *See on*, 7.
y iii 3 Matt xxiv. 43 1 Thes v. 2, 3 2 Pet. iii. 10.
z Matt xxiv. 42 xxv. 13 xxvi. 41. Mark xiii 33—37 xiv 38 Luke xii. 37 43 xxi 36. Acts xx. 31 1 Thes v. 6. 1 Pet iv 7.——a *See on* iii 4 18 Ex xxxii 25. Is. xlvii. 3 Ez xvi 37. Hos ii. 3 Hab. ii 15. 2 Cor. v 3 ——b xvii. 14 xix. 17—21 Judg iv 7. Joel iii 9—14 Zech. xiv. 2, 3 ——c ix 11. John v. 2. xix. 13 17. Acts xxvi 14 ——d Judg v. 19 2 Kings xxiii 29. 30. Zech. xii. 11.——e xx. 1—3. Eph ii 2. vi. 12 ——f 1 xi. 19. xiv. 17. xv 5, 6
g x. 6, 7. xxi. 6. Dan. xii. 7—13. John xix 30.
h iv. 5. viii. 5 xi. 19.
i xi. 13. Dan xii. 1.
k xiv. 8 xvii. 18. xviii 2. 10. 16—19. 21.
l xvii. 5. Dan. iv. 30.
m *See on*; xiv. 8. 10. xviii. 5. Is. xlix. 26. li. 17—23. Jer. xxv. 15, 16 26.
n vi. 14. xx. 11. Is. ii. 14—17. Jer. iv. 23—25.
o viii. 7. xi 19. Ex. ix. 23—26. Josh. x. 11. Is. xxx. 30. Ez. xiii 11. 13. xxxviii 21, 22.
p *See on*, 9. 11. Is. viii 21.

V. 12—16. If the river Euphrates is here to be understood literally, some eastern nation or nations may be expected to invade Europe, as the executioner of the Lord's vengeance on the kingdom of the beast. But as Rome is mystical Babylon, which stood on the river Euphrates, and was both enriched and protected by it, perhaps we may understand, by the drying up of the Euphrates, such deductions from the power and resources of Rome, as shall embolden and excite other nations to attack her. These events, however, will threaten the destruction of that whole interest; so that three unclean spirits, like frogs, will come out of the mouth of the dragon, as representing Satan, who gave his power to the beast; out of the mouth of the beast or antichristian empire; and out of that of the false prophet, or the antichristian church and clergy. That is, emissaries, commissioned by them, and instigated by unclean spirits, being loathsome, and croaking, and intruding themselves into every place, to the mischief of all, (*Ex.* viii. 1—3.) will go forth to promote idolatry, pretending to work miracles in support of their doctrine, and to collect the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, even all in every place who favour that design, that they may make one united effort against the cause of God; and thus they will be gathered for battle against the great day, in which the almighty God intends to destroy them. Some have imagined these three mystical frogs to be the Dominicans, Franciscans, and Jesuits, and the description given of them would agree well enough with that of those Janizaries of the church of Rome; but the predicted events must fall much later than the founding of those orders, and Satan will no doubt be able to excite men of the same stamp to similar services with those performed by *them* in former ages. These will be times of great temptation, and therefore Christ, by his apostle, called on his professed servants to expect his sudden coming, and to watch, that they might retain, and be found in, the garments of salvation, and not appear naked, and so be put to shame, as apostates or hypocrites; for the blessing would belong only to the watchful. This parenthesis interrupts the prediction; but that proceeds to show, that He, even the Lord, gathered together the kings of the earth, in his righteous providence, to a place called Armageddon, or the mountain of destruction, with reference to Megiddo. (*Judg.* v. 19. 2 *Kings* xxiii. 29, 30.)

V. 17—21. Satan is called "the prince of the power of "the air," and this last vial will be poured into the seat of his empire; for after it, his cause in every place without, as well as within, the dominions of the beast, will be ruined. A proclamation was therefore made, that it was *done*, or *finished*, as under the seventh trumpet the mystery of God was to be finished. (x. 7.) Terrible calamities, awful displays of the divine presence, intestine distractions, and the revolt or destruction of cities and nations, &c. will make way for great Babylon to drink of the wine of the fierceness of God's wrath; and the concurrent judgments are described in the strongest language; especially by hail stones of above a hundred pounds weight each, which must dash in pieces all persons and things whatsoever on which they fall. But how this is to be understood, the event must show. It would be very easy to *give an opinion*, or to quote from those who have done this; but, as *conjectures* about the future fulfilment of prophecies is no part of the plan of this publication, the author must decline the attempt, and refer the reader to those who have purposely written on the subject, among whom he allows that Mr. Faber has supported his opinions with more *probable* arguments from other prophecies, than others whom he has consulted. But as doubts remain on his mind in several particulars, he does not think himself authorized to *adopt* any of Mr. Faber's conclusions. Posterity will be more competent than we are, to determine on such questions. It is, however, clear, beyond doubt, that convulsions, revolutions, and the wreck of nations, to a degree and extent never hitherto witnessed, or recorded, are yet to be expected, before the mystery of God

CHAP. XVII.

An angel shows John the persecuting idolatrous power which was to be destroyed; under the emblem of an infamous, but splendid, harlot, riding on a scarlet-coloured beast, with a golden cup in her hand, her name inscribed on her forehead, and drunk with the blood of the saints, 1—6. *He explains the vision to him,* 7—18.

AND there came [a] one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and [b] talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; [c] I will shew unto thee the judgment of [d] the great whore [e] that sitteth upon many waters:

2 With whom [f] the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.

a xv. 1. 6. xvi. 1—17. xxi. 9.
b iv. 1. xxi. 15. Luke ix. 30. xxiv. 32
c xvi 19. xviii. 16—19.
d 4, 5 15, 16. xix. 2. Is. lvii 3. Nah. iii. 4 5.
e 15 Jer. li. 13.
f 13. 17. xiv. 8. xviii 3 9. 23. Jer li. 7.

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is finished. The opinion, also, that the land of Canaan will be the stage, on which the last grand conflict shall be decided, is highly probable: but whether that country, or the papal dominions, be meant, by the six hundred furlongs to be drenched with blood, he will not presume to decide. (*Note*, xiv. 18—20.) The dimension may suit either one or the other: and it is not certain, whether particular dreadful judgments on the immediate seat of the beast, or tremendous vengeance on all his remaining adherents, be there foretold. It may be observed, that I have not at all noticed the interpretations of those, who consider several of these vials as long since poured out. This has resulted from a full conviction, that these interpretations are absolutely inconsistent with the chronology of the prophecy, and the whole clue which must direct us in expounding it; and that they are altogether unsatisfactory, even as *insulated* accommodations. Whether the opinion of those, who explain the former of the vials of recent events which have occurred within these last twenty years, be well founded, will be known ere long; at least they are not apparently inconsistent with the chronology of the book. The grand question to be decided, in this respect, relates to the sounding of the seventh trumpet. If that event be past, the vials have begun to be poured out; if it be future, none of them have been poured out. For it seems to me clear, that as the seventh seal includes all the seven trumpets, so the seventh trumpet includes all the seven vials. Nor do I think it possible for human sagacity to determine, till some considerable time has elapsed, at what precise period events of such immense magnitude, as those here predicted, began to be accomplished.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

How infatuated must men be, to set at defiance the power of God, who can fight against them by such varied means, and with such irresistible weapons! especially as he continues to beseech his enemies to be reconciled to him, and share his omnipotent and everlasting favour! No wonder that angels, who witness or execute his vengeance on such implacable haters of God, of Christ, and of holiness, loudly celebrate the praises of his justice and truth, and adore his awful dispensations, when he brings upon bloody persecutors the tortures, which they had inflicted on his saints and prophets. But the heart of man is so desperately wicked, that the most complicated miseries will never induce them to repentance, without special grace; nay, if men are left to themselves, they will blaspheme the name of God, even in the intervals of gnawing their tongues with pain! It is vain, therefore, to expect that purgatory, or hell-fire, will ever bring men to glorify God in true repentance, or in any sense purge away their sins. Even hell is filled with blasphemies, determined and horrid, in proportion to the degree of its torments: and they are as ignorant of the history of human nature, as of the Bible and of their own hearts, who do not know, that the more men suffer, and the more plainly they see the hand of God in their sufferings, the more furiously they often rage against him. Let then sinners now seek repentance from Christ, and the grace of the Holy Spirit; or they will hereafter have the anguish and horror of an unhumbled, impenitent, and desperate heart, burning with enmity against God, as well as tortured by the fire of his indignation, and thus augmenting guilt and misery to all eternity. Whilst Satan and wicked men, by every artifice and with all their power, excite numbers to combine against the cause of God, they are in fact gathered by him, that he may execute judgment upon them. But many of those, who are professedly the friends of God, will have their portion with avowed unbelievers; and, being found destitute of the robe of salvation, will be put to shame, and perish. May we then remember that Christ cometh suddenly, that we may watch, and "give diligence to be found of him in peace, "without spot and blameless."

NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 1, 2. This chapter digresses from the subject, to show more precisely what was meant by great Babylon, the ruins of which had been predicted. One of the angels, who had poured out the vials, conversed in vision with John, and bade him come to him, and he would show him the judgment of that corrupt Church, or kingdom, which might be emphatically called "the great whore;" because it had exceeded all other churches or societies, in seducing men to commit idolatry, and abominations of every kind. The many waters, on which this dignified harlot, who was illustrious in her infamy, sat enthroned as a queen, are afterwards explained. (15.) No one can doubt but Rome is meant in this chapter; nay, the most zealous papists allow it: and indeed it would not have been made so undeniable, by being expressly named, as it is by this description. The only question then is, whether Rome Pagan, or Rome Papal, is meant? But Pagan Rome never seduced the kings of the earth to join in her idolatries; she never intoxicated the inhabitants with the wine of her fornication; she subdued and ruled them with an iron rod, and not by artifices and blandishments; she left them in general to their ancient

3 So [g] he carried me away in the Spirit [h] into the wilderness: and I saw [i] a woman sit upon a scarlet-coloured beast, [k] full of names of blasphemy, [l] having seven heads and ten horns.

4 And the woman was [m] arrayed in purple and scarlet-colour, [n] and * decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having [o] a golden cup in her hand full of [p] abominations and [q] filthiness of her fornication:

g i. 10. iv. 2. xxi. 10. 1 Kings xviii. 12 2 Kings ii. 16. Ez. iii. 12. viii. 3. xi. 24. Acts viii. 39.
h xii 6. 14. Cant. viii. 5.
i 4. 6. 18. xii. 3.
k *See on,* xiii 1—6 Dan. vii 8 20. 25. xi. 36 2 Thes. ii. 4
l 9—12. xii. 3 xiii. 1
m 3. xviii. 7. 12. 16
n Dan xi. 38.
* Gr. *gilded.*
o xiv. 8. xviii 6. xix. 2. Jer li. 7. 2 Thes. i. 3—10.——p Deut. xxix. 17 1 Kings xiv. 24. 2 Kings xxi. 2. Is. lxvi. 3. Ez. xv. 30 Hos ix. 10.——q Ezra ix. 11. Lam. i. 9. Ez. xxiv. 11. 13. xxxvi. 25

5 And [r] upon her forehead *was* a name written, [s] MYSTERY, [t] BABYLON THE GREAT, [u] THE MOTHER OF † HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

6 And I saw the woman [x] drunken with the blood of the saints, [y] and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, [z] I wondered with great admiration.

r vii. 3. Is. iii. 9. Phil iii. 19.
s 2 Thes. ii. 7. 2 Tim iii. 1—5.
t xi 8 xiv. 1. xvi. 19. xviii 2 10. 21. Jer. li. 47, 48.
u xviii 9 xix. 2.
† Or, *fornications.*
x xiii. 7. xvi. 6. xviii. 20—24. Dan. vii. 21 25.
y ii. 13. vi. 9, 10. xii 11. Acts xxii. 20.
z Hab. i. 13.

usages and worship; nay, she imported the idols and vices of the conquered nations, and thus became fatally corrupted: and when the Roman emperors persecuted the Christians, they did it rather from a desire of crushing innovations, which threatened as they supposed the peace of the state, than from zeal for any particular form of idolatry. On the other hand, it is well known by what subtle insinuations, and politic management, "with all "the deceivableness of unrighteousness," Rome Papal, without any adequate temporal force, hath obtained and preserved an ascendency over kings and nations, attaching them to her usurped dominion in blind submission, and inducing them to conform to her idolatries, and corruptions of Christianity. So that the authority of powerful kings, and the forces of mighty nations, have repeatedly been employed in defence of her tyranny: and multitudes have been intoxicated and infuriated, by their zeal for that church, to murder their unoffending neighbours, by tens of thousands, and to enslave, weaken, and impoverish themselves!

V. 3—5. The angel then carried John "in the spirit;" (that is, being under the influence of the prophetic Spirit, he seemed to be conveyed into the wilderness; for the antichristian tyranny and seductions had reduced the church into a most desolate state, and made it like a desert;) and he there saw a woman seated on a scarlet-coloured beast. (*Marg. Ref.*) This woman was the emblem of *the church of Rome,* and the beast of the *temporal power,* by which it hath been supported; and the latter was full of names of blasphemy, which we have had repeated occasions to mention. The seven heads and ten horns are afterwards explained. The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour: for these have always been the distinguishing colours of popes and cardinals, as well as of the Roman emperors and senators: nay, by a kind of infatuation, the mules and horses on which they rode, have been covered with scarlet cloth; as if they were determined to answer this description, and even literally to ride on a scarlet-coloured beast! The woman was also most superbly decorated with gold and jewels: and who can sufficiently describe the pride, grandeur, and magnificence of the church of Rome, in her vestments and ornaments of every kind? Even papists have gloried in the superiority of their church, in this magnificence, to ancient Rome when at the height of her prosperity. 'This appears in all things relating to their public worship, and in the papal court, even beyond what can be conceived: and external pomp attaches carnal men to a religion which interests and gratifies them, whilst they despise the simplicity of spiritual worship. 'This 'is beyond description, and as much surpassed my expect'ation, as other sights have generally fallen short of it. 'Silver can scarce find an admittance, and gold itself 'looks but poorly, among such an incredible number of 'precious stones.' (*Addison.*) In the woman's hand likewise there "was a golden cup full of abominations:" this alludes to the practice of harlots in inflaming their paramours with love potions; and represents the various fascinating allurements, the impostures, delusions, promises of impunity, indulgences, absolutions, with hopes of worldly interest and preferment, by which that church hath obtained and preserved her influence, and seduced men to join in her spiritual fornication, the other abominations of her corrupt worship, and the unholiness connected with it. (*Marg. Ref.*) To distinguish this notorious harlot from all others, her name was inscribed on her forehead; as prostitutes of old sometimes made themselves known, by a label on the forehead with their name upon it. This was "Mystery, Babylon the Great." Her religion was "a mystery of iniquity," (2 *Thes.* ii. 7,) and she herself was mystically Babylon. Now there was nothing in Pagan Rome, to which this title was more proper than to any other city; nor would it have been any thing mysterious to have substituted one Pagan city for another: but it was indeed a great mystery, that the professed metropolis of the Christian church should be another Babylon, in idolatry, iniquity, and cruelty to the people of God: and therefore her title of 'the Roman Catholic, 'or universal church,' entitles her to the name of "Mys"tery, Babylon the Great." She affects indeed the character of 'our holy mother the church;' but she is in fact "the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth;" the inventress, source, promoter, and principal example of idolatries, and all kinds of abominable abuses and perversions of Christianity, with which the nations of the earth have been corrupted. It is asserted by writers of good authority, that, before the reformation, the word *mystery* was written in letters of gold, upon the front of the Pope's mitre: but the fact has been controverted, and therefore, though the affirmative evidence vastly preponderates, we cannot be absolutely certain of it.

V. 6. The woman was as notorious for cruelty and persecution, as for idolatry and profligacy; and the apostle saw her intoxicated with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus. In this respect Rome Pagan and Rome Papal were both criminal; but the latter has probably slain more *thousands,* than the former did *individuals:* and the apostle would not have been so greatly astonished to see a heathen city persecuting Christians; (having wit-

7 And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? [a] I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.

8 The [b] beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and [c] go into perdition; and they that dwell on the earth [d] shall wonder, ([e] whose names were not written in the book of life [f] from the foundation of the world,) when they behold [g] the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

9 And [h] here *is* the mind which hath wisdom. [i] The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.

10 And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, *and* the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.

11 And the beast [k] that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.

12 And [l] the ten horns which thou sawest, are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

13 These have [m] one mind, and [n] shall give their power and strength unto the beast.

14 These [o] shall make war with the Lamb, and [p] the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is [q] Lord of lords, and King of kings: [r] and they that are with him *are* called, and chosen, and faithful.

a *See on*, 1—6. 8.
b ix 2, 3. xiii. 1—11.
c 11. xiv. 8—20. xvi xviii xix 15—21. xx. 10. Dan vii 11. 26. xi. 45 2 Thes. ii. 3—8.
d xiii. 3, 4.
e *See on*, xiii. 8. xx. 12. 15.
f Matt xxv. 34. John xvii. 24. Acts xv. 18. Eph. i 4 Tit. i. 2. 1 Pet i 20.
g xiii. 1—4. 11, 12.
h xiii 18 Dan xii 4. 8—10 Hos xiv. 9. Matt xiii. 11. xxiv. 15.
i 3. 7. 18. xiii. 1.
k *See on*, 8.
l xii 3. xiii 1. Dan ii. 40—43. vii 7, 8. 20. 24. Zech. i. 18—21.
m Phil i. 27. ii. 2.
n 17. Is. x. 5—7. Ez. xxxviii. 10. Acts iv. 23.
o xi 7. xiii. 6, 7. xvi. 14. xix. 15—21. Dan. vii. 21 25. viii. 9—12 24, 25. Zech. ii. 8 Matt. xxv. 40. Acts ix. 4, 5.
p vi. 12—17 Ps. ii. 8, 9 xxi. 8—12. cx. 5, 6. Dan. ii. 44 vii. 26, 27. 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25
q i. 5. xix. 16. Deut x. 17 Ps. cxxxvi. 2. 3. Prov. viii. 15, 16 Dan. ii. 47. 1 Tim. vi 15
r xiv. 1—4. xix. 14. Ps. cxlix. 5—9. Jer. l. 44, 45. Mic. v. 7—9. John xv 16. Rom. viii. 30. 2 Tim. ii 4. Heb iii. 1, 2. 1 Pet. ii. 9.

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nessed and experienced such persecutions previously to this vision;) but that a city, professedly Christian, and the metropolis of the Christian church, should thus wanton and riot in the blood of the saints, might well excite his highest amazement. ‘All this is very plain: but papists wonder by what figure of speech heretics are called saints, and rebels against the Pope, martyrs of Jesus.’ (*Bp. Hurd.*)

V. 7, 8. The reader might have been well satisfied about the meaning of those emblems, if he had received no further information: but, lest he should mistake or hesitate, the angel became the interpreter of the vision. As the apostle had seen and heard very much on the same subject before, the angel inquired into the reason of his excessive amazement: and he then showed to him the mystery of the woman riding on the beast. A beast is the emblem of an idolatrous and oppressive empire: the Roman empire *was* the beast under the Pagan emperors: it ceased to be so, when it became Christian, with reference to which the angel says, by way of anticipation, “It is not.” Yet it would afterwards “ascend out of the abyss;” that is, when the antichristian empire became idolatrous and persecuting, and the dragon gave his power to the beast, it seemed to arise out of the sea, the tempestuous state of the nations; but it was in fact from hell, being Satan’s grand scheme for opposing the Gospel, (*Note*, xiii. 1, 2:) and therefore after a time it would go into perdition, and be destroyed finally and for ever. ‘The empire was idolatrous under the heathen emperors; and then ceased to be so under the Christian emperors; and then became idolatrous again under the Roman pontiffs, and hath so continued ever since. But in this last form it shall go into perdition: it shall not, as it did before, cease for a time, and revive again, but shall be destroyed for ever.’ (*Bp. Newton.*) In the mean while, however, it would deceive, into a stupid admiration and blind submission, all the inhabitants of the earth, within the sphere of its influence, except the remnant of the elect. (*Note*, xiii. 8.) Here then was a proper trial and exercise of a man’s wisdom, to discover what was meant by the beast, that had been, was not, and yet was; being the same in a different form.

V. 9—14. To assist the reader in this inquiry, the angel observed, that the seven heads of this symbolical beast represented seven mountains, on which the woman was enthroned; being especially the seat of that spiritual authority, by which the power of the beast is supported. This is the known situation of Rome; and though Constantinople is also built on seven hills, they are comparatively obscure, and no other mark of the beast answers to it. For the seven heads of the beast had another enigmatical meaning, and signified seven forms of government, or successions of rulers, according to the usual prophetical meaning of the word *kings*. They all appeared in vision at once upon the beast; but in fact five of them were fallen, at the time when the apostle had the vision; namely, kings, consuls, dictators, decemvirs, and military tribunes; one of them then subsisted, even that of emperors; and another was not yet come, which when he came would endure only for a short time. Some explain this of the Christian emperors; but their power must either be included in the sixth head; or it could not be a head of the beast at all, not being idolatrous. Others explain it of the Exarch of Ravenna, who for some years ruled over Rome; and others, of the usurpations of the pope, before he became a temporal prince, or the prescribed twelve hundred and sixty years of the reign of the beast had entered. Many other interpretations have been given, and especially the dominion of Charlemagne and his successors, during some generations, has been fixed upon; but, at last, no great certainty seems to attach to this interpretation; and the very words of the prophecy intimate that it would be differently explained. In general, however, it related to the intervening space between the subversion of the empire and the establishment of papal tyranny; during which time Rome was under the temporal jurisdiction of the Exarch of Ravenna, and the spiritual rule of the Pope, who had already introduced the worship of saints and images, and many other gross abuses. If this be reckoned a distinct form of government, then the beast, as it subsisted when the woman sat on it, was the eighth; but if

15 And he saith unto me, [s] The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, [t] are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

16 And [u] the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, [x] these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate, [y] and naked, and shall [z] eat her flesh, [a] and burn her with fire.

17 For [b] God hath [c] put in their hearts [d] to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, [e] until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

18 And [f] the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

s See on, 1. Ps. xviii 4 lxv. 7. xciii. 3, 4 Is. viii. 7, 8 Jer. li 13. 42. 55.
t x 11. xi. 9. xiii 7, 8.
u See on 2. 10. 12.
x 1, 2 13 Is xlvi. 17, 18. Jer l. 41 42.
y xviii. 16, 17. Ez. xvi 37—42. xxiii. 45—49.
z Job xxxi. 31 Ps. xxvii. 2. Dan vii. 5
a xviii 8. Lev. xxi. 9.
b See on. 13.
c Ezra vii 27. Ps cv 25. Prov. xxi. 1. Jer. xxxii. 40. 2 Thes. ii 10—12 Jam. i. 13—17
d Luke xxii. 3 22. 37 John xiii 2 18.
e x. 7. Prov. xix. 21. Is xiv. 27. xlvi: 10. 11. Jer. xxvii 6, 7. Ez. xxxviii. 16, 17. John x. 35. xii. 39, 40. xix. 24 28.
f xvi. 19. xviii. 2 Dan. ii. 40, 41. vii 23. Luke ii. 1.

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it is deemed too inconsiderable to be reckoned a distinct head, "He was one of the seven;" but whether the seventh or the eighth, he would be the last form of government in that idolatrous empire, and would go into perdition. 'The beast, therefore, on which the woman rideth, 'is the Roman government in its last form: and this, all 'must acknowledge, is papal, not imperial.' (*Bp. Newton.*) For the last head was the only one which was referred to, when the woman sat on the beast, and was therefore spoken of as the beast itself. The ten horns, (which seem to have all grown on the last head,) were ten kings, or successions of kings, who had received no kingdom when John had this vision: but they would receive power as kings, *one hour* with the beast, or *at the same time*, and *for the same period*. This points out the division of the Roman empire into ten distinct kingdoms, yet all united in one design, to support the idolatry of the church of Rome. They might be kings; but they were not horns of the beast, till they embraced that religion, and both stengthened the hands of the pope and church of Rome, and were strengthened by them. (*Note, Dan.* vii. 7, 8.) These were contemporary, not successive, princes; and therefore they were of one mind, to give their power to the beast: implicitly submitting to that idolatrous religion, defending its tyranny and usurpations, enduring its exorbitant exactions, and obeying its mandates to make war, in opposing the cause of Christ, and in order to extirpate his disciples. But it was predicted, that they would all be finally defeated in that war by the Lamb of God; as he "is Lord of lords, and King of kings:" and his followers are effectually called to enlist under his standard, in consequence of his special choice of them; and therefore they are true believers, faithful to his cause, and to their own engagements.

V. 15—18. The angel next explained to the apostle "the many waters, on which the woman sat" in regal dignity. So many words, all in the plural number, aptly describe the extensive dominion of the church of Rome, not only over those within the territories belonging to the papacy, but over all the kingdoms of that communion: nay, the pope hath claimed the right over all nations, to dispose of crowns and depose princes at his pleasure, as if he were lord of lords, and king of kings! and the very titles of universal bishop, and the Roman catholic church, fully accord to this description. This, however, will not always be the case; for the ten horns, or kingdoms, that once exalted and supported the ecclesiastical tyranny, will at length hate, desolate, strip, devour, and destroy it. Most of them will be the principal instruments in the destruction of popery, and the ruin of Rome itself; though some will lament over these events. How far some late revolutions may lead to this crisis, we cannot tell; but present appearances render it not improbable, that the last victory of the beast over the witnesses of Christ will be obtained in some other way than by papal delusions.—(*Note,* xi. 1—9.) God had so influenced the hearts of these kings, by his power over them, and by the dispensations of his Providence, that they fulfilled his will, or did those things, without intending it, which he had purposed and predicted: (*Marg. Ref.*) so that they agreed together, to give their power to the beast, to make him, as it were, their liege lord, and only to reign over others, in order to render them subservient to him. But they will at length better understand their own interest, and their duty to God and their subjects, than thus any longer to prostitute their power. To terminate the description of the woman that sat on this symbolical beast, she was declared to be that city, which reigned over the kings of the earth when John had this vision: and every body must know Rome to be that city. Indeed, this was the avowed object, aim, and ambition of Rome, from its foundation; and, in different ways, it has accomplished its purpose, with little interruption, even to this present time.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord takes pleasure in satisfying his people, concerning the reasons and equity of his judgments on his enemies, that they may not be intimidated by the severity of them, or fail to adore and praise him on that account.—Great prosperity, pomp, and splendour, commonly feed the pride and lusts of the human heart, and they can never form any security against divine vengeance. They, who allure or tempt others to sin, must expect more aggravated punishment, in proportion to the degree of the mischief done by them. The worst abominations, idolatries, filthiness, cruelties, and blasphemies, have been perpetrated within the professing church; and a magnificent religion, adorned with purple, and decked with gold and jewels, is generally antichristian. Indeed, every attempt to accommodate the truth or worship of God to the taste of carnal minds must mar its simplicity, and corrupt its purity. But the *golden* cup in the hand of Babylon and her daughters will reconcile most men to the mysteries of iniquity connected with *it*, and make them willingly swallow down the wine of their fornications; and even induce them to join in making themselves drunken with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus. Let all then beware of a splendid, a lucrative, or a fashionable religion; let us avoid the mysteries of iniquity, and study diligently

CHAP. XVIII.

A mighty angel announces the fall of Babylon, and its utter desolation, because of its abominations, 1—3. *A voice from heaven calls on the people of God to come out of her, lest they should be involved in her destruction,* 4—8. *The kings and merchants connected with her lament her fall; and the apostles and prophets are called to rejoice over it,* 9—20. *Her final and total overthrow first signified by a millstone cast into the sea; and then emphatically described,* 21—24.

AND after these things [a] I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; [b] and the earth was lightened with his glory.

2 And he [c] cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, [d] Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is [e] become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

3 For [f] all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and [g] the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the * abundance of [h] her delicacies.

4 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, [i] Come out of her, my people, that ye be not [k] partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues:

5 For her sins have [l] reached unto heaven, [m] and God hath remembered her iniquities.

6 [n] Reward her even as she rewarded you, and [o] double unto her double, according to her works: in [p] the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double.

7 How [q] much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her; for she saith in her heart, [r] I sit a queen, and am [s] no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

8 Therefore [t] shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; [u] and she shall be utterly burned

a *See on*, xvii. 1
b xxi 23. Is ix. 1—3 Ez. xliii. 2. Luke xvii. 24. 2 Thes. ii 8.
c i. 15. v. 2. x 3 xiv. 15. Jer xxv. 30 Joel iii. 16.
d 10 21 xiv 8 xvi. 19 xvii 5. 18 Is. xiii. 19. xxi 9. Jer li 8. 60—64.
e Lev. xi. 13—19. Is xiii 20—22. xiv. 23 xxxiv 11—15. Jer. l 39, 40. li. 37 Mark v 3—5 Luke viii. 27, 28
f 9. xiv 8. xvii. 2 Jer. li. 7.
g 11—17. 23. Is. xlvii. 15. 2 Pet. ii. 1—3.
* Or, *power.* Prov. xxiii. 1—3.
h Jer. li. 34. Lam. iv. 5. Luke vii. 25.
i Gen. xix 12, 13. Num. xvi. 26, 27. Is. xlviii 20. lii. 11. Jer l. 8. li 6. 45. 50 Matt. xxiv. 15, 16. 2 Cor vi. 17.
k Ps. l. 18. Matt xxiii. 30. 1 Tim. v. 22. 2 John 11.
l Gen xviii. 20, 21. 2 Chr xxviii. 9. Ezra ix 6. Jer li 9 Jon. i. 2.
m *See on*, xvi. 19.
n xiii 10. xvi 5, 6. Ex xxi. 23—25. Ps cxxxvii. 8. Jer l. 15. 29. li 24. 49. 2 Tim. iv. 14.
o Is. xl 2. lxi. 7. Jer xvi 18. xvii 8. Zech ix. 12.
p *See on*, xiv. 10. xvi. 10. xvii. 2. 4
q Is xxii. 12—14. xlvii 1, 2. 7—9. Ez. xxviii. 2—10. Zeph. ii 15. 2 Thes. ii. 4—8.
r Ps. xlv. 9. Jer. xiii. 18.
s Is xlvii. 7, 8. Lam. i. 1.
t 10. 17. 19. Is. xlvii. 9—11. Jer. li. 6.
u 9. xvii 16. xix 3. Jer. li. 58.

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the great mystery of godliness, that we may learn humility, simplicity, self-denial, and gratitude, in the stable at Bethlehem, in the carpenter's shop at Nazareth, by the side of the well at Sychar, in the garden, and on mount Golgotha: for the more we resemble Christ, the less shall we be liable to be deceived by antichrist. We cannot but wonder at the oceans, as it were, of Christian blood, which have been shed by men called Christians; but our wonder will abate, when we consider these prophecies, and the awful fact will turn to us for a testimony of the truth of the Gospel. Whatever enemies at any time make war against the Lamb of God must surely be overcome by him; though hand join in hand, such wicked men shall not be unpunished, even if all the kings and nations of the earth should agree in opposing him: for he is "Lord of lords, "and King of kings;" and his called, chosen, and faithful followers are on the strongest side. May we approve ourselves to be of that number! And then we shall be received to his glory, when wicked men will be destroyed in a most tremendous manner, and when their concurrence together in sin will be turned into the bitterest hatred and rage, and they will assist in tormenting each other. But "the LORD's Portion is his people;" "his counsel shall "stand, and he will do all his pleasure."

NOTES.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 1—3. (*Note*, xvi. 19.) After the apostle had been certified who Babylon the Great was, and what she had done, he had the vision of her destruction continued. Another angel, distinct from those who poured out the vials, came down from heaven, possessing great power, and illuminating the earth with his glory: this was either Christ himself, or an emblematical representation of his coming to destroy his enemies, and to diffuse the light of his Gospel through all nations; to which events the language naturally directs our thoughts. He therefore repeatedly proclaimed in a loud voice, which all might hear, and which implied great power and authority, that "Babylon the Great was fallen," totally and finally; and that it was become not only desolate, but a kind of hell upon earth. Some think that the words may refer to the discoveries which will then be made of the diabolical ambition, impostures, lies, murder, and horrible uncleanness, with which the city is filled, under the mask of religion; but the expressions are figurative and borrowed from the Old Testament. (*Notes*, &c. *Is.* xiii. 19—22. xxxiv. *Jer.* l. 39.) No destruction of Rome has hitherto left it in this condition; unless any choose to say, that it "hath been the habitation of devils, and the hold of every "foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful "bird," ever since popes and cardinals have made it their residence. To the reasons before assigned for the ruin of this city, it is here added, that "the merchants of "the earth are waxed rich, through the abundance of her "delicacies:" her outward magnificence, luxury, and excess, have proved a source of immense wealth to vast multitudes; and the various arts, trades, manufactures, and species of commerce, which flourish by means of her pompous religion, have always helped to support it; for "by that craft many have their wealth." But the spiritual merchandise, by which unnumbered multitudes have wickedly lived in affluence, and enjoyed abundant delicacies, by the sins and follies of mankind, seem principally intended.

with fire: [x] for strong *is* the Lord God who judgeth her.

9 And [y] the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication, and lived deliciously with her, [z] shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see [a] the smoke of her burning,

10 Standing [b] afar off, for the fear of her torment, saying, [c] Alas, alas! [d] that great city Babylon, that mighty city! [e] for in one hour is thy judgment come.

11 And [f] the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her, for no man [g] buyeth their merchandise any more:

12 The [h] merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all * thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble,

13 And [i] cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, [k] and † slaves, [l] and souls of men.

14 And the fruits that [m] thy soul lusted after are [n] departed from thee, and all things, which were dainty and goodly, are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.

15 The merchants of these things, [o] which were made rich by her, [p] shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,

16 And saying, [q] Alas, alas! that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!

17 For [r] in one hour so great riches is come to nought. [s] And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off,

18 And cried [t] when they saw the

x Job ix. 19. Is. xxvii 1 Jer l. 31. 34 1 Cor x 22.
y *See on*, 3 7. xvii 2 12, 13.
z 20. Ps lviii. 10. Jer l 46. Ez. xxvi. 16, 17. xxxii. 9, 10 Dan. iv 14, Zech xi. 2. 3.
a 18. xiv. 11. xix. 3. Gen xix 28 Deut xxix 23. Is. xiii 19. xxx. 33. xxxiv. 9, 10. Jer. l. 40.
b Num. xvi 34.
c 16. 19 Jer. xxx. 7 Joel i. 15 Am. v. 16.
d *See on*, xiv. 8. Is xxi. 9.
e *See on*, 8. Jer li. 8, 9.
f 3. 9. 15. 20. 23 xiii 16. 17. Is. xxiii. 1—15. xlvii 15 Ez. xxvi. 17—21. xxvii. 27—36. Zeph. i. 11. 18.
g Prov. iii 14 Matt. xxii. 5. John ii. 16. 2 Pet. ii. 3.
h xvii. 4. 1 Kings x. 11, 12. Prov. viii 10. 11 Ez. xxvii 5–25.
* Or, *sweet* 1 Kings x. 11.
i 1 Kings x. 10 15. 25. 2 Chr. ix. 9 Prov. vii. 17. Cant. i. 3. iv. 13, 14. v. 5. Am. vi 6 John xii. 3–8.
k Ex. xxi. 16. Deut. xxiv. 7. xxviii. 68. Neh. v. 4, 5. 8. Is l. 2. Ez xxvii. 13. Am. ii. 6 viii. 6 1 Tim i. 10.
† Or, *bodies*.
l 2 Pet ii. 3
m Num. xi. 4. 34. Ps. lxxviii. 18. cvi. 14. 1 Cor. x. 6. Jam iv. 2 1 John ii. 16, 17
n Luke xii. 20. xvi. 25
o 3. 11. Hos xii. 7, 8. Zech. xi 5. Mark xi. 17. Acts xvi 19 xix. 24—27.
p *See on*, 11 Judg. xviii. 23, 24. Ez. xxvii. 31. Am. v. 16, 17.
q *See on*, 10, 11. xvii. 4 Luke xvi 19
r 10. Is. xlvii. 9. Jer. li. 8. Lam. iv 6
s 11. Is. xxiii. 14. Ez xxvii. 27—36. Jon. i. 6.
t *See on*, 9.

V. 4—8. As Lot was called forth out of Sodom, before it was destroyed by fire and brimstone, so the people of God are directed, by a voice from heaven, to come out of Babylon before her fall. (*Note, Is.* lii. 11.) This summons concerns all persons in every age; they who believe in Christ, and worship God in the Spirit, should separate from so corrupt a church, and from all others that copy her example of idolatry, persecution, cruelty, and tyranny, and avoid "being partakers of her sins," even if they have renounced her communion; or else they may expect to be involved in her plagues. As her crimes, her daring, presumptuous, and atrocious wickedness, resembled mountains reaching to heaven, so God had remembered her iniquities, though his forbearance had been mistaken for disregard. And, therefore, the persons, or nations, who had been persecuted by her, were called on to retaliate upon her as a condemned criminal, and to give her a double measure of the wine of his wrath, from the cup of his indignation, according to the atrociousness of her sins, and the cruel treatment which they had received at her hands; that torture and anguish might be rendered to her, proportionable to her former ostentation, splendour, and luxury, and to the pride and presumption, with which she had set these predictions at defiance, declaring that "she sat as a queen, was no" bereaved destitute "widow, "and should see no sorrow," whatever the word of God had threatened. (*Notes, Is.* xlvii.) Therefore all the plagues that had been denounced against her, would surely come on her in one day, suddenly and unexpectedly; death, in every dreadful form, would fill the city with mourning, and famine would attend the other desolations, till she should *utterly* be burned with fire, and then she would know that the Lord, who had judged and condemned her, was strong, and fully able to execute the tremendous sentence. As Rome has never hitherto been "utterly burned "with fire," it is undeniable that events yet in futurity are predicted.

V. 9, 10. Some of the kings, who had previously supported the church of Rome, will adhere to her, even when the rest of them will unite in destroying her; (*Note*, xvii. 16.) and they will lament her fall, having been bigoted to her idolatries, and lived in more abundant luxury and magnificence, through their alliance with her. They will, therefore, bewail at a distance the smoke of her burning and torment, without being able to quench the one, or relieve the other; so that they must either renounce her at last, or share her doom. In this situation, they will say, alas! alas! Or "wo, wo," for this will be the third wo before-mentioned; (xi. 14.) not that the fall of Rome will terminate that wo, (though it will end with the seventh vial,) for the events predicted in the following chapter will form a considerable part of it. Nor is there any proof, though it hath generally been supposed, that the second wo trumpet will end in the destruction of the Othman empire. (ix. 13—21.) On the contrary, it may perhaps subsist, in an enfeebled state, till after the fall of the western antichrist; this may be the grand means of the conversion of the Jews; and their restoration to their own land may produce the subversion of the Othman empire, the destruction of the Mahometan delusion, and the calling of the other Gentiles. (*Notes, Ez.* xxxviii. xxxix. *Dan.* xi. 40—45.) We should not indeed be confident in such matters; yet the arrangement of this and the two following chapters seems to favour the supposition; as the destruction of all Christ's implacable enemics, the conversion of the nations, and the binding of Satan, are predicted, *in order*, after the fall of Rome.

smoke of her burning, saying, [u] What *city is* like unto this great city!

19 And [x] they cast dust on their heads, and cried, [y] weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas! that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea, by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.

20 [z] Rejoice over her, *thou* heaven, [a] and *ye* holy apostles and prophets; for [b] God hath avenged you on her.

21 And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast *it* into the sea, saying, [c] Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and [d] shall be found no more at all.

u 10. xiii. 4. Is. xxiii. 8, 9. Ez. xxvii. 32
x Josh. vii. 6. 1 Sam. iv. 12. 2 Sam. xiii. 19. Neh. ix. 1. Job ii. 12. Ez. xxvii. 30.
y *See on*, 10. 15, 16.
z xix. 1—3. Judg. v. 31. Ps xlviii. 11. lviii. 10. xcvi. 11—13. cvii. 42. cix. 28 Prov. xi 10. Is. xliv. 23. xlix. 13. Jer. li. 47, 48.
a Eph ii. 20 iii. 5. iv. 11. 2 Pet. iii. 2 Jude 17.
b vi. 10. xix. 2. Deut. xxxii. 42 Ps xviii. 47. xciv. 1. Is. xxvi 21. Luke xi. 49, 50. xviii 7, 8
c Ex. xv. 5. Neh. ix. 11. Jer. li. 63, 64.
d 22 xvi. 20. xx. 11. Job xx. 8. Ps. xxxvii. 36. Ez. xxvi. 21. Dan. xi. 19.

22 And [e] the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft *he be*, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee;

23 And [f] the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; [g] and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride, shall be heard no more at all in thee: for [h] thy merchants were the great men of the earth; [i] for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.

24 And [k] in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

e Is. xxiv 8, 9. Jer. vii. 34. xvi. 9. xxv. 10. xxxiii 11. Ez. xxvi. 13.
f xxii. 5 Job xxi. 17. Prov. iv 18, 19. xxiv. 20.
g *See on*. 22.
h 3. 11—19. Is. xxiii 8, 9. Ez. xxvii. 24, 25 33, 34
i 3 9 xii. 9 xiii 13—16. xvii 2—5 xxi 8. xxii 15. 2 Kings ix. 22 Is. xlvii. 9. Nah iii. 4 Acts viii. 11
k xi. 7 xvi. 6. xvii 6. xix. 2. Jer ii. 34. Ez. xxii. 9. 12 27. Dan. vii 21. Matt. xxiii 27—35. Luke xi 47—51. Acts vii. 52. 1 Thes. ii. 15.

V. 11—20. (*Note, Ez.* xxvi. xxvii.) This lamentation of these merchants coincides with that of the merchants over Tyre. The various articles of commerce, here enumerated, do not require a particular consideration; the whole tends to give us a deep impression of the splendour, luxury, excess, and self-indulgence of all kinds, which fill that antichristian licentious city, and which have always enriched immense multitudes, in different ways, by impoverishing the nations belonging to her communion. Neither need we accommodate the various particulars to the several kinds of spiritual merchandise, by which the popes, cardinals, bishops, abbots, priests, and other retainers, have been enriched, at the expense of the people. These are indeed evidently alluded to, when not only slaves, but "the *souls of men*," are mentioned as articles of commerce, which is the most infamous of all traffics that the demon of avarice ever devised, but by no means the most uncommon. The sale of indulgences, dispensations, absolutions, masses, and bulls, hath greatly enriched the clergy and their dependents, to the deceiving and destroying of the souls of millions; and thus "by feigned words "they made merchandise of them;" nor has the management of church-preferments, and many other things, been any better than trafficing in souls; and it would be gratifying, if we could say, that this merchandise has been peculiar to the Roman antichrist. In general, however, all this will at length come to nothing, and no man will buy of the merchandise of Rome any more; but all who have shared the gains of her commerce, temporal or spiritual, will stand afar off, for fear of her torment, and behold the smoke of her burning, as that of Sodom was seen at a distance. (*Gen.* xix. 28.) Probably the destruction of Rome will be finished by some immediate judgment of God; and the nature of the soil in the vicinity, the frequent eruptions of subterraneous fires, and the terrible earthquakes which have occurred, seem to point out the method; the combustibles are provided, and the train is already laid; there only wants the "breath of the "Almighty to kindle it." But whilst others, whose hopes of further gains will be gone, shall lament the fall of Rome, the inhabitants of heaven, and especially the holy apostles and prophets, are called on to rejoice over it, as God had revenged them on that idolatrous persecuting city, as well as made way for the preaching of his Gospel to all nations. It is peculiarly worthy of observation, that the apostles, who are idolatrously honoured at Rome, and daily worshipped, should be specially mentioned as rejoicing in her fall, as if it avenged them on her for the dishonour cast on their characters, while it vindicated the glory of God. There could be no reason why the Christian should rejoice in the judgments inflicted on ancient Rome by the Huns, Goths, Vandals, and other idolatrous nations; for they, (the Christians,) were peculiarly sufferers in those calamities; the judgments, therefore, on papal Rome, must be exclusively intended.

V. 21—24. (*Note, Jer.* li. 63, 64.) As a stone was tied to a book, and cast into the Euphrates by Seraiah, in token of literal Babylon's fall, so a mighty angel here cast a millstone into the sea, to represent the violence of mystical Babylon's fall, and to show that she would never rise again. This event is further illustrated by expressions taken from the prophets. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'But Rome is 'still standing and flourishing, and is honoured by many 'nations as the metropolis of the Christian world; she still 'resounds with *singers and musicians*; she still excels in '*arts*, which serve to pomp and luxury; she still abounds 'with *candles*, and *lamps*, and *torches*, burning even by 'day as well as by night, and consequently this prophecy 'hath not been, but remains yet to be fulfilled.' (*Bp. Newton.*) Her merchants being said to be "the great "men of the earth," in connexion with "all nations being "deceived by her *sorceries*," plainly refers to the infamous traffic before mentioned.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

When collective bodies are ripe for vengeance, their sins will be punished in this world, but individuals are reserved unto the wrath to come. Impunity, and prosperity in wickedness, constitute the most fatal incentive to further crimes; and, as the day of punishment will come,

CHAP. XIX.

All the servants of God praise him with loud acclamations, 1—6. *An intimation of the vast success of the Gospel, under the emblem of the marriage of the Lamb,* 7, 8. *An angel declares the blessedness of those who were called to the marriage-supper,* 9. *John, about to worship him, is reproved,* 10. *Christ and his followers on white horses, obtain great victories, and utterly destroy all opposers,* 11—21.

AND [a] after these things [b] I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, [c] Alleluia; [d] Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:

[a] *See on*, xviii.
[b] xi. 15. xviii. 20.
[c] 3; 4 6. Ps cvi. 1. cxi 1. cxv. 1. cxlvi. 1. cxlviii. 1. cxlix. 1. cl 1. *Marg.*
[d] iv. 10, 11. v. 9—13. vii. 10, 11. xi. 15. xii. 10. 1 Chr. xxix. 11. Ps iii. 3 Jon. ii. 9 Matt. vi. 13 1 Tim. i. 16, 17.

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they may be accounted the most dire calamities. When the Lord shall come in his great power, to lighten the earth with his glory, he will cast down the proudest cities, which are filled with iniquity, and oppose his cause; the magnificence of wicked kings, or the riches of ungodly merchants, will then avail nothing, except to augment, and render more intolerable, the vengeance to be inflicted; and surely the contempt and torment of hell will be more dreadful to those, who have glorified themselves and lived deliciously, than to other sinners!

V. 9—19.

No allies or helpers can deliver those against whom the Lord God, as a strong Judge and Avenger, is pleased to contend; they can only lament the victims of his indignation, and tremble for themselves. The prosperous merchants and traders in great commercial cities should learn, from these prophecies, "to buy the truth," "to get "wisdom, and with all their getting to get" spiritual "understanding;" to sell all, and purchase the "Pearl of great "price;" to ensure "the unsearchable riches of Christ," and to be "faithful stewards in the unrighteous mam"mon;" otherwise, even in this life, they may lament, that "no man buyeth their merchandise any more;" and that "all the fruits that their souls lusted after are depart"ed from them." Death, however, will soon terminate their commerce, and in that one hour all the riches of the ungodly will come to nought, and all "their purple and "fine linen" will be exchanged, not only for the coffin and the worm, but for the fire that never shall be quenched. (*Notes, Luke* xvi.) And, alas! too often, injustice, oppression, fraud, avarice, or excessive indulgence, are connected with extensive commerce; and to number "the "persons of men," with beasts, sheep, and horses, as the stock of a farm, or with bales of goods, as the cargo of a ship, is no doubt a most detestable and *antichristian* practice, fit only for Babylon the Great. Yet even this, cruel, unrighteous, and hateful as it is, must not be considered as the worst traffic, even of this our land; for the souls of men are traded for by those who take the cure of them for the sake of the emolument, and the abundance of the delicacies obtained by it, and then either leave them to perish in ignorance, or poison them by heresy, or lead them on the road to hell by a profligate example. How fervently should we then pray, that God would raise up reformers, who may contend as firmly, perseveringly, and successfully, against this vile merchandise, as some honourable and philanthropic persons have against the accursed slave-trade! For, when Christ shall again come to drive the buyers and sellers out of the temple, he will have much to do in other places besides Rome; many of these spiritual wickednesses, and this merchandise of souls, by feigned words, equivocating subscriptions and declarations, nay, worshipping God in expressions, which are avowedly deemed false by those who use them, and all this for filthy lucre's sake, will be found, under different forms, even in the protestant churches; and perhaps no denomination is quite free from the guilt of rendering religious profession and sacred functions *subservient* to worldly interest, credit, ease, and indulgence. These are the remains of the anti-Christianity derived from Rome, which most need protesting against and removing; in these things we ought to come out and separate from Babylon, if we would not partake of her plagues. Compared with such evils, a posture, a garb, or a ceremony, though perhaps inconvenient in itself, and derived from Rome, are scarcely worth noticing; yet bigotry exerts itself principally much the other way, and externals are decried against with great warmth; whilst the spiritual pride, avarice, worldly indulgence, and intolerance of Rome, are not so much disliked! But the vengeance of heaven is coming upon Rome, not for gestures, garbs, and ceremonies, though multiplied, ridiculous, and of bad consequence in themselves; but for idolatry, ambition, oppression, cruelty to the people of God, imposture, avarice, licentiousness, and spiritual tyranny. These are the sins which have reached to the heavens, the iniquities that God remembers, and the evils for which we must stand aloof from her communion, and that of all others who resemble her, or we shall be involved in their destruction. But we must needs go out of the world, and the Church too, if we renounce every religious sect, because some of the members or leaders of it are criminal in such matters.

V. 20—24.

When the world rejoices, Christ's disciples often mourn, but they are called to rejoice, when the world is filled with lamentation. It is of little consequence what becomes of all the riches, magnificence, and costliness of the earth, if Christ's kingdom be but promoted, and his enemies either converted or deprived of the power to do mischief. Apostles and prophets rejoice in heaven on such occasions, and we ought to rejoice on earth, even though they be connected with the fall of mighty cities and empires, to rise no more for ever. But let sinners take warning by the judgments executed on others, to tremble and flee from the wrath to come; and let us all take occasion, from the view given us of the changeable nature of earthly things, to "set "our affections on things above, where Christ sitteth at the "right hand of God."

2 For [e] true and righteous *are* his judgments: for he hath [f] judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, [g] and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

3 And again they said, [h] Alleluia. [i] And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.

4 And [k] the four and twenty elders, and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, [l] Amen; [m] Alleluia.

5 And [n] a voice came out of the throne, saying, [o] Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, [p] both small and great.

6 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, [q] and as the voice of many waters, [r] and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: [s] for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

e *See on*, xv. 3. xvi. 5—7. Deut. xxxii. 4. Ps xix. 9 Is. xxv. 1.
f xvii 1, 2 15, 16. xviii. 3. 9, 10. 23.
g *See on*, vi. 10 xviii 26 Deut. xxxii. 35 43.
h *See on*, c 1.
i *See on*, xiv. 11. xviii. 9. 18 Gen. xix. 28 Is. xxxiv. 10 Jude 7.
k iv. 4—10. v. 8—11. xi. 15, 16 xv. 7
l v 14. 1 Chr xvi. 36 Neh v 13. viii. 6. Ps. xli 13. lxxii. 19 lxxxix 52. cvi. 48. Jer xxviii. 6 Matt. vi. 13. xxviii. 20. 1Cor. xiv. 16.
m *See on*, c 1.
n vii. 15 xi. 19. xvi. 17
o Ps. ciii 20—22. cxxxiv. 1. cxxxv. 19, 20. cxlviii 11—13. cl. 6
p *See on*, xi. 18. xx. 12
q i 15. xiv. 2 Ez i 24. xliii. 2.
r iv. 5 vi. 1 viii. 5. xi 19 Job xi. 9. Ps. xxix. 3—9. lxxvii. 18 ——s xi. 15—18. Ps xlvii 2. 7. xciii 1. xcix. 1. Is lii. 7. Matt vi. 13.

7 Let us [t] be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: [u] for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

8 And [x] to her was granted, that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and * white: for [y] the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

9 And he saith unto me, [z] Write, [a] Blessed *are* they which are called unto the marriage-supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, [b] These are the true sayings of God.

10 And [c] I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, [d] See *thou do it* not: [e] I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have [f] the testimony of Jesus: [g] Worship God: [h] for the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy.

t Deut xxxii. 43. 1 Sam. ii 1. Ps ix. 14 xlviii. 11 xcv. 1—3. xcvii 1. c. 1, 2 cvii 42 Prov. xxix 2. Is. lxvi 10. 14. Zech. ix. 9. John iii 29 Phil iii. 3.
u xxi. 2 9 Ps. xlv 10—16. Cant. iii 11. Is lxii 5. Hos. ii. 19, 20. Matt. xxii 1. xxv 1—10 2Cor. xi 2 Eph. v. 32.
x iii 4, 5. 18 Ps. xlv. 13, 14. Is. lxi. 10. Ez xvi. 10. Matt. xxii. 12. Rom iii 22. xiii. 14. Eph v. 26, 27.
* Or, *bright* Matt. xvii. 2. Mark ix 3 Luke xxiv. 4. Acts i 10.
y vii 13, 14. Ps cxxxii 9.
z i. 19 ii. 1. 8. 12. 18. iii 1. 7. 14. x. 4 xiv 13. Is. viii. 1. Hab ii 2
a *See on*, 7, 8. Matt. xxii. 2—4 Luke xiv. 15, 16.
b 11 xxi 5. xxii. 6 1 Tim. i. 15. iv 9. 2 Tim ii 11. Tit iii 8 ——c xxii 8, 9. Mark v. 22. vii. 25. Acts x. 25, 26. xiv. 11—15. 1 John v. 21. ——d 2 Cor. viii. 7. Eph. v. 15 33 1 Thes v. 15. Heb. x. 25 ——e Ps ciii 20, 21. Dan. vii. 10 Luke i. 19 Heb i 14. f *See on*, i 9 xii. 11—17 xxii 9 1 John v. 10. ——g iv 10. xiv 7. xv 4 Ex. xxxiv. 14. 2 Kings xvii 36 Ps. xlv. 11 Matt. iv. 10. John iv 22—24. Phil iii 3 ——h Luke xxiv. 25—27, 44 John v. 39. Acts iii. 12—18. x. 43 xiii 27. Rom iii 21, 22. 1 Pet. i. 11, 12. 2 Pet. i 19—21.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIX. V. 1—6. When the apostle had witnessed the destruction of mystical Babylon, he heard the voice of much people in heaven, singing the praises of God, and ascribing to him their own salvation and that of his church; and adoring his glorious perfections, as displayed in these, and all his wonderful works; and his sovereign and everlasting dominion. For his truth and justice had been alike conspicuous, in the judgments which had been executed on that corrupt and persecuting church and city: and again they cried Alleluia, or praise the Lord; whilst the smoke of the city arose up perpetually, and was an emblem of the final and eternal misery of the wicked inhabitants, who had been cut off in their sins.—(*Note*, xiv. 10, 11.) In these praises, the emblematical representatives of the church and her ministers most cordially united; and a voice from the throne of God, or from some One who was very near it, called on all the servants of the Lord, in heaven and earth, great and small, even all his worshippers, all who feared God, without distinction, to praise him; which was followed by the acclamations of a multitude, like the rushing of a cataract, or the roaring of the sea, who joined in praising the Lord, because by his omnipotence he had taken the throne, and would reign in and by his Son all over the earth. The repeated use of the word Alleluia, or *Hallelujah*, which is Hebrew, is supposed by some persons to be an intimation that the Jews will be converted about the time of the destruction of Rome; and, whatever may be thought of this, it is exceedingly probable that the accomplishment of the New Testament-prophecies, in this respect, will be one principal means of effecting that happy change.

V. 7, 8. The whole company, before-mentioned, next call on each other to rejoice, and give glory to the Lord, because "the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his "bride hath made herself ready." Christ is the Bridegroom of his ransomed church; this sacred union will be fully completed in heaven; but the beginning of the glorious Millennium may be considered as a most remarkable celebration of his espousals on earth: all that has hitherto been done seems to be merely an introduction to that happy æra, when innumerable multitudes will be converted, and the state of the church on earth will greatly resemble heaven itself. Then the marriage of the Lamb will come, and his espoused church, being purified from heresies, divisions, and antichristian abuses, will be made ready, and meet to be publicly owned by him, as his delight and his beloved. Then to her it will be granted to be arrayed in fine linen, "clean and white, which is the righteousness "of the saints." The word is plural, and some would render it, "*the righteous acts* of the saints;" but the word *raiment*, in this meaning, seems generally to signify, either the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, or the image of Christ renewed in them by the sanctification of the Spirit, of which their righteous acts are effects and evidences; and both these senses may here be intended.—'That is, those good works, which are the certain evidences of a living faith.' (*Beza.*)

V. 9, 10. An angel, (either he from whom the voice is supposed to have come (5,) or rather the angel who interpreted the foregoing vision,) (xvii. 7,) informed the apostle on this occasion, that those persons would be happy, in a peculiar manner and degree, who were invited to the marriage-supper of the Lamb. This seems especially to refer to the more abundant grace and consolation, which Christians will receive in those happy days that are coming. This will render their lives on earth far more blessed than ours are at present, and make them meet for a more exalted felicity in heaven. The church collectively is the spouse of Christ; believers are often individually spoken of

11 ¶ And I saw [i] heaven opened, and behold, [k] a white horse; and he that sat upon him *was* called [l] Faithful and True, [m] and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

12 His [n] eyes *were* as a flame of fire, and [o] on his head *were* many crowns; and he had [p] a name written, that no man knew but he himself.

13 And he *was* [q] clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and his name is called, [r] The Word of God.

i See on, iv. 1. xi. 19. xv. 5.
k See on, vi. 2. Zech. i. 8.
l i. 5 iii. 7. 14. John xiv. 6.
m xv. 3–7 Ps. xlv 4–7. l 6. lxvii. 2–4 xcvi. 13. xcviii. 9 xcix. 4. Is. xi. 3–5. xxxii 1 xlv 21. lxiii. 1–5. Jer xxiii 5, 6. xxx ii 15 Zech ix. 9, 10. Heb vii. 1, 2.
n See on, i. 14 ii 18.
o vi. 2. xii 3. xiii. 1. Ps. viii. 5. Matt. xxi. 5. xxviii. 18 Heb. ii 9.
p 16. ii. 17. Gen. xxxii. 29. Ex. xxiii. 21. Judg xiii 18. Is. ix. 6. Matt xi 27 Luke x. 22 ——q xiv. 20. Ps. lviii. 10. Is. ix. 5. xxxiv. 3–5 lxiii. 1–6, ——r See on, John i. 1. 14. 1 John i. 1. v. 7.

14 And [s] the armies *which* were in heaven followed him upon [t] white horses, [u] clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

15 And [x] out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: [y] and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: [z] and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of almighty God.

16 And he hath [a] on *his* vesture and on his thigh, a name written, [b] KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

s xiv. 1. 20 xvii. 14 Ps lxviii. 17. cxlix. 6–9. Zech xiv. 5. Matt. xxvi. 53. 2 Thes i. 7. Jude 15.
t See on, 11.
u See on, 8.
x 21. i. 16. ii. 12. 16 Is. xi. 4. xxx 33. 2 Thes. ii 8.
y ii. 27. xii. 5. Ps. ii. 9.
z xiv. 17–20. Is. lxiii. 2–6
a 12, 13.
b See on, xvii 14. Ps. lxxii. 11. Prov. viii. 15, 16. Phil. ii. 9—11. 1 Tim. vi. 15.

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as invited guests to the marriage-feast, which may relate both to their present joy in the Lord, and to the perfect happiness of heaven; and the angel further assured John, that these were the true sayings of God; thus attesting the whole of the prophecies and promises. Upon which the glorious presence of the angel, and the rapturous prospect of these happy times, threw the apostle's mind into such an agitation, that he fell prostrate to worship him. But the angel charged him by no means to do it, as he was not his Creator, or Lord, or in any respect an object of adoration, but a fellow-servant to him, and to his brethren, who had been employed to bear testimony to the Lord Jesus; and he ought to worship God, and not a creature and a servant: for he, (the angel,) was only a prophet of superior order, being inspired by the Spirit to bear testimony to Jesus, as the common Lord of men and angels. Indeed, the testimony of Jesus was, from the beginning, the great subject of the Spirit of prophecy to whomsoever he was given; as all the revelations and predictions of Scripture were intended to make the Saviour known, in his personal and mediatorial glory, to make way for and announce his coming, to lead the attention of men to him, or to prove the doctrines revealed concerning him. 'Thither, as to that one and certain scope or 'object, all the prophecies tend: whence it is effected, that, 'at last, the true Spirit of prophecy, to which we must 'hearken, is that which leads us unto Jesus.' (*Beza.*)—Christ never declined such honour as John was forbidden to render to the angel; nay, he always showed his approbation of it: but the angel was a servant, and no more: Jesus is "the King of Glory." and "the Lord of all," "God "blessed for evermore." (*Marg. Ref.*) It should also be remembered, that the worship of creatures, or demons, under the names of saints and angels, forms the prominent part of that corruption of Christianity by idolatry, which has extended its baleful influence through so many populous nations, and continued during so many revolving ages; and against which the apostle was, in this book, to bear a most decided prophetical testimony. Now, nothing could give more energy to this protest than the repeated injunction laid on him, not to pay any homage, at all resembling adoration, to a most glorious benevolent angel, when visibly present, and acting the part of an instructor to him. Surely, then, no *invisible*, and, (most probably,) no *absent creatures* can be worshipped, without giving to them the glory which belongs exclusively to Jehovah.

V. 11—16. (*Note*, vi. 1, 2.) Having noted the rejoicings of the *universal* church, and of all the servants of God, over the destruction of Rome, the apostle saw heaven opened, as an indication of further visions: and he beheld a *white* horse, the emblem of justice and holiness; and One sat on it, who was "called faithful and true," fulfilling his promises to his people, and executing threatened vengeance on his enemies. He was indeed about to judge and to wage war against those who refused submission to him; yet he was unlike those warriors, whose ambition, rapacity, or malignant passions, have in every age made the earth a field of blood; for he conducted both his judicial proceedings, and his military expeditions, by the most perfect rules of righteousness. Yet none could deceive him, or elude his detection, for "his eyes were as a flame "of fire." (i. 14.) The many crowns worn by him denoted the extent of his authority, as Creator of the world, and "Head over all things to his church;" and the multitude of his victories. "He had a name written, "that no man knew but he himself;" for, as the eternal Son of God, his perfections and nature are incomprehensible. (*Marg. Ref.*) His vesture, dipped in blood, implied, either the atonement of his own blood, as the ground of his mediatorial authority, or, rather, that he was come from the slaughter of his enemies, and had stained his garments with their blood. (*Notes, Is.* lxiii. 1—6.) But though none could fully comprehend his perfections and counsels, yet he was known in his church by the name of "the Word of God," as declaring the mysterious perfections, and holy truth and will of God, to fallen men. (*Note, John* i. 1—3.) He was also followed by the armies of heaven, even his redeemed and converted people, who rode on white horses, to denote their conformity to him, and their concurrence and agency in his victories; and they were clothed in fine linen (8,) as accepted in him, and renewed by him. To illustrate the nature of his conquests still more fully, "out of his mouth "went a sharp sword," (i. 16.) implying that he powerfully executed the denunciations of his word, and smote the opposing nations. (*Notes, Ps.* ii.) Thus he trode the wine-press of the wrath of God; (*Note*, xiv. 14—20.) crushing all other obstinate enemies, as he had done the mystical Babylon. He had also inscribed "on his vesture, "and on his thigh," (the part of his garments where the

17 ¶ And I saw [c] an angel standing in the sun: and he cried with a loud voice, [d] saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;

18 That [e] ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh [f] of all *men*, *both* free and bond, both small and great.

19 And [g] I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against [h] him that sat on the horse, and against his army.

20 And [i] the beast was taken, and with him [k] the false prophet that wrought miracles before him. with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. [l] These both were cast alive into a lake of fire [m] burning with brimstone.

21 And [n] the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which *sword* proceeded out of his mouth: [o] and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

c viii. 13. xiv. 6. Is xxxiv. 1—8.
d 21. Is. lvi. 9. Jer. xii. 9 Ez. xxxix. 17—20
e Deut. xxviii 26. 1 Sam xvii. 44. 46. Ps. cx. 5, 6 Jer. vii. 33 xvi. 4. xix. 7. xxxiv. 20. Ez xxix 5. xxxix. 18—20. Matt. xxiv 28. Luke xvii 37.
f *See on*, vi. 15. xiii. 16.
g xiii 1—10 xiv. 9. xvi. 14 16. xvii. 12 — 14 xviii. 9. Ez. xxxviii. 8—18 Dan vii. 21—26. viii. 25 xi. 40—45. Joel iii. 9—14.
h *See on*, 11—14.
i 19. *See on*, xiii. 1—8 18 xvii. 3—8. 12, 13. Dan. ii 40—45, vii 7 12—14. 19—21. 23 24
k xiii. 11—17. xvi. 13. xx. 10. xxii. 15 Dan vii. 8—11. 24—26 viii. 24, 25. 2 Thes. ii. 8—11
l xx. 10 14. Dan. vii 11. xi 45.
m xiv. 10. xxi 8. Gen. xix 24. Deut. xxix. 23. Job xviii. 15. Ps. xi. 6. Is. xxx. 33 xxxiv 9 Ez. xxxviii. 22.
n *See on*, 11—15.
o *See on*, 17, 18.

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sword is worn,) another name or title, implying his universal and absolute dominion, as "King of kings, and "Lord of lords;" (xvii. 14;) which carried in it a warning to the most powerful princes to submit to him, or they must fall before him. These verses and the context seem to predict the progress of the Gospel, subsequent to the fall of Rome, in the destruction of the remains of the antichristian empire, the purifying of the visible Church, the conversion of the Jews, the termination of Mahomedism, and the bringing in of the fulness of the Gentiles; and they more fully declare most important transactions, before briefly intimated, and also foretold by the ancient prophets. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 17—21. The angel, standing in the sun, emblematically denoted, that the predicted judgments would be conspicuous to all the world; and his proclamation showed the immense slaughter which would be made of the enemies of God. To this place may be referred Ezekiel's prophecy of Gog and Magog, as the subsequent visions seem to relate to the Millennium: (*Notes, Ez.* xxxviii—xlviii:) for the total ruin of the eastern antichrist, and of all the opposers of the Gospel in Asia, seems to be immediately connected with the fall of the western antichrist. Though Rome was destroyed, yet the *beast* is supposed still to subsist: for the spirit of antichrist will survive that antichristian city; and probably the adherents of the party will unite with other enemies of the Gospel, in different parts of the world. (*Marg. Ref.*) The beast, however, or the idolatrous persecuting power, whose chief seat had been at Rome, will form a confederacy with the kings of the earth, that with combined forces they may fight against Christ and his servants; but in the event, the antichristian tyranny, and the corrupt clergy, who deceived men by lying miracles to support it, will be seized on and dreadfully destroyed, by being cast into the lake of fire, &c. and then all the remnant of their adherents will be cut off, according to the words of Christ; so that all opposition to his pure religion will then cease, till after the Millennium.—"The false "prophet," evidently denotes the same power before designated as "the two-horned beast;" and this effectually confirms the interpretation before given of that great enemy of God and his Church. (*Notes,* xiii. 11—18. *Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

All heaven resounds with the high praises of God, whenever he executes his true and righteous judgments on those who corrupt the earth with pernicious principles and ungodly practices, and when he avenges the blood of his servants upon their persecutors. Though the smoke of their torment shall arise up for ever and ever, the whole company of redeemed sinners, and all the servants and worshippers of God in heaven and earth, will concur in these acclamations, and say, Amen, Hallelujah. Who then are they that will throw out insinuations, or openly speak of cruelty and tyranny, on hearing of these righteous judgments, but rebels, who blasphemously take part with the enemies of God, and plead against his dealings towards them? Let all beware of every approach to such impiety and presumption; for "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." As justice and judgment are the basis of his throne, the earth hath cause to tremble; but, as it is established in mercy also, the penitent may rejoice in hope. Thousands of thousands, who once were rebels, are now singing "salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, be unto the Lord "our God." Let us then be glad in him, and give honour to him; and, whilst we view "the Lamb that was slain," espousing redeemed sinners unto himself, let us remember that we are invited to share the blessedness of the marriage-supper; that the wedding-garment is given to all who properly seek for it; that now is the time to be made ready for those sacred joys; and that all the felicity which the world can boast is not worthy to be compared with this unfading crown of glory and happiness. These are the true sayings of God; let none then say, "I pray thee "have me excused." If even created angels are so glorious, as to surprise the apostle into a purposed adoration, how glorious must the Lord of angels be! And if the highest of holy creatures so greatly *fear*, and decidedly *refuse undue* honour, how humbly should we sinful worms of the earth behave ourselves! And yet we may and ought to aspire at being made equal to angels, and the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus. We should then beware of a voluntary humility, and not degrade ourselves, or dishonour our Head, by worshipping angels, or

CHAP. XX.

An angel binds Satan, and imprisons him in the abyss, for a thousand years, 1, 2. *The glorious state of the church during that period,* 3—6. *Satan, being loosed, again deceives the nations, and excites terrible war against the church,* 7—9; *the assailants are destroyed by fire, and Satan cast into hell,* 10. *Christ appears to raise the dead, and to judge the world; with the condemnation and punishment in the lake of fire, of all, who are not written in the book of life,* 11—15.

AND [a] I saw an angel come down from heaven, [b] having the key of the bottomless pit, and [c] a great chain in his hand:

2 And [d] he laid hold on [e] the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

3 And [f] cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, [g] and set a seal upon him, that he [h] should deceive the nations no more, till [i] the thousand years should be fulfilled: [k] and after that he must be loosed a little season.

4 And I saw [l] thrones, and they that sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* [m] the souls of them that were [n] beheaded for [o] the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, [p] and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; [q] and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

5 But [r] the rest of the dead lived not again, until the thousand years were finished. [s] This *is* the first resurrection.

a *See on,* x. 1. xviii 1.
b i 18. ix. 1, 2. Luke viii. 31.
c 2 Pet. ii. 4. Jude 6.
d Gen. iii. 15. Is. xxvii. 1. xlix 24, 25. Matt. viii 29 xii. 29 Mark v. 7. Luke xi. 20—22. John xii. 31. xvi. 11. Rom. xvi. 20. Heb ii. 14.
e *See on,* ix. 11. xii. 9. 13. 15. 17. xiii. 2. 4. Job i 7. ii 1, 2. 1 Pet. v. 8.
f *See on,* i. xvii 8.
g Dan vi. 17. Matt. xxvii. 66.
h 8. xii. 9. xiii. 14 xvi 14—16. xvii. 2 Matt. xxiv. 24. 2 Cor. xi 3 13—15 2 Thes. ii 9—11.
i Ps xc. 4 2 Pet. iii. 8.
k 8—10.
l Dan. vii. 9 18. 22 27 Matt. xix. 28 Luke xxii. 30. 1 Cor. vi 2, 3.
m vi 9. Mal. iv. 5. Matt. xvii. 10—13 Mark ix. 11—13 Luke i. 17. ix. 7—9
n Matt. xiv. 10. Mark vi 16. 27. Luke ix. 9.
o *See on.* i 9. xi. 3 7. xii. 11.
p xiii. 12—17. xiv. 11. xv 2. xvii 8.
q v 9, 10. xi. 11. 15. Dan. ii 44, 45 vii. 18. 27. Rom. viii 17. xi 15. 2 Tim. ii. 12.
r 8, 9 *See on,* xix. 20, 21
s xi 11 15. Ez. xxxvii. 2—14. Rom xi 15.

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any mere creature, by calling men masters upon earth, or by the grovelling pursuit of worldly things.

V. 11—21.

The blessed Jesus is the Lord of all; but angels, apostles, and other Christians, are fellow-servants: he is "God "over all," and therefore to be worshipped, as one with the Father and the Holy Spirit; and all Revelation is the testimony of the Father, by the Spirit, to the Redeemer's personal and mediatorial glory; the whole centres in him, and his salvation and kingdom. May he then go forth, in faithfulness and righteousness, to extend his spiritual conquests, till "all kings fall down before him, and all nations do him "service!" May his armies be increased in number, and made more like unto him, being "clothed in fine linen, "clean and white, which is the righteousness of saints." (*Ps.* cxlix.) We cannot indeed know his whole glory, or his immeasurable love; but let let us endeavour to be more acquainted with him, as THE WORD OF GOD; and, accepting of his Salvation, may we be glad in him, who is "the King of kings, and Lord of lords!" for he will surely smite his proudest and stoutest enemies with the rod of his mouth, and "with the breath of his lips will he "slay the wicked," till he hath crushed them all in the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of almighty God. It behooves us then to rejoice, and praise the Lord, when opposing tyrants are crushed, and false prophets are put to silence in darkness; and we should not scruple to add, "So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord." Nevertheless, it is our part to aim at more peaceful and gentle victories; and by our prayers, example, and improvement of talents, to seek the conversion of sinners, and the salvation of the souls even of our most cruel enemies and persecutors; whilst we constantly declare, that, "except they re-"pent, they will all likewise perish."

NOTES.

CHAP. XX. V. 1—3. The foregoing chapter predicted the termination of all open opposition to the Gospel; and the dreadful punishment of all those who had introduced, supported, or concurred in, the idolatrous corruptions of the Gospel, before predicted. But, while the instruments of mischief had been cut off, the great agent was still at liberty; and he would surely excite fresh disturbances, or produce new delusions, if not prevented.—The apostle had therefore a vision, emblematical of the restraints which would be laid on Satan himself. An angel from heaven, with the key of the abyss, (ix. 1—3,) and a great chain, seized on him, bound him, and cast him into the abyss, and there shut him up, to prevent his deceiving the nations, as he had before done; and this imprisonment continued during one thousand years. (xii. 7—9.) In some places, "the dragon" signifies the persecuting power of idolatrous emperors, who were vicegerents of the devil, and bore his name and style: but here Satan himself is evidently meant; and it is implied that Christ, with omnipotence and absolute authority, will restrain the devil, and all his legions of evil spirits, from deceiving mankind in general, or any part of them, into idolatry, impiety, heresy, and wickedness, as he hath hitherto done: for though human nature is prone to all evil, and averse to all good, yet the agency and influence of fallen angels has immense effect in counteracting the Gospel, in exciting men to atrocious crimes and cruel persecutions, and in devising and propagating ingenious, but fatal, delusions. When, therefore, this roaring lion, or subtle poisonous old serpent, shall be completely restrained, the Gospel will be rendered effectual, to purify the church and convert the nations; the Christian religion, in all its purity and glory, will become universal; and the true "Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the "world with fruit." Then the first petitions of the Lord's prayer will be wonderfully answered; (*Notes, Matt.* vi. 9, 10.) and piety, peace, righteousness, and purity, will fill the earth, till Satan shall again for a short space be loosed. (*Marg. Ref.*)

t 5. xiv. 13. xxii. 7. Is. iv. 3 Dan xii. 12 Luke xiv 15.

6 Blessed and holy [t] *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such

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V. 4—6. The apostle next saw thrones, and persons sitting on them. These represented the honourable and prosperous state of believers in those happy days, for they appeared to reign as kings on the earth. "And "judgment was given to them;" they were Christ's assessors, as it were, in the judgment executed on the beast, the false prophet, and the devil; even as all believers will be, when he shall judge the world. And he "saw "the *souls*" of the martyrs, confessors, and other eminent Christians of the preceding periods, living and reigning with Christ a thousand years. It hath long been disputed, and by disputants of various descriptions, whether this should be understood literally, or figuratively; and when prophecies are evidently unfulfilled, modesty and caution are very requisite. Yet it is necessary here to give an opinion, with the reasons of it. I am, therefore, induced to understand it figuratively, by the following considerations: 1st. The whole book is enigmatical, and full of emblems; so that a literal exposition would often imply absurdity, and the interpreter's business and skill consist principally in decyphering hieroglyphics. A succession of kings is constantly spoken of, as if they were individually the same persons; the two witnesses, that were slain, were "raised again, and ascended into heaven," when others were sent forth of the same spirit, and to bear the same testimony with greater encouragement and success. Rome is called Egypt, Sodom, Jerusalem, Babylon; and, in short, this is the style and manner of the whole prophecy, which no man could possibly explain upon any other principle. As therefore the Jews expected Elijah to come *personally*, and knew him not when he came *mystically*, in John Baptist, so, I apprehend, many Christians, and men of the utmost respectability for piety and learning, have fallen into the same mistake, in expecting a literal and personal resurrection of the martyrs, at the opening of the Millennium; and they would not know them *at first*, when they arose, (as the witnesses did,) in a numerous race of Christians, resembling them as to all their eminent graces. 2dly. It is unaccountable, that the *souls* of the persons raised should be exclusively mentioned, if the literal resurrection of their *bodies* was meant; for this rather implies, according to the enigmatical style of the book, that their *souls* reanimated other *bodies;* that is, they appeared to live again in Christians of the same spirit, (vi. 9.) 3dly. Some have imagined, that the resurrection of all the righteous will precede the Millennium, because "the dead in Christ will rise first;" but what do they suppose the state of the earth will be during that period? Will none live on earth but the *risen* saints? Or will all the rest be wicked? Or, being righteous, will they not die? Or, if they die, will there be three resurrections; one of the righteous before the Millennium, and another of the righteous after it, and one of the wicked? These questions are not easily resolved on that hypothesis. The resurrection is always spoken of as one grand event, occurring nearly at the same time; except, that the righteous will be first raised, and so be prepared to sit with Christ in judgment on the wicked: and it is implied, in every one of those declarations, that *all* the dead in Christ will rise together, before the living shall be changed. 4thly. We cannot conceive that it could add to the felicity of those who, being "absent from the body," are "present "with the Lord," to come again to dwell on earth, which must be in some degree a scene of pain, suffering, imperfection, and death, till the present state of things is fully ended; and this will not be till the general resurrection, as it sufficiently appears from the loosing of Satan, and the effects of it, after the Millennium. 5thly. This is the only place, in which any thing like such a literal resurrection, previous to the end of the world, is intimated; whereas there are numerous prophecies of an universal prevalence and triumph of true religion throughout the earth. (*Marg. Ref.*) Now, is it most reasonable to interpret so many plain predictions by one expression in this enigmatical book, or to explain that one expression by the many clear predictions which give another view of it? Or why should the *literal* sense be here insisted on, when in so many places it must be departed from? Indeed, I cannot see that the resurrection of *souls* can *literally* mean the resurrection of *bodies.* But if the resurrection, here spoken of, be not a literal, but a figurative resurrection, the same reasons lead us to conclude that Christ will not come down from heaven *personally*, to reign on earth; but that he will reign *spiritually*, in the prevalence of his Gospel, and by his Holy Spirit in the hearts of men in general. The Scriptures constantly speak of his sitting on the right hand of God in heaven, till he shall come the second time to judge the world: the expressions concerning his coming to destroy Jerusalem, (*Matt.* xxiv. 27—30. *Mark* xiii. 24—30.) and those that relate to his presence with, and *coming* to, his people, are stronger than any here used; yet no good expositor interprets them of his *personal* presence as man, in the primary meaning of them. (*Notes, John* xiv. 18—23.) Multitudes of believers will be raised up, as if animated by the souls of those who had been martyred for Christ, or had protested against antichrist: even as the witnesses were raised again after three days and a half. These excellent persons will live and reign on earth, in victory, honour, holiness, and joy, being happy in the gracious presence of Christ with their souls, and in their assemblies; and without any enemies, or false teachers to harass, corrupt, or divide them; but the rest of the dead will not live till the thousand years be ended. 'There is 'mention made in this prophecy of two sorts of dead 'persons; those who were slain for the witness of Jesus, 'and those who were slain by the sword of him that sat 'on the horse. The former were raised to life, and lived 'and reigned with Christ a thousand years; but the others 'lived not again till the thousand years were finished; 'they had no successors of the same wicked and persecuting spirit, till the devil was let loose after the Millennium.' (*Guise.*) This interpretation suits the style of the book, and is to me perfectly satisfactory. The expression itself intimated a *figurative* resurrection, and therefore it was carefully distinguished from the literal resurrection of the dead. (*John* v. 25—29.) It is more-

[u] 14 ii. 11. xxi 8. [x] i. 6. v 10 Is. lxi. 6 Rom. xii 1. 1 Pet. ii. 5. 9. [u] the second death hath no power; but they shall be [x] priests of God, and of Christ, [y] and shall reign with him a thousand years. [y] 4. i 6. v. 10. Rom. viii. 17. 2 Tim. ii. 12.

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over an instance of that wise and proper obscurity, which we always find in prophecies, previous to their accomplishment. This is the first resurrection, a spiritual and mystical resurrection; and they who shall partake of it, living in those happy times, will be holy and blessed, (xix. 9.) even more than Christians in other ages. When it is added, that the *second* death shall have no power over them, it seems implied, that they must enter heaven by passing through the *first* death: nor is there any thing different in what follows from the language used concerning believers of other times, (*Marg. Ref.*) except, that they shall "reign "with Christ *a thousand years;*" which naturally signifies, that a succession of such triumphant Christians, made honourable and happy by the Lord's special presence with them, shall continue through the Millennium, even as the two witnesses prophesied in sackcloth, through the whole term of the reign of Antichrist. Some would compute the thousand years after the same manner as the three years and a half, or twelve hundred and sixty days, have been reckoned, each day to signify a year; which would extend this happy period to 360,000 years at least: this, however, seems so much beyond all proportion, and so different from all the views elsewhere given of the speedy approach of the day of judgment, that it is not generally regarded. So that, upon the whole, we may expect that a thousand years will follow the final destruction of all the antichristian, idolatrous, persecuting powers, during which pure Christianity, in doctrine, worship, and universal holiness, will be diffused all over the earth, and that all idolatry, infidelity, impiety, superstition, heresy, false religion, injustice, fraud, oppression, cruelty, war, murder, intemperance, licentiousness, with all other evils, which now harass and desolate the earth, will be restrained by the omnipotent operation of the Holy Spirit; and that godliness, righteousness, peace, truth, purity, and love, will render the earth in some measure like heaven itself. Hitherto the depravity of human nature, and the malignant agency of apostate angels, have been illustrated and displayed in the state of the world; and the inefficacy of all human inventions, and even of the word of truth, without the new-creating Spirit of truth, to remedy these evils, hath been demonstrated, in opposition to man's proud reasonings. The event of the trial hath shown that nothing but the power of God himself can prevent men from listening to the temptations of fallen angels, or from despising, opposing, neglecting, corrupting, or perverting, the Gospel of salvation itself. But at length the Lord will arise; by the almighty power of his providence he will confine fallen angels; and by the operation of his Spirit he will new-create fallen men, generally, all over the earth; and then repentance, faith, and holiness, will as certainly prevail, as impenitence, unbelief, and unholiness, now do. Still, however, Christianity will be the religion of sinners, and there will be defects and sins in believers; and doubtless some unconverted persons, for a short part of their lives at least, for men will be made holy by regeneration, not born holy; and therefore they will still continue liable to many natural evils, and to death. Yet that measure of righteousness, which such a prevalence of true Christianity must produce, will immensely lessen the quantity of natural evil. We may easily perceive what a variety of dreadful pains, diseases, and other grievous calamities, must cease, were all men true Christians: all the evils of public and private contention would be terminated: domestic, relative, and social felicity must be exceedingly enhanced. Industry in useful things, with frugality and temperance, would prevent that pinching poverty and distress, which now render multitudes wretched; and a greater fertility of the earth may reasonably be expected, according to the former fruitfulness of Canaan, contrasted with its present sterility. Every man will then try to alleviate, instead of adding to, the unavoidable sorrows of all around him; nor "shall they hurt or destroy in all the holy "mountain" of God. The hope of glory, the prospects of a happy meeting in heaven, and the abundant consolations of the Holy Spirit, will render sickness, death, and the loss of beloved friends, far more easy than at present; while communion with God, and the communion of the saints, all being of one heart in the worship and service of God, will render religion a constant feast to their souls, and inferior to heavenly felicity, only because it will not be absolutely perfect. Every one must likewise perceive how immensely the human species would be increased, if wars, destructive employments, and intemperance, were put an end to, and God's ordinance of marriage were generally substituted, instead of that compound of licentiousness and selfishness, which constitute a vicious celibacy, at least till the prime of life is past, or that forced and prudential celibacy, which comparative or real poverty, united with distrust of Providence, often occasions; things that exceedingly tend to corrupt the morals of the human species, and to destroy the lives of both sexes in youth, almost as much as war itself. We may therefore readily allow, that the number of persons who shall live on earth, during the Millennium, may be immensely greater than the whole multitude of all the preceding ages; and consequently, that far more of the human race may yet be saved than shall perish, even though we do not agree to the computations which have been made concerning it. The wild notions and extravagant practices grafted on the belief of a Millennium, have rendered the name of it contemptible or hateful to numbers; yet we have as just grounds to expect such a happy event, as the Jews had to look for a Messiah: but they, who suppose it will be a carnal Millennium, are as much mistaken, as the Jews were in waiting for a temporal Deliverer. It is our duty to pray for the promised glorious days, and to do every thing, in our private or public situations, which can be instrumental in preparing the way for them; even as David made abundant provision for the temple which Solomon was to build. Whether the general opinion, that this thousand years will be the seventh thousand from the creation, or the sabbatical millenary, the event must determine: it is evident, however, that the dawn of this glorious day cannot be very distant. *The rest of,* &c. (5.) 'It is 'only the rest that were slain, (xix. 21,) that "lived not "again." 'It is only those, who had no share in the first 'resurrection, and so were neither blessed nor holy, (6;)

z *See on*, 2.

a *See on*, 3.

b Ex. xxxviii. xxxix.

c *See on*, xvi. 14.

d Judg. vii 12 1 Sam xiii 5 1 Kings iv. 20. Is. x 22 Jer. xxxiii. 22. Heb. xi. 12.

e Is viii. 7, 8 Ez xxxviii. 9. 16. Hab. i 6.

7 ¶ And [z] when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,

8 And shall go out [a] to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, [b] Gog and Magog, [c] to gather them together to battle: [d] the number of whom *is* as the sand of the sea.

9 And they [e] went up on the breadth of the earth, [f] and compassed [g] the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: [h] and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

10 And [i] the devil that deceived them, was cast into [k] the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *are*, and shall be [l] tormented day and night for ever and ever.

f 2 Kings vi. 15. Mic. ii. 13. Matt xvi. 16—18 Luke xix. 43. xxi. 20.

g Ps. xlviii. 1—3. lxxiv. 2—4. cxxv 1, 2. Heb. xiii. 12.

h xi. 5. xiii 13. Gen. xix. 24. Ex. ix. 23, 24. Lev. x. 2, 3. Num. xi 1. xvi. 35. 2 Kings i. 10—15 Ps xcvii. 3. cvi 18. Is. xxx 33 xxxviii. 36 Ez xxxviii 22. xxxix. 6 Luke ix 54 xvii. 29. 2 Thes i. 8 ——i *See on*, 2, 3. k 14, 15. *See on*, xix 20.——l *See on*, xiv. 10, 11. Matt. xxv. 41—46.

‘nor had their names written in the book of life; and, consequently, those on whom the second death had place; which death they suffered, when “fire came down from heaven and devoured them,” ‘and “they were cast into the lake of fire with the devil.” (10. 15.) ‘And that “the rest” ‘should signify the same persons cannot seem strange, if we consider that only four verses intervene betwixt them. And that they must be the same persons is evident from the connexion of the words;’ “The rest of the dead lived not, till the thousand years” ‘of Satan's binding, and the saints' reign were ended. The dead church lives again in the same metaphorical sense, in which the rest of the dead, the enemies of the Church, live again, at the end of the thousand years, when Satan is loosed, and gathers them to battle against the Church. The souls of them, who were slain for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, are those Christians, who were slain in the time of the ten persecutions; (*Note*, vi. 9—11;) and the souls of them, who worshipped not the beast, are those Christians, who chose rather to die, than to be guilty of Romish idolatry: and they are said to live again; as the beast, who had received the wound of death lived again, in the succession of the antichristian beast, who exercised the power of the heathen emperors over the earth, and revived the idolatry of the heathen empire; and as the two witnesses, when slain, are said to live again, because a succession of men of the same faith, and the same opposition to the beast, revive and flourish, after they are slain.’ (*Whitby.*)—(*Notes, Is.* xxvi. 19. *Ez.* xxxvii. 1—14.) It appears to me undoubted, that the fathers, or early writers of the Christian Church, in general expected a Millennium; and several of them, a Millennium not materially differing from that above described. But others, gradually following the impulse of imagination, speculation, and carnal passions, advanced sentiments on the subject so extravagant, so ridiculous, and even so licentious, that sober, yet injudicious, men became ashamed of the general doctrine. Thus it was disgraced, and almost forgotten, during many centuries: but, about the æra of the reformation, it was again revived, and again still more deeply disgraced, by the wild reveries and practical atrocities of those who maintained it, and rendered it subservient to rebellions, insurrections, and every abomination. But for some considerable time past, the question concerning a Millennium has been brought forward, and discussed, in a more sober and holy manner; and, notwithstanding that some still maintain the doctrine of a literal resurrection, and a personal visible reign of Christ on earth, and others favour the view above given, yet it is evident that the doctrine itself gains, more and more, general credence; is supported, or allowed, by writers of widely discordant theological opinions; and has lost by far the greater part of that odium and contempt, which formerly attached to it. Nor can I doubt but that, in proportion as the Scriptures are diligently and impartially searched and understood, the more generally and unreservedly will the persuasion prevail, that there shall be a Millennium; that it is at hand, even at the door; and that we ought to advert to it, and to those things which may prepare the way for it, in all our studies and writings, and in the improvement of our several talents. How far the restoration of the Jews to their own land, and the rebuilding of Jerusalem, are implied in the general doctrine, the event must show: but many things, taken from the concluding chapters of this book, and connected with the opinion of the Millennium, either as directing our expectations respecting it, or as forming objections to it, will, I trust, be proved to relate exclusively to the heavenly world, and the state of the redeemed, subsequent to the day of judgment. It may, however, be reasonably conjectured, that the restoration to purity and peace of the Christian church will make way for the conversion of the Jews, as a nation, and probably their reinstatement in their own land; and that this will introduce the conversion of the nations, in which the converted Jews will be most diligent and successful instruments. This seems to be intimated in many prophecies already considered; yet the event alone can fully show whether the conjecture is well-grounded.

V. 7—10. At the end of the Millennium, God will remove Satan's restraint, for reasons which we are not competent to understand; perhaps, among others, to show that the long continued happy estate of the world was not the effect of any melioration of human nature, as to itself, but of an immediate divine influence on men's minds, “to the praise of the glory of his grace.” Being loosed out of prison, this great deceiver will again exert himself, and excite his agents, with all earnestness, subtlety, and sagacity, to corrupt the Gospel, and to seduce men into apostacy, idolatry, heresy, infidelity, or vice; and thus, the old generation of believers dying, the succeeding race, through many nations in the *four quarters* of the earth, will be deceived by him: and, having themselves departed from the faith, they will be instigated to hate and persecute such as adhere to it; and thus the spirit of antichrist will rise again, after the thousand years are expired, (*Note*, 4—6.) Then religious wars will be undertaken, and at

AND I saw [a] a new heaven and a new earth: [b] for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; [c] and there was no more sea.

2 And [d] I, John, saw [e] the holy city, new Jerusalem, [f] coming down from God out of heaven, prepared [g] as a bride adorned for her husband:

3 And I heard [h] a great voice out of heaven, saying, [i] Behold the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, [k] and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God.

4 And [l] God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be [m] no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for [o] the former things are passed away.

a 5 Is. lxv 17. lxvi. 22. 2 Pet. iii. 13.
b *See on*, xx. 11
c xiii. 1 Is. xxvii 1. lvii. 20. Dan vii. 3.
d i. 1. 4. 9.
e iii 12. Ps xlviii 1—3 lxxxvii 3. Is. i. 21 lii. 1. Jer xxxi. 23. Heb xi. 10 xii. 22 xiii. 14
f 10. Gal. iv. 25, 26
g *See on*, xix 7, 8. Is liv. 5. lxi 10. lxii. 4 John iii. 29. 2 Cor. xi 2 Eph. v. 25—27 30—32
h x 4 8. xii 10
i vii. 15 Lev. xxvi. 11, 12. 1 Kings viii. 27. 2 Chr. vi. 18 Is. xii 6. Ez xxxvii 27 xliii. 7. John i 14 xiv. 23. 2 Cor. vi. 16.
k 7. *See on*, Gen. xvii. 7, 8 Jer. xxxi. 33 xxxii. 38 Zech xiii. 9. 2 Cor. vi. 18. Heb. viii. 10. xi. 16.
l vii. 17. Is. xxv. 8
m xx 14 xxii. 3. Is. xxv. 8 Hos. xiii. 14. 1 Cor. xv 26. 54—58. Heb. ii 14, 15
n Is xxxv. 10. xxx. 19. lx 20. lxi 3 lxv. 18, 19. Jer. xxxi. 13.
o 1. Ps cxliv. 4. Matt. xxiv 35. 1 Cor. vii. 31. 2 Cor. v. 17. 2 Pet. iii. 10. 1 John ii. 17.

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success of the Gospel will make in the state of the world, supply us with an unanswerable argument of its divine original and authority, even previous to the fulfilment of those prophecies, which relate to it. Can that doctrine come from any other than God, which wants but to be universally received with obedient faith, to remedy all the evils that fill the earth; and to render men as much like holy and happy angels, as most of them at present are like deceitful, malignant, ambitious, and apostate spirits? The need that the world stands in of such a remedy; the suitableness of it; its evident tendency; and its efficacy, as far as men actually make use of it, proclaim its divinity in the most decisive manner; even apart from miracles, fulfilments of prophecy, and all other external arguments whatsoever; yea, in language distinct from, though connected with, that "witness in himself," which is the principal source of assurance to the experienced believer's heart.

V. 8—15.

Whenever the Lord takes off the restraint from Satan, he is both active and able to deceive the nations, and to propagate lies and mischief among men: and then persecution again lifts up its horrid front, and stalks abroad to revel upon the blood of the saints.—We may even learn profitable lessons from the devil and his angels: for if the servants and ministers of Christ were as united, active, vigilant, and persevering in doing good, as these enemies are in doing mischief; we might hope for better times. Nor shall we do amiss in taking the hint from them, not to think the least opportunity of good beneath our notice; whilst we aspire and aim at the most extensive and important usefulness; for our enemies, when forming horrid plans to destroy, if it were possible, the whole church at once, do not neglect to deceive one soul; or even to defile, mislead, or harass the meanest of those whom they cannot destroy. But no weapons formed against the church can prosper; and all that fight against her shall perish, with the devil, the beast, and the false prophet, and be tormented day and night for ever and ever. May we then firmly believe, that 'Christ shall come to be our Judge.' and daily prepare to stand before his awful tribunal, when "heaven and earth shall flee from his face, and no place "shall be found for them." Let us frequently reflect on the opening of the books, the bringing to light of the hidden things of darkness, and the discovery of all characters and actions in their proper colours, which will take place, when the Judge shall render to every one according to his works. Then all the dead shall be raised; all distinctions swallowed up, except that between the righteous and the wicked; and all will be cast into the lake of fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, except the believing and obedient followers of Christ, whose names are written in the book of life. "Let no man, therefore, deceive himself "with vain words; for the wrath of God will come on all "the children of disobedience," how many soever they be. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the "kingdom of their Father:" and "death shall be swallowed up in victory." "He that hath an ear, let him "hear what the Spirit saith to the churches."

NOTES.

CHAP. XXI. V. 1—4. Some interpreters, (especially among those who hold a literal resurrection at the beginning of the Millennium, and the personal reign of Christ on earth during it,) understand these chapters principally of the state of the church on earth at that time. But they come in order subsequent to the account of the general judgment; and we can never attain to a satisfactory understanding of prophecy, if imagination, or conjecture, be allowed to carry us backward, or forward, without any fixed principles. The method that we should take, of clearing up the evidence of the divine authority of scripture from the accomplishment of prophecy; (and this is no doubt one principal weapon, with which to defend Christianity against all kinds of infidels;) must be, by showing, that there is order and arrangement in the predictions, and a coincidence between them and known facts; and that a regular series of events is foretold, some of which are already fulfilled, and the rest cannot be so, because the order of the prophecy shows them to be yet future. But, in order to this, we must carefully adhere to the proposed arrangement in our interpretations, not deviating even from the appearance of it without evident reason. For example, there was a necessity of returning, at the beginning of the twelfth chapter, to the primitive times of Christianity; because another regular series of predictions is there evidently begun, after the other had been completed. This creates a proper degree of prophetical obscurity; and when the key is found, it adds to the consistency, energy, and beauty of the whole. But, having now traced both parts of the book to the end of the world; it must introduce perplexity, and occasion an appearance of uncertainty and ambiguity, to return back, without any necessity, to the preceding Millennium. As many ages of persecution and tribulation had been predicted; and as this

5 And [p] he that sat upon the throne said, [q] Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, [r] Write: for [s] these words are true and faithful.

6 And he said unto me, [t] It is done. [u] I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End: [x] I will give unto him that is athirst, of [y] the Fountain of the water of life [z] freely.

7 He that [a] overcometh shall [b] inherit [*] all things; [c] and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

8 But [d] the fearful, and unbelieving, [e] and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, [f] and all liars, shall have their part in [g] the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: [h] which is the second death.

p iv. 2, 9. v. 1. xx. 11.
q Is. xliii. 9. xlii. 19.
r See on, i. 11. 19.
s See on, xix. 9.
t See on, xvi. 17.
u See on, i. 8. 11. 17. xxii. 13.
x vii. 17. Is. xii. 3. lv. 1—3. John iv. 10. 14. vii. 37, 38.
y Ps. xxxvi. 9. Jer. ii. 13. Joel iii. 18.
z Hos. xiv. 4. Rom. iii. 24. viii. 32. 1 Cor. ii. 12.
a ii. 7. 11. 17. 26. iii. 5. 12. 21. 1 John v. 4, 5.
b 1 Sam. ii. 8. Prov. iii. 35. Is. lxv. 9. Matt. xix. 29. xxv. 34. Mark x. 17. 1 Cor. iii. 21—23. 1 Pet. i. 3, 9. iii. 9.
* Or, these things.
c See on, 3. Zech. viii. 8. Rom. viii. 15—17. 1 John iii. 1—3.
d Deut. xx. 8. Judg. vii. 3. Is. li. 12. lvii. 11. Matt. viii. 26. x. 28. Luke xii. 4, 5. John xii. 42, 43. 1 Pet. iii. 14, 15. 1 John v. 4, 5.
e xxii. 15. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. Gal. v. 19—21. Eph. v. 5, 6. 1 Tim. i. 9, 10. Heb. xiii. 4. 27.
f ii. 2. Is. ix. 15. John viii. 44. 2 Thes. ii. 9. 1 Tim. iv. 2. 1 John ii. 22.
g xix. 20. xx. 14, 15.
h See on, xx. 14.

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book was in a good measure written for the support and encouragement of believers, during those afflicting scenes; so we might naturally expect to hear towards the conclusion of it, some account of their happy state in heaven, as well as of the prosperous times of the church on earth: but if these chapters do not relate to that subject, we hear indeed of the punishment of the wicked, but nothing concerning the felicity of the righteous. Many of the expressions also are such, as cannot apply to any state, where the least remains of sin or sorrow are to be found, or any return of them to be expected: and those which seem of another nature are emblematical, according to the style of the whole book; which differs from all others in the New Testament, though it resembles many of the prophecies of Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zechariah. These reasons induce me to explain what follows of the heavenly state exclusively; except as the reader's thoughts are naturally called off, in some places, to other subjects. The emblem of a new heaven hath several times occurred, in different senses. (*Notes*, &c. *Is.* lxv. 17. lxvi. 22.) Some think that Peter wrote after the book of Revelation was published, and alluded to it; (*Note*, 2 *Pet.* iii. 10—14;) but the Holy Spirit might lead both the sacred writers to the same views and images. It is obvious, however, that Peter spake of the heavenly state; which is an additional argument to prove that John did the same; and indeed this must be so; for the "first heaven and earth were passed "away." (xx. 11.) In this new world, "there was no "sea;" which aptly represents an entire freedom from polluting and conflicting passions, distressing temptations, tempestuous troubles, changes, and alarms; and from whatever can divide, or interrupt, the communion of saints with each other: some think it implies, also, that there is abundance of room in that blessed world; as a large proportion of the earth is now covered with the sea. The apostle likewise saw the holy city, coming down from heaven; the whole church triumphant was shown to him under this emblem, that he might perceive, and report something of its glory and felicity, according to man's capacity of apprehending heavenly things: and he thus learned, that its blessedness came wholly from God, and depended on him. It seems to have appeared in the air just before him, that he might contemplate and examine it: and he perceived that it was prepared as a bride adorned for her nuptials; (xix. 7, 8;) which was another emblem, denoting the mutual love between Christ and his triumphant church; their union and communion, and delight in each other; and the glory and felicity thus bestowed upon believers in heaven. Thus two emblems, which apparently are not very compatible, concur in giving some instructive ideas of this interesting but inconceivable subject. He then heard a voice from heaven, proclaiming, with astonishment at the divine condescension, that the tabernacle of God was placed with men, and that he would dwell among them as their reconciled Father, notwithstanding all their rebellions! (*Ps.* lxviii. 18. *John* i. 14.) They would, therefore, be his people, devoted to his service and glory, and he would be with them, as their all-sufficient and eternal portion. (*Marg. Ref.*) This has a partial accomplishment, in the present consolations of true believers; but here it must refer to the perfect enjoyment of God in the beatific vision: for "He will then wipe "away all tears from their eyes," like a tender Father, who comforteth his mourning children, (vii. 17.) and they will never weep again, either for sin or trouble; as death, and every cause of grief, shall be no more, and the former things will be passed away. Can these expressions relate to any thing less than the heavenly state? *There was no sea.* (1.) 'It is evident from hence, that this new heaven 'and new earth are not designed to take place, till after the 'general judgment: for at the general judgment, "the sea "gave up the dead which were in it." (xx. 13.) 'Gog 'and Magog, the nations in the four corners of the earth 'are deceived by Satan, after the expiration of the Mil'lennium: but Gog and Magog are not inhabiters of the 'new heaven and the new earth. The church of Christ 'shall be glorious upon earth during the Millennium; and 'it shall be more glorious still in the new earth, after the 'Millennium, to all eternity.' (*Bp. Newton.*)

V. 5—8. "He that sat on the throne," generally, in this book, denotes the Father personally, as distinguished from "the Lamb that was slain:" but as Christ will *appear* on the throne of judgment, (xx. 11,) so we may understand it of him in this place; and the language employed best accords to him in his mediatorial character. The Lord Jesus, therefore, declared, in the apostle's hearing, that "He made all things new:" (*Marg. Ref.*) he brings sinners into a new state, and creates them anew to holiness; and he will make all things new, respecting their situation and manner of living, when he hath brought them, perfected both in body and soul, to his glorious felicity. This John was commanded to write, for the encouragement of the church in all its afflictions, conflicts, and temptations; for these were true and faithful sayings, on which the most entire dependence might be placed. He also added, "It is done:" the whole counsel of the love of God will be then completed, and the redemption, which the incarnate Son finished on the cross, will be

9 ¶ And there came unto me one of the seven angels, [i] which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee [k] the bride, the Lamb's wife.

i xv 1—7. xvi. 1—17.
k See on, 2. xix. 7.

10 And [l] he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me [m] that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

l i. 10. iv 2 xvii. 3. 1 Kings xviii. 12. 2 Kings ii 16 Ez. iii 14 viii 3 xi. 1. 24. xl. 1—3. Acts viii. 39. 2 Cor. xii. 2—4.
m See on, 2. Ez. xlviii. 15—22.

11 Having [n] the glory of God: and [o] her light *was* like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper-stone, [p] clear as crystal;

n 22, 23. xxii. 5. Is. iv. 5. lx 19, 20. Ez xlviii. 35.
o 19. Ez. i. 26 xxviii. 13, 14 16.
p 18. iv 6 xxii. 1. Job xxviii 17.

12 And had [q] a wall great and high, *and* had [r] twelve gates, and at the gates [s] twelve angels, [t] and names written thereon, which are *the* names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.

q 17—20. Ezra ix. 9 Neh. xii 27. Ps li. 18 cxxii 7.
r 21. 25 Is. liv. 12. lx. 18. Ez xlviii. 31—34.
s Matt. xviii 10 Luke xv 10. xvi. 22. Heb i. 14.
t vii. 4—8 Num. ii 2—32. Acts xxvi. 7.

13 On the east, three gates; on the north, three gates; on the south, three gates; and on the west, three gates.

14 And the wall of the city had twelve [u] foundations, [x] and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

u 19—21. Is. liv. 11. Heb. xi. 10.
x xviii 20 Matt. x. 2-4. xvi. 18. 1 Cor. iii 10, 11. Gal. ii. 9. Eph. ii 20. iii. 5. iv 11. Jude 17.

15 And he that talked with me had [y] a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

y See on, xi. 1. 2. Ez xl 3 5 xlii 1, &c. Zech. ii. 1.

16 And the city lieth [z] four-square, and the length is as large as the breadth. And he measured the city with the reed, [a] twelve thousand furlongs: The length, and the breadth, and the height of it, are equal.

z Ez. xl 47 xlviii. 20.
a Ez. xlviii 8—19

17 And he measured the wall thereof, [b] an hundred *and* forty *and* four cubits, *according to* the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

b vii. 4. xiv. 3.

18 And the building of the wall of it [c] was *of* jasper: and the city *was* pure gold, [d] like unto clear glass.

c See on, 11. 19.
d 11. 21.

19 And [e] the foundations of the wall of the city *were* garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation *was* jasper; the second, [f] sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;

e Job xxviii 16—19 Prov iii. 15 Is. liv. 11, 12.
f See on, Ex. xxviii 17—21. xxxix. 10—14.

20 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the

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perfectly applied. For, being "Alpha and Omega, the "Beginning and the End," he will surely bring the work he had begun to a glorious conclusion. (*Notes*, &c. i. 8. 11. 18. ii. 8.) If any man in any age or place, were athirst for the blessings of salvation; if any one were so sensible of his perishing need of them, and had such a view of their preciousness, as to be earnest in using means for obtaining them, and would not be satisfied with any thing else, Christ would surely give him "of the Foun-"tain of the water of life freely." (*Marg. Ref. and notes on the texts referred to.*) The sin and folly of men consist in "forsaking the Fountain of living water, to "hew out broken cisterns, that can hold no waters;" his happiness must begin with returning to this Fountain, as opened through the mediation of Christ. Sensual and sinful pleasures are muddy and poisoned waters; the best earthly comforts are like the scanty stagnating supplies of a cistern; when idolized, they become broken cisterns, and yield only vanity, disappointment, and vexation; and all our labour about them, resembles "hewing out broken "cisterns, that can hold no water." But the joys of true religion are like the springing waters from a fountain. pure, refreshing, overflowing, always satisfying, never satiating, abundant, and eternal. The sanctifying consolations of the Holy Spirit, being the preparation for heavenly felicity, and the antepast of it, are the streams from this Fountain, which flow for us in the wilderness. To those, who thirst for them, Christ will give of these waters, *freely,* without any price paid for them, even supplies adequate to their largest desires; these shall be furnished from time to time, when they come and ask for them, to be their solace in life, and at the approach of death; and then he will bring them to the Fountain-head, that they may drink for ever full draughts of these holy and glorious joys. All this he gives *freely;* though he purchased them by the shedding of his blood upon the cross for their sins. (xxii. 1. 17.) Indeed, they, who draw waters from these wells of salvation, have many enemies to encounter: but the Lord assures them, that every conqueror shall "inherit all things," for He will be his God, and he shall be his son, and thus be the heir of all things in him. (1 *Cor.* iii. 21—23.) On the other hand, "the fearful," who dared not profess, or who renounced the gospel, from the dread of reproach and suffering; the cowardly soldiers, who feared the enemy more than their Captain, and so "turned back in the day of battle;" and "infidels" or "unbelievers" of all descriptions; (not the weak in faith, but such as had no faith;) "the abomi-"nable," or those who were guilty of unnatural practices; murderers of themselves or others, in duels, wars, persecutions, perversion of justice, and oppression; "for-"nicators;" adulterers, and lewd persons of every kind: "sorcerers;" the devil's prophets, real or pretended, to which company *pretenders* to new revelations belong; "idolaters, and all liars," hypocrites, deceivers, false teachers; all, who *lie* for gain, or from malice, who thus cheat or slander others: yea, all liars, though they only *divert* themselves or others by breaking God's commandments; all these shall have their portion in the lake of fire, with the devil and his angels. (*Note,* xx. 10—15.)

tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

21 And [g] the twelve gates *were* twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city *was* [h] pure gold, [i] as it were transparent glass.

g 12. xvii. 4. Matt. xi. 45, 46.
h 18. xvii. 4. xviii. 16. 1 Kings vi. 20. Is. lx. 17, 18.
i 11. 18.

22 And [k] I saw no temple therein: for [l] the Lord God almighty and [m] the Lamb are the temple of it.

23 And [n] the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it:

k 4, 5. 1 Kings viii. 27. 2 Chr. ii. 6. vi. 28. Is. lxvi. 1. John iv. 23.
l See on, i. 8. iv. 8. xi. 17. xv. 3. xvi. 7. 14. xix. 15.
m John ii. 19—21. x. 30. Col. i. 19. ii. 19. Heb. ix. 1—12.
n xxii. 5. Is. xxiv. 23. lx. 19, 20.

V. 9.—21. An angel having called John to accompany him, that he might show him the bride, (*Note*, xix. 7, 8.) or the church triumphant, after the completion of the sacred union between Christ and his purchased people, in the glory of heaven, he was, to his own apprehension, (being under the influence of the prophetic Spirit) carried to an exceedingly high mountain, and shown a city immensely great, descending out of heaven from God. (2, 3.) This interchange of emblems from "the Bride, the Lamb's wife," to "the holy Jerusalem," shows, that we are only to take general ideas from them, but not to enter minutely into particulars, in which there is seldom much agreement: and that our complex view of such subjects must be deduced from the whole of them compared together. This city was illuminated, beautified, and rendered illustrious beyond expression, by the glory of God beaming full upon it; which shows that the happiness of heaven consists in immediate communications from God, and in conformity to him. Thus the light, that shone on the city, was like the refulgency of the most admired jewels: the whole, as it appeared pendent in the air, shone with surprising lustre and beauty, and was transparent as crystal: which may intimate, that our knowledge in heaven will be intuitive, certain, and productive of the most satisfying delight. The great wall of jasper of one hundred and forty-four cubits in height, or thickness, (according to the measure of a man, from his elbow to the end of his middle finger, (17,) being the number of the twelve tribes multiplied by that of the twelve apostles, may denote the entire security of that residence, which the almighty God hath prepared for the whole increase of both the Old and the New Testament churches, when collected together in heaven; where no enemy can approach to annoy or alarm them for ever. Twelve gates, guarded by twelve angels, and inscribed with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, implied, that this holy city was open on every side for the admission of the true Israel of God, even all his believing servants, and for none else: and that angels rejoiced in their security and felicity in heaven, as well as readily ministered to them during their progress thither. The twelve foundations, inscribed with the names of the twelve apostles, and formed of twelve precious stones, (which John in vision saw, in the same manner as he did the rest,) might show that all, who belonged to that holy city, obtained their citizenship, by receiving and obeying the doctrine of the apostles respecting Christ and his salvation, as "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world:" the whole city rests on that foundation primarily, and in a subordinate sense on those that published and attested that doctrine, who will be honoured there in a peculiar manner: nor will any person enter thither, who does not hold the doctrine of the apostles, in its grand outlines: for thus it hath been believed by the church, ever since the first promise to fallen man. The precious stones may denote, that all earthly splendour is mean and paltry compared with that of heaven; and that all possible excellency and glory will there combine, abound and centre for ever. (*Notes*, *Is.* liv. 11, 12. *Eph.* ii. 19—22.) The vast dimensions of the city, being an exact square, fifteen hundred miles on each side, might be emblematical of magnificence, and of room for any number of inhabitants which should ever enter it. As it is inconceivable how a city could be fifteen hundred miles high; so, when it is said that the length, breadth, and height were equal, some conclude that no more is meant, than that the height was proportionable to the other dimensions. As, however, the whole is enigmatical, and as a cube seems a kind of perfect form, perhaps the language is to be understood according to its obvious meaning: and then we may consider it as an intimation, that the reader is not to form any gross conceptions of the city in his imagination, but to deduce instruction from it, as an emblem: and it may imply the stability, proportion, and uniformity of heavenly things, and the inconceivable nature and glory of them. (*Eph.* iii. 18.)—The city, and the street of it, being "of pure gold, like unto clear glass," may be an emblem of the union in heaven of those excellencies, which seem here to be incompatible. 'They will be splendid, and durable as the purest gold; clear and transparent as the finest glass. In that happy world, the beauties and advantages, which here are divided and incompatible, will unite and agree. Our glass is clear, but brittle; our gold is shining and solid, but it is opaque, and discovers only a surface. And thus it is with our minds. The powers of the imagination are lively and extensive, but transient and uncertain. The powers of the understanding are more solid and regular, but at the same time more slow and limited, and confined to the outside properties of the few objects around us. But when we arrive within the veil, the perfections of the glass and gold will be combined, and the imperfections of each will entirely cease. Then we shall *know* more than we can now *imagine*. ***The glass will be all gold.*** And then we shall apprehend truth in its relations and consequences, not (as at present,) by that tedious and fallible process which we call reasoning, but by a single glance of thought, as the sight pierces in an instant through the largest transparent body. ***The gold will be all glass.***' (***Newton's Cardiphonia.***)—The twelve gates, made of so many vast pearls, denoted, that every thing will be superlatively glorious, beyond all comparison with any thing seen on earth.—The marginal references will show the reader, in a manner suited to excite a peculiar interest, that even in those things, which are stated as the glory of the antichristian harlot, the true spouse of Christ immensely exceeds her.

[o] for the glory of God did lighten it, and [p] the Lamb *is* the Light thereof.

24 And [q] the nations of them which are saved, shall [r] walk in the light of it: [s] and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

25 And [t] the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; [u] for there shall be no night there.

26 And they shall bring [x] the glory and honour of the nations into it.

27 And [y] there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* [z] worketh abomination, [a] or *maketh* a lie: but [b] they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

o *See on*, 11. xviii. 1. Is. ii. 10. 19. 21. Hab. iii. 3 Matt xvi 27. Mark viii. 38. John xvii. 24. Acts xxii. 11.
p Luke ii. 32. John i. 9. 14 18 v 23.
q xxii. 2. Deut. xxxii. 43. Ps. xxii 27. Is. ii. 2 lii. 15. lv. 5. lxvi. 18. Jer. iv. 2 Zech. ii 11. viii. 22, 23. Rom. xv. 10–12. xvi. 26.
r Is. ii. 5
s Ps lxxii. 10, 11. Is. lx. 3—10. 13 lxvi. 11, 12.
t Is. lx. 11.
u xxii. 5. Is lx. 20 Zech. xiv. 7.
x *See on*, 24.
y Lev. xiii. 46. Num. v. 3. xii 15. Ps. ci. 8. Is xxxv. 8. lii 1. Joel iii. 17.
z *See on*, xvii 4, 5.
a *See on*, 8. xxii. 14. 15.
b *See on*, iii. 5 xiii. 8. xx. 12. 15. Phil. iv. 3.

V. 22—27. The temple was essential to the literal Jerusalem, as its great ornament and honour; and it made a prominent part in Ezekiel's vision of the church, during the Millennium, under the emblem of the holy city (*Notes*, *Ez.* xl—xlviii:) but there was no temple in the mystical city which John saw; which is a demonstration, that the heavenly state was exclusively meant. In heaven there will be no need of external symbols of the Lord's presence; when he shall be fully manifested in his essential glory, as far as creatures can perceive and know him. He will be evidently among them, to communicate unalloyed felicity, and to receive their adorations; and the eternal Son, in human nature, as the Lamb that was slain, will be a Temple, in which "all the fulness of the Godhead dwelling "bodily" will be made manifest to the glorified bodies of the saints, whilst the perfections of the divine nature will be contemplated with open face, by the exercise of their intellectual powers.—Nor will this holy city need the sun or moon to lighten it, or any of the things which outwardly contribute to our comfort and are suited to our state on earth; for the glory of God will lighten it, yea, the Lamb will be the light and felicity of it. (*Notes*, *Is.* lx. 19, 20.) What words can more fully express the mysterious union and coequality of the Son with the Father in the God-head?—The inhabitants of this city will not only be numerous, above those of other cities; but even nations, many nations of those, whom Jesus hath saved, will dwell in it, and walk in the light of God and the Lamb, perpetually and eternally. If all the kings of the earth had concurred to bring the whole of their wealth, magnificence, and glory, into one place; it could not have borne any comparison with this holy city: thus those kings, who belonged to the church on earth, though they have left all their outward grandeur behind them, will yet bring all their real honour into it, and all other glory will be swallowed up in it. The gates not shut by day, and there being no night there, emblematically show the liberty, peace, security, and uninterrupted enjoyment of that blessed state: and as believers are the excellent of the earth, and enter thither from every nation; so it may literally be said, that "they bring the glory and honour of the nations into "it;" as well as figuratively, in respect of its incomparable splendour and excellency. Moreover, nothing sinful or unclean can at all find admission into it. All the inhabitants are absolutely perfected in holiness; and all increase, rejoice in, and participate each other's felicity, being all excellent, loving, and lovely, beyond expression or imagination.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

"There remaineth a rest for the people of God:" and when the idolized objects of carnal men's affections and pursuits shall pass away, and be no more for ever, believers shall enter "the new heaven and the new earth," in which dwelleth righteousness, and where no tumultuous passions, anxious cares, or changing dispensations, shall disturb their repose to all eternity. "But will God indeed "dwell with man," and receive man to dwell with him in heavenly felicity? What then should for a single moment divert us from seeking so vast a blessing? Or what words can suffice to express our admiring gratitude? May we seek the adorning and beauty of holiness, and still desire to be found accepted in the righteousness of the Redeemer, and adorned with the beauties of holiness; and then the heavenly bridegroom will find us prepared, and will rejoice over us to do us good for ever. (*Zeph.* iii. 17.) Tears may indeed now furrow our cheeks, and anguish may sometimes distract our hearts, because of sin within us and around us, and because of its distressing effects; but speedily our God will wipe away all our tears, and we shall feel and see no more of death, of sorrow, of crying, or of pain, for ever. Let us then pray for patience, that, "having done the will of God, we may inherit the promise." If we are willing and desirous that the gracious Redeemer should make all things new in our hearts and nature, by whatever means he sees good, we need not fear, but that he will make all things new, in respect of our situation, till he hath brought us to the enjoyment of complete felicity: for he is Alpha and Omega; his work is perfect; and when he begins to save he will never leave or forsake those who partake of his grace, and who are the objects of his everlasting love. If, in bringing us to thirst for the waters of life, he causes us to pass through humiliating dispensations and experiences, we ought not to complain, as this thirst is the preparation for all the blessings of time and eternity, and he will give to "every one that is athirst "of the Fountain of the water of life freely." Did we come to him for this blessing more frequently, and pray for it more earnestly, we should be enabled in the sharpest trials to realize the Christian paradox, "as sorrowful, yet "always rejoicing:" but we are too apt to go to broken cisterns; and no wonder in this case that we go mourning all the day long. Let then those, who are engaged in the combat, have recourse to this never-failing cordial; that, by its exhilarating and invigorating efficacy, their strength may be renewed, till they have won the victory, and are owned as children and heirs of God in Christ Jesus, and possess all things in him.—But, surely, the curse is also set before us in this scripture, as well as the blessing: and most loudly doth Christ say to all that hear his word, "not to fear them, who can kill the body, but after that "have no more that they can do;" when such cowards,

CHAP. XXII.

A further description of the heavenly state, 1—5. The angel attests these things, and again forbids John to worship him, 6—9. Christ himself shows the apostle, that the state of men would soon be fixed, by his coming to judgment, 10—12: he declares who would enter heaven, and who would be excluded, 13—15; invites all that were willing, to accept of his salvation; and denounces plagues on all who add to, or take away from this prophecy, 16—19. The apostle desires the speedy advent of Christ; and concludes with a benediction on his readers, 20, 21.

AND he shewed me [a] a pure River of [b] water of life, [c] clear as crystal, [d] proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

2 In [e] the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* [f] the Tree of life, which bare twelve *manner of* fruits, *and* yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the Tree *were* for [g] the healing of the nations.

3 And [h] there shall be no more curse: [i] but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; [k] and his servants shall serve him:

[a] Ps. xxxvi. 8. xlvi. 4 Is. xli. 18 xlviii. 18. lxvi. 12 Ez. xlvi 1—9. Zech. xiv. 5 John vii. 38, 39.
[b] vii 17 xxi 6. Ps. xxxvi. 9. Jer ii. 13. xvii. 13. John iv. 10, 11 14.
[c] *See on* xxi. 11.
[d] iii. 21 iv. 5 v. 6. 13 vii 10, 11. 17. John xiv. 16—18. xv. 26. xvi. 7—15. Acts i. 4, 5. ii. 33
[e] l. xxi 21. Ez. xlvii. 12
[f] 14 ii. 7. Gen. ii 9. iii. 22—24. Prov iii. 18.
[g] xxi. 24. Ps. cxlvii 3. Is. vi. 10. vii 18, 19. Jer. xvii. 14. Ez. xlvii. 8—11. Hos. xiv. 4 Mal. iv. 2 Luke iv. 18. 1 Pet. ii. 24.——[h] xxi. 4 Deut. xxvii 26 Zech. xiv. 11 Matt. xxv. 41. Gal iii. 10—13.——[i] vii 15—17. xxi. 22, 23. Ps. xvi. 11 xvii 15 Is. xii. 6. Ez. xlviii 35. Matt. xxv. 21. John xiv. 3. xvii. 24 ——[k] vii. 15. John xii. 26.

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as dare not own Christ on earth, are ranked with the most abominable sinners, as heirs of the lake of fire and brimstone. If the Lord should speak in thunder from heaven, and protest to sinners, *by name*, that they were in the way to hell, it could not be more manifest than it is at present, if men would but notice it: for whilst they live in infidelity, impiety, or any of the sins here or elsewhere enumerated, does not God say expressly to them, "Except "ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish?" But blessed be his name, he says also to the worst, "Repent, and be "converted, that your sins may be blotted out." "Believe "in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

V. 9—27.

The angels who pour out vials of wrath, and inflict plagues on ungodly men, take pleasure in helping the joy of believers: and the mystical espousals of Christ and his church excite their attention, admiration, and rejoicing praises. But the way in which the Lord teaches us the nature of heavenly glories, implies that we are poor ignorant children, too apt to be pleased with trifles and externals, who must be spoken to in our own language, not being capable of knowing things as they are, or of fully relishing the pure and spiritual felicity of the celestial world. Yet, if any thing draw off our affections from earthly objects to seek a treasure in heaven, and a permanent mansion in that blessed world, it will be well.—Glorious things are indeed here spoken of the city of God; and the whole is well suited to raise our expectations, and enlarge our conceptions of its security, peace, splendour, its purity and felicity: but in proportion to our spirituality, we shall be more and more led to contemplate heaven, as filled with the glory of God, and enlightened by the presence of the Lord Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, and the Redeemer of lost sinners: knowing, that in "his "presence is fulness of joy, and pleasures at his right "hand for evermore." As nothing unclean can enter thither, let us be stirred up, by these glimpses of heavenly things, in giving diligence to "cleanse ourselves from all "filthiness of flesh and spirit, and to perfect holiness, in "the fear of God," that we may be approved as "Israelites "indeed, in whom there is no guile," and have a sure evidence that we are written in the "book of life of the "Lamb, that was slain from the foundation of the world."

NOTES.

CHAP. XXII. V. 1. The angel next made known to the apostle the source and current of heavenly blessings, for "he showed him a pure River of water of life:" this implied the holy nature and tendency of those unalloyed pleasures, which flow, without interruption or end, for the full satisfaction of all the saints in glory. (*Ps.* xlvi. 4.) It was also "clear," or transparent, "as crystal;" which may intimate that the happiness of heaven greatly consists in a full, exact, and certain knowledge of God, and his glorious perfections and works, exciting all holy and delightful affections in the heart. This river "proceeded "out of the throne of God and of the Lamb," as from its fountain; which showed, that all felicity comes from God, as the all-sufficient Source of life, light, holiness, and joy; and that it is communicated according to his wise and holy sovereignty. But the throne of God was the throne of the Lamb also; (iii. 21;) for the river flows to sinful men, through the Person of Emmanuel, and his atonement and mediation. This especially points to the quickening and sanctifying influences and consolations of the Holy Spirit, as given to sinners through Jesus Christ, to be the author of spiritual and eternal life to their souls. (*Marg. Ref. and notes on the texts referred to.*) This interpretation, which coincides with so many other scriptures, gives a peculiarly interesting view of the sacred Trinity; the Father, who sent his only begotten Son to be our Saviour; the Son, who, having finished his work on earth, rose and ascended, and sat down with the Father on his throne, and ever liveth, as Emmanuel, our divine, our incarnate Mediator; and the Holy Spirit, as proceeding from the Father and the Son, to apply, by his creating love and power. this salvation to our souls: that 'Glory may 'be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; 'as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, 'world without end.'

4 And [l] they shall see his face; [m] and his name *shall be* in their foreheads.

5 And there shall be [n] no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun: for the Lord God giveth them light: [o] and they shall reign for ever and ever.

6 And he said unto me, [p] These sayings *are* faithful and true: and the Lord God of [q] the holy prophets [r] sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things [s] which must shortly be done.

l Ex. xxxiii. 18–20 23 Job xxxiii 26 Ps. iv. 6. Is xxxiii. 17 xxxv 2. xl. 5. Matt v 8. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Heb xii. 14 1 John iii. 2, 3.
m *See on,* iii 12. xiv. 1.
n xviii. 23 *See on,* xxi 22–25 Ps. xxxvi. 9 lxxxiv. 11. Prov. iv 18, 19. Is lx. 19, 20.
o iii 21. xi. 15. Dan vii. 18. 27 Matt. xxv. 34. 46. Rom. v 17. 2 Tim ii. 12. 1 Pet. i. 3, 4.
p *See on,* xix 9 xxi 5 — q xviii. 20. Luke i 70. xvi. 16 Acts iii 18 Rom i. 2 1 Pet i. 11, 12 2 Pet i 21 iii 2 — r *See on,* i 1. Dan iii. 28 vi 22 Matt. xiii 41. Acts xii 11. 2 Thes. i. 7 — s 7. 10 Gen xli 32. 1 Cor. vii. 29. 2 Pet. iii. 8, 9.

7 Behold, [t] I come quickly: [u] blessed *is* he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

8 And I, John, saw these things, and heard *them*. And when I had heard and seen, [x] I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.

9 Then saith he unto me, [y] See *thou do it* not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: [z] Worship God.

t 10. 12 20. *See on,* iii. 11.
u 9. *See on,* i. 8.
x *See on,* xix. 10.
y Deut iv 19. Col. ii. 18, 19. 1 John v. 21.
z iv. 10. ix. 20. xiv 7. xv. 4. Ex. xxxiv. 14. 2 Kings xvii. 36. Ps. xlv. 11. Matt iv. 9. Luke iv 7. John iv. 22, 23.

V. 2--5. In the midst of the street, or principal place of concourse of the city, and on each side of the river, was "the Tree of life:" which seems not to mean a single tree, but a species of trees, that grew in the places of public resort, for the common benefit of all the inhabitants. On earth some fruits ripen at one season, and some at another: but this Tree bore twelve kinds of fruit; that every month in the year might be supplied, and abundance be united with perpetuity and variety. This was an emblem of Christ, and all the blessings of his salvation, as communicated constantly and perfectly to all his redeemed people in heaven, by his own presence with them, and love to them. The leaves of the Tree, being appointed for the healing of the nations, implied, that the favour and presence of Christ would remove and prevent all evil, as well as communicate all good, to the inhabitants of that blessed world. So that "no more curse would be "there," no sickness, pain, sorrow, wrath, or death: for Adam sinned in the garden of Eden, and so fell with his posterity under the curse; but this will never befall the redeemed; as the same sovereignty and omnipotence, which have saved them, will confirm them for ever. (*Note, Ez.* xlvii. 12.) For the throne of God, and of the Lamb, being established there, *his* servants shall serve and worship him for ever, which is their great desire and delight; "and "they shall see his face," behold his glory, be assured of his love, and enjoy the fulness of felicity in his presence. "And his name shall be in their foreheads;" that is, all shall know that they belong to him, and perceive that they bear his holy image. It is remarkable, that "God and the "Lamb" are here spoken of *as One*, in such a manner, that we cannot determine to which of them the singular personal pronoun belongs. In that world of light and glory there will be no night, no affliction, dejection, no intermission of service and enjoyment: they will need no candle; no diversions or pleasures, of man's devising, will there be at all wanted; and even the outward comforts, which God hath provided, suited to our state in this world, will no longer be requisite. (xxi. 23, 24.) How very different from a Mahommedan heaven, which could only please gross, sensual, and carnal men, if it were real! but indeed this, and various notions of heavenly happiness, springing up, as new revelations, from time to time, without excepting even the hope of philosophers, of enjoying the pleasure of learned society, an increasing knowledge of nature, and discoveries in science, beyond expression many and great; are mere delusions of the enemy; to soothe men into the opinion, that they may be happy, without submission to the gospel, and without *holiness:* till the event awfully convince them of the fatal delusion.

V. 6, 7. (xxi. 5.) The angel's declaration in this passage, that the Lord God had sent him, compared with what follows, (16,) has been adduced as a conclusive proof of Christ's Deity: but indeed we meet with this doctrine, in one form or other, continually; and there is no way of avoiding it; but by rejecting, wholly, or in part, the divine inspiration of those books, in which it is so undeniably contained.—The Lord Jesus next spake by the angel, and declared that "He was coming quickly," to fulfil these prophecies, to punish his enemies, to deliver his servants, and to take their souls to heaven; but especially to raise the dead and judge the world: and he added a blessing on all, who observed, understood, remembered, believed, and obeyed, the sayings contained in this prophecy: (i. 4:) as they could not fail, to increase their faith, hope, patience, steadfastness, and propriety of behaviour, in the church, and in the world.----'Good Vitringa devoutly wisheth; May the Lord bestow this 'grace and favour on us, who have employed some time 'and pains, in the study and explication of this book; 'that some part of this blessing also may descend to us.' (*Bp. Newton.*)

V. 8, 9. (*See on,* xix. 10, 11.) Whilst we are surprised, that the apostle should again fall into his former mistake, and need repeatedly the same admonition: we may observe the great wisdom of God in leaving him to do so. It has been remarked that the idolatrous worship of saints and angels was one great abomination of that antichristian system, against which this prophecy is principally levelled: and here all palliations of that enormity are answered at once; for the most exalted and beneficent creature, when visibly present, would not allow the least appearance of adoration to be rendered to him: whereas *the papists* worship creatures, when not visibly present, and thus ascribe omnipresence and omniscience to them, as well as other divine honours! It also shows the weakness of the Socinian way of accounting for Stephen's adoration of Christ; because, say they, he was visibly present: but if he had not been also truly God, the martyr would nevertheless have been an idolater: yet Christ neither reproved him, nor any other person, for

10 And [a] he saith unto me, [b] Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: [c] for the time is at hand.

11 He [d] that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: [e] and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

12 And, behold, [f] I come quickly; [g] and my reward *is* with me, [h] to give every man according as his work shall be.

13 I am [k] Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

14 [k] Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may [l] have right [m] to the Tree of life, [n] and may enter in through the gates into the city.

15 For [o] without *are* [p] dogs, and [q] sorcerers, and [r] whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, [s] and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

16 [t] I, Jesus, have sent mine angel [u] to testify unto you these things in the churches [x] I am the Root and the Offspring of David, [y] *and* the bright and morning star.

17 And [z] the Spirit and [a] the bride say, Come. And [b] let him that heareth say, Come. And [c] let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will, [d] let him take the water of life [e] freely.

a 12, 13. 16 20.
b v. 1. x. 4. Is. viii. 16 Dan. viii 26. xii. 9 Matt x 27.
c *See on*, i. 3. Is. xiii 6 Ez xii. 23. Rom. xiii. 12. 2 Thes. ii. 3. 1 Pet. iv. 7.
d xvi 8—11. 21. Ps lxxxi. 12. Prov. xiv. 32. Ez iii. 27 Dan xii. 10. Matt. xv 14 xxi. 19. John viii. 21.
e 3. vii. 13—15. Job xvii. 9 Prov. iv. 18. Eph. v. 27. Col. i. 22. Jude 24.
f *See on*, 7
g xi. 18 Is. iii. 10, 11. xl. 10. lxii 11. 1 Cor iii. 8. 14 ix. 17, 18.
h *See on*, xx 12. Matt xvi 27. Rom. ii. 6—11. xiv. 12
i *See on*, i. 8. 11. xxi. 6. Is xli. 4 xliv. 6 xlviii. 12.——k 7. Ps. cvi. 3—5. cxii 1. cxix. 1—6 Is lvi. 1, 2 Matt vii. 21—27 John xiv 15 21—23 xv. 10—14. 1 Cor vii 19 Gal. v 6. 1 John iii. 3. 23 v. 3.——l John i. 12 1 Cor viii 9. ix. 5 *Gr.*

m *See on*, 2. ii. 7.
n *See on*, xxi. 27. John x 7. 9. xiv. 6.
o xxi. 8. 1 Cor. vi 9, 10. Gal. v. 19—21. Eph. v. 3—6. Col. iii. 6.
p *See on*, Phil. iii. 2.
q ix 21. xviii 23. Is. xlvii. 9 12. lvii 3 Mal. iii. 5. Acts viii 11. xiii. 6—11.
r *See on*, xvii. 1—6.
s xxi. 8 27. 1 Kings xxii. 8. 21—23. Is. ix. 15, 16 Jer. v. 31. John iii. 18—21. viii 46. 2 Thes. ii. 10—12
t *See on*, 6.
u 20 *See on*, i. 11. ii 7. 11 17. 29 iii. 6. 13. 22.
x *See on*, v. 5 Is xi. 1 Zech. vi. 12. Matt. xxii. 42 45. Rom. i. 3, 4 ix. 5.——y ii. 28. Num xxiv. 17. Matt. ii. 2. 7—10. Luke i 78 2 Pet. i 19
z *See on*, u. 16. Is. lv. 1—3. John xvi. 9—15.——a *See on*, xxi. 2. 9.——b Ps xxxiv. 8. Is. ii. 3. 5. xlviii. 16—18 Jer. i 5 Mic. iv. 2 Zech viii 21—23. John i. 39—46. iv. 29. 1 Thes. i 5—8.——c *See on*, xxi. 6 Is lv. 1 John vii. 37.——d *See on*, 1. Is. xii 3. John iv. 10. 14.——e Rom iii. 24 1 Cor. ii. 12.

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showing him this kind of honour, or any other; but the contrary.

V. 10—12. The Lord Jesus is undoubtedly the Speaker in these verses; but some think that he spake by the angel, as his ambassador: or commanded him to proclaim these words in his name, and immediately from him. 'It was not thought sufficient to represent the angel, speaking in the person of Christ; but Christ himself also is introduced, speaking in his own person, and confirming the divine authority of this book, and attesting it to be properly his revelation.' (*Bp. Newton.*) Yet this does not seem satisfactory. (16.) It is therefore far more probable, that Christ again appeared in vision to his apostle, to close the prophecy, as he had done at the opening of it. (*Notes*, i. 10—20.) He directed the apostle not to seal the sayings of this prophecy, but to publish them for the use of the church: (x. 4. *Dan.* xii. 4:) for the time was at hand, when they would begin to be accomplished, nay, they would indeed soon be completed. As therefore, after all these revelations of the will of God, and the way of salvation, obstinate sinners would be left to their perverse choice, without further means being used for their conviction; and believers should be exhorted and encouraged to perseverance in well-doing; so the time would speedily arrive, when the unjust and filthy, the unpardoned and unregenerate, would be irreversibly fixed in such a state, that they would be unjust and filthy still, and for ever, without hope or remedy; and the justified and sanctified believer would be confirmed for ever in righteousness, holiness, and felicity. And, behold, Christ was coming quickly, bringing his recompense with him, both for his enemies and his people. (*Note*, xx. 11—15.)

V. 13. (*Notes*, i. 9—11. 17, 18. *Marg. Ref.*)

V. 14, 15. (*Note*, xxi. 5—8.) They, who do the commandments, as delivered to sinners in the Gospel, by repentance, faith in Christ, attendance on the means of grace, and renewed unreserved obedience from evangelical motives, are blessed; and they have a right, or *privilege*, derived from grace, to all the blessings of salvation by Christ, and to admission into heaven, that they may there have fellowship with God and his holy angels, for ever and ever. (*Matt.* xii. 50.) The word, translated *right*, is the same which is rendered *power*, in another remarkable declaration; (*Note, John* i. 11—13;) which shows the entire coincidence of these texts. (*Marg. Ref.*) But without the city, even in the lake of fire, (for there is no middle place, or condition,) "are dogs," or selfish, greedy, fierce, and sensual persons, or apostates, with others of a hateful character; especially those, who loved a carnal flattering lie better than the holy and humbling truth of God, and who invented and propagated lies for their own selfish purposes: all other liars may also be included. (*Marg. Ref.*) As idolaters are mentioned separately, that abomination cannot, with propriety, be considered as specially intended. But the whole prophecy being, in a peculiar manner, directed against the delusions, or lies, with which the devil, by means of the beast and the false prophet, and others, deceived all the nations; and the idolatry of the church of Rome being only a part of her "deceivableness of unrighteousness:" it may fairly be supposed, that they, who thus "spake lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron," were *particularly*, though not *exclusively*, meant, by those "who loved and made a lie."

V. 16, 17. The Saviour, in his divine nature, was the Root from whom David sprang, and his promised Seed as Man. He was also "the bright and morning Star." 'His rising up in his incarnation introduced the Gospel-day: his rising in power introduced the millennial day; his rising in the saving influences of his Spirit introduceth the spiritual day of grace and comfort; and his appearance to judge the world will introduce the eternal day of light, purity and joy.' (*Brown.*) Some understand the former part of the next verse, of the church's desire for Christ's second coming; but the context plainly directs us to another interpretation. "The Spirit," by the sacred Word, and by his convictions and influence in the sinner's conscience, says, "Come," to Christ for salvation; "the Bride," or the whole church militant and triumphant, says "Come," and share our felicity. It therefore behooves every man, that hears the invitation, to

18 For [f] I testify unto every man that [g] heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, [h] if any man shall add unto these things, [i] God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

19 And if any man shall [k] take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, [l] God shall take away his part * out of the book of life, [m] and out of the holy city, [n] and *from* the things which are written in this book.

20 He [o] which testifieth these things saith, [p] Surely I come quickly: [q] Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

21 [r] The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

See on, 16. iii. 14. Eph iv 17.
g 1 Thes iv 6.
h *See on*, i 3 Deut iv 2 xii. 32 Prov. xxx 6. Matt. xv 6 -9. 13
i xiv 10, 11. xv 1. xvi. xix. 20 10 15. Lev xxvi 18. 24. 27, 28 37.
k *See on*, h 18. Luke xi 52
l *See on*, iii 5 xvii 8 Ex. xxxii. 33 Ps. lxix 28.

* Or, *the tree of life. See on*, 2.
m *See on*, xxi. 1. 22-27.
n 12. i. 3. ii. 7. 11. 17 26. iii. 4, 5. 12. 21. vii 9-17. xiv 13
o *See on*, 18.
p *See on*, 7 10. 12.
q i. 18 Cant. viii. 14. 2 Tim. iv. 8. Heb. ix 28. 2 Pet. iii. 12-14.
r i. 4. *See on*, Rom. i. 7. xvi. 20 24 2 Cor. xiii. 14 Eph. vi. 23, 24.

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call on others to "come;" and, in fine, "let ever many," throughout the earth, who "thirsts," for salvation, come to Christ. Nay, lest any should hesitate, as not able to determine whether their thirst be spiritual or not, "Let "whosoever is willing come, and take of the waters of "life freely," as he would take water from a well, which belonged in common to him and to all his neighbours: nor ought he to think of paying for these blessings; except as he throws away his poison to receive food, or his dross to receive gold. (*Marg. Ref. and notes on the texts referred to.*)

V. 18—21. The Lord Jesus concluded this address, and indeed the whole of his word, by testifying, (as "the "Amen, the true and faithful Witness,") to every one who heard that prophecy, that if any man added any thing to what was contained in it, as of divine authority, God should add to, or heap on him, the plagues that were written in the book; and, on the other hand, if any one should presume to take any thing away from it, God would take away from him his part of the blessings, which he appeared, or thought himself, to be entitled to, or which he otherwise might have obtained. This seems primarily meant of the book of Revelation; with which as much liberty has been taken as with any part of scripture: but as the Lord doubtless intended this for the conclusion of the sacred Canon, so it may be applied to the whole of the written word: (*Marg. Ref.*) and it warns every man, in the most awful manner, to add nothing to, and take nothing from, what God hath revealed, of doctrine, ordinance, or commandment; the standard of truth, the way of acceptance, the evidence of conversion, or the rule of duty. Enthusiasts, pretenders to new revelations, bigoted sectaries, and imposing churchmen, on the one hand; with infidels and skeptics, on the other, who reject the whole or part of scripture, or aver that it is of no consequence what men believe, (which takes away all doctrinal truth at once,) have abundant cause to tremble at this warning. Critics, who are continually proposing conjectural alterations, or expunging from, and adding to, the text of scripture, are in no small danger: and expositors have abundant cause to be cautious and humble. Indeed, I am ready to tremble when I write upon this testimony of Christ, and think of the work in which I have been, during so many years, engaged. But the merciful Saviour will no more condemn unintentional mistakes in the honest *writer*, who desires to help men to understand his word, and proceeds in simple humble dependence on his teaching, than he will the honest *preacher:* and I trust this effort to explain his holy scriptures, though feeble and defective, has been conducted from proper motives, and in dependence on the Lord. I can confidently appeal to my heart-searching Judge, that I have, as far as I know, written, word for word, what I supposed he would have me write; without adding to, altering, or keeping back the sense of any passage, willingly, to serve any personal end, or party-interest: and that whatever mistakes have been made were involuntary, the effects of ignorance, and not design. —After this most solemn warning, our Lord declared, that he was coming quickly, and the apostle in his own name, and that of the church, added, "Amen, Even so, come, "Lord Jesus;" and then concluded with the usual benediction on his readers in general, or on the seven churches of Asia in particular. (*Note, Mal.* iv. 6. *Marg. Ref.*)— 'Men are sometimes apt to think, that if they could but 'see a miracle wrought in favour of religion, they would 'readily resign all their scruples, believe without doubt, 'and obey without reserve. The very thing that you 'desire you have. You have the greatest and most striking 'of miracles, in the series of scripture-prophecies accom'plished: accomplished, as we see, in the present state of 'almost all nations, the Africans, the Egyptians, the 'Arabians, the Turks, the Jews, the Papists, the Pro'testants; Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre; the seven churches 'of Asia, Jerusalem, and Rome. And this is not a 'transient miracle, ceasing almost as soon as performed; 'but is permanent, and protracted through the course of 'many generations. It is not a miracle delivered upon 'the report of others, but is subject to your own inspec'tion and examination. It is not a miracle, exhibited 'only before a certain number of witnesses; but is open 'to the observation and contemplation of all mankind; 'and, after so many ages, is still growing, still improving, 'to future ages. What stronger miracle therefore can 'you require for your conviction? Or, what will avail, 'if this be found ineffectual? Alas! if you reject the evi'dence of prophecy, "neither would you be persuaded, "though one rose from the dead." 'What can be 'plainer? You see, or may see, with your own eyes, the 'scripture-prophecies accomplished; and if the scripture'prophecies are accomplished, the scripture must be the 'word of God: and if the scripture is the word of God, the 'Christian religion must be true.' (*Bp. Newton.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

May the Lord show to us the streams of "the pure River 'of the water of life, which proceed out of the throne of 'God, and of the Lamb;" that, receiving the precious gift of the life-giving Spirit, we may be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. All other streams are polluted, or will soon dry up; but this will flow, clear as crystal, without alloy or interruption, for evermore. They who drink of this water, and eat of the fruit of the

Tree of Life, shall hunger and thirst no more: they will soon arrive where sin and sickness shall be known no more; for the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations: no curse will there be found; but blessing only and eternally, from the throne of God and the Lamb, in the service and presence of their beloved Lord, and in bearing his image, and being filled with all his fulness. No more complaints will then be heard of darkness, desertion, or temptation; and there will be no need of worldly pleasures or amusements, as "the Lord God giveth them "light, and they shall reign for ever and ever." These are true and faithful sayings; but they are so vast, that we need to pray continually, "Lord, increase our faith," or we shall not be able to receive them, however attested to us. We should give due honour to the instruments of good to our souls; but we must worship God only; for angels, apostles, prophets, and all believers, are fellow-servants, or brethren, and Christ is the Lord of all.

V. 10—21.

Soon will our Saviour and Judge come to determine our eternal state; but how dreadful will it be to the impenitent and polluted sinner, to be consigned to eternal unrighteousness and filthiness; and to be left without, among dogs and sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers, idolaters, and all liars! Oh, may we be found righteous and holy, and be confirmed in his holy favour and service, as our eternal and unchangeable felicity, when he shall come to render to every man as his work shall be! Never let us think that a dead or disobedient faith will save us; when the "Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last," hath declared them alone blessed, who "do his commandments," and thus prove their "right to the Tree of Life, and to "enter in by the gates into the holy city." These things he hath abundantly testified by his messengers to the churches; and in this manner we may hope to have him dwell in our hearts, as the bright and morning Star, ushering in the eternal day. But if sinners be alarmed, and begin to desire his salvation, let them remember, "that "the Spirit and the bride say, come;" and all that hear should say to every one of their relations, friends, and neighbours, Come; yea, whoever "will, let him come, and "take of the water of life freely." Ought not then the ministers and professors of the Gospel to beware of *adding* any thing, as a restriction on these large and open invitations, or of *deducting* any thing from them? or of altering in any way the terms of a sinner's acceptance and salvation: God alone is the Judge of men's motives and intentions; but we should keep at the greatest distance from the brink of that tremendous precipice, which is here pointed out to every man, who heareth the words of this prophecy; and down which multitudes, in every age, without doubt, rush headlong into destruction. The Lord deliver us from this condemnation: and may the writer, and all the readers, of these observations, have a well grounded confidence in Christ, and be of that number, who love and long for his appearing, saying, "Amen, even so come, Lord Jesus." The God of all mercy and grace be pleased to pardon all that is erroneous and faulty in this publication; and to his holy name be all the praise of whatever is true and profitable! Thanks be to God, for having given the writer health, strength, and ability, to bring it at length to a conclusion. May numbers have as much cause to be thankful for benefit derived from the perusal of it, as he has for the advantage he hath found in writing it: that so, 'Glory 'may be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy 'Ghost: as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever 'shall be, world without end.' And "may the grace of "our Lord Jesus Christ be with us all, now, and for "ever. Amen."

A Retrospective View of the Predictions contained in the Revelation of St. John.

THE intention of this retrospect is, merely to collect, and to place before the reader in one view, the outline of the interpretation of the book, which has, not without many interruptions of the subject, been adopted in this publication. The introductory chapters do not seem to require such a retrospect: the prophetical part, properly so called, begins with the opening of the seals, in the sixth chapter; which, containing six of the seven seals, has been interpreted to predict, first the progress of the Gospel during the period intended; and then the gradual undermining of the *Pagan* persecuting Roman empire, by several successive judgments, till that was terminated by the conversion of the emperors to Christianity. The seventh chapter has been explained as predicting, in the former part of it, the enlargement of the church, in consequence of the revolution above-mentioned: and in the latter part of it, as describing the blessedness enjoyed with Christ by the martyrs and suffering Christians, who had lived during the Pagan persecutions.

In the eighth chapter, under the seventh seal, the sounding of seven trumpets is announced, all of which fall under this last seal: but the sounding of four only is here mentioned, with an awful denunciation of wo on the inhabitants of the earth, when the other three trumpets should be sounded: which, from this circumstance, are generally called, 'The three wo-trumpets.' The four trumpets, the sounding of which is mentioned in this chapter, are interpreted to predict the gradual subversion of the Roman empire, by the Goths, Huns, Moors, and Vandals; till the whole fabric seemed completely demolished by the death of the last feeble and obscure emperor, called Momyllus, or contemptuously Augustulus.

The sounding of the fifth and sixth trumpets, or the two first wo-trumpets, in the ninth chapter, with the events recorded under each, is interpreted to predict the Mahommedan imposture, and its most destructive success, especially in the east, first under the Saracens, headed by Mahommed and his successors; and then under the Othmans or Turks, the effects of which remain to this present day.

The tenth chapter is considered as the introduction, by a solemn vision of *a little book*, a kind of appendix, or codicil, to the book with the seven seals; attended by some other intimations, which are afterwards more particularly elucidated.

The eleventh chapter, which (exclusive of the concluding verses, relating to the sounding of the seventh trumpet) is here supposed to be this *little book*, or appendix, is interpreted to predict the state of the church in the western regions, during the term of the fifth and sixth trumpets, while

Mahommedism made such tremendous ravages in the east, or during the period of twelve hundred and sixty years. This prediction shows the extremely corrupt state of the nominal Christian church; which yet is supplied, during the whole term, with a competent number of suffering witnesses for the truth, who protest against these corruptions; till at length they are slain, their testimony is silenced, and their enemies triumph: but only for a very short time, after which the witnesses arise, ascend into heaven, and tremendous judgments on their enemies make way for the sounding of the seventh trumpet, and the final and universal triumph of the Redeemer's cause, or are connected with these events. These latter particulars are here considered *as future;* though many eminent expositors are of another opinion, respecting the slaying and rising again of the witnesses, and the sounding of the seventh trumpet.

The concluding verse of the eleventh chapter is here considered as introducing the prophecy of the twelfth chapter, in which the apostle is supposed to resume his subject from the close of the sixth or seventh chapter, or the revolution, by which the Roman empire became professedly Christian, under Constantine the Great; in order to give a more detailed prediction of those events, especially relating to the western world, which had before been very compendiously intimated. Satan, by his agents and vicegerents, the pagan persecuting emperors, having in vain endeavoured to prevent this revolution; and being, with all *their* coadjutors, cast out, degraded from authority, and deprived of power to do mischief, in the same way as formerly, have recourse, with great zeal, to other measures. And the Devil, having failed of success as a roaring lion, appears as a dragon, *a deceiver*, yet a destroyer. The Church, however, and her seed, before the new projects are ripe, has a place provided in the wilderness, to which she flees at the appointed time, and is secured, *during the period* of twelve hundred and sixty years; which is repeatedly mentioned both by the apostle and the prophet Daniel.

The thirteenth chapter is interpreted to predict the rise, establishment, and dominion of the *papal* persecuting Roman *empire*, as the ten horned beast; of the *popish clergy*, as the two horned beast; and of *the Pope*, as the image of the beast; with the mark and number of the beast; and the persecutions and cruelties which would be perpetrated by this antichristian power.

The fourteenth chapter is interpreted, as predicting the opposition made by the remnant of true believers, to this antichristian power; and their protest against its abominations, under the name of Babylon the Great; and the several stages of that reformation, which was at length effected in the protestant and reformed churches: with a general intimation of those tremendous judgments, by which, at last, the whole *papal* persecuting empire will be destroyed, under the image of a harvest and a vintage. The fifteenth chapter contains a vision of seven angels, having seven vials, containing the seven last plagues, which were about to be poured out, and in which the wrath of God would be fulfilled. The pouring out of all these vials is here supposed to take place, under the seventh trumpet; as all the seven trumpets fall under the seventh seal.

The sixteenth chapter records the pouring out of the seven vials, which is interpreted to predict the succession of judgments by which the papal persecuting empire and church, and Rome itself, the metropolis and centre of both, will be utterly desolated. The whole of this prophecy, however, is here considered as yet unfulfilled; though some interpret the pouring out of the three first vials, to predict the late events on the continent. The seventeenth chapter gives a figurative, but most intelligible description of the beasts, both the ten horned beast, and two horned beast, with the extent and seat of their empire. The eighteenth is *interpreted*, by all protestant expositors, as a prophecy of the utter desolation of Rome, for all her abominations; with the terror, distress, and ruin of all her adherents, and the exulting joy of the true church of Christ. In the nineteenth chapter, after a still more animated description of the joy and praise of all the servants of God on account of these events, and the glorious and blessed effects which will follow; is a prophecy of the subsequent efforts against true Christianity, made by the remains of the antichristian party, under the conduct of the beast; and the false prophet, or the two horned beast; and of the final victory obtained over them, ending in their entire destruction, and the casting of the beast and the false prophet into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.

Still, however, Satan himself, the grand deceiver of all nations, remains at liberty; and ready to make further efforts against the cause of Christ: but the twentieth chapter opens with a prediction of his being bound, and cast into the bottomless pit, for a thousand years. Then the Millennium, or triumphant reign of Christ, for a thousand years takes place: at the close of which, Satan being again liberated, successfully renews his efforts; and impels those whom he has deceived, and drawn into apostacy from God, to levy war with tremendous force and violence, against the remnant of believers. But at that crisis, fire from heaven consumes the assailants, the devil is finally consigned to the place of torment; the general judgment immediately succeeds; and all the wicked being cast into the lake of fire, the state of the righteous in heaven is described in the two concluding chapters, with many coincident instructions and exhortations.

This is the scheme of interpretation adopted in this publication: and it is, at least, the result of much study and reflection on the subject. One thing further remains to be noticed: Some modern expositors, especially Mr. Faber, suppose another persecuting power to arise towards the end of the twelve hundred and sixty years, distinct from the *ten horned*, and the *two horned beasts;* which is properly to be considered as ANTICHRIST, as an infidel king, an atheistical, and not popish, domination. The author's comment on Daniel had been reprinted, before he saw this interpretation; and should his life be spared, it may hereafter come in his way, to consider how far Daniel's prophecies confirm this sentiment. He indeed purposed to give an opinion on the subject, in his exposition of Revelation; but he really found no convenient place, in the body of the work, for introducing it. For, though, by no means decided against the sentiment, or averse to it; nay, allowing that modern events countenance the supposition; he could find no such third power distinctly mentioned by St. John. So that proceeding to the close of the book, without finding a proper opening for the subject; he saw no better way, than to mention this circumstance at the close of it. In respect to the word ANTICHRIST, and the character of Antichrist, he must refer the reader to the notes on the first epistle of St. John. (1 *John* ii. 18—23. iv. 1—4.)

TABLES of MEASURES, &c. mentioned in SCRIPTURE.

Measures of Length.

	Yds.	Ft	In
A finger-breadth, about	0	0	0 3-4
A hand-breadth, rather more than	0	0	3 1-2
A span, or half cubit, about	0	0	10
A cubit, the length of a full sized man's arm, from the elbow to the extremity of the middle finger	0	1	8

	Ft.	In.
N. B. Some compute the cubit to be	1	9
And others only	1	6

The computation here selected is, probably, rather too large. There seems no sufficient ground, in scripture, for supposing different kinds of cubits; the only text, which appears to imply this, being capable of another interpretation. (*Notes, Ez.* xl. 5. xliii. 13.)

	Yds.	Ft	In
A fathom, 4 cubits	2	0	8
Ezekiel's Reed, by some computed to be	3	1	2
A stadium, or furlong, 400 cubits	222	0	8
A mile, 10 furlongs, being about one fifth longer, than an English mile	2,220	6	8

Measures of capacity, for Corn or Liquids.

	Wine Gal.	Qts.	Pts.
The Log 1-72 of an Ephah	0	0	0 3-4
The Cab 1-18 of an Ephah	0	1	1 1-2
The Omer 1-10 of an Ephah (about)	0	3	0 1-4
The Hin 1-6 of an Ephah (about)	1	1	0
The Ephah, or Bath (about)	7	2	0 1-2
The Chomer, or Homer, 10 Ephas	75	2	1
This should carefully be distinguished from the *Omer*, which is only a hundredth part of it.			
The firkin, as mentioned John ii. 6. is differently computed. Some think it contained	0	3	1 1-4
The measure, or Cheenix, mentioned Rev. vi. 6. seems to have been the daily allowance made of corn to a slave, perhaps rather more than	0	1	0
That mentioned 2 Kings vii. 1. is supposed to have contained about	2	0	0

A Table of Weights and Money.

By Troy Weight.

	lb	oz.	pen.	grs.
The Gerah 1-20 of a Shekel	0	0	0	12
The Bekah 1-2 a Shekel	0	0	5	0
The Shekel	0	0	10	0
The Maneh, 60 Shekels	2	6	0	0
The Talent, 3000 Shekels	125	0	0	0

N. B. Some make the Shekel, according to which all the other weights are computed, rather less than in this table; and others rather more.

Money, in Value.

This is a subject of a very difficult nature: for money is mere relative property; and its value consists in the quantity of things useful to life, which it will purchase. Now it is certain, that the same weight, either of brass, silver or gold, will at one time, and in one place, purchase far more of these things than in another time and place: and, probably, an ounce of silver, in any of the times, of which the scripture treats, would purchase as much as three, or four, or five ounces now would. All, therefore, that can be attempted on this head is, to show the relative value of the money mentioned in scripture, as computed in the money of this age and nation. An ounce of silver is generally, I believe, coined into something more than five shillings: but as minute exactness is not the object in this place, the computation will be made at that price.

	l.	*s.*	*d.*
The Drachma	0	0	7 1-2
The Beka, or Didrachma	0	1	3
The Shekel	0	2	6
The Maneh, or pound	7	10	0
The Talent	375	0	0
A Talent of gold, (at 16 of silver to one of gold)	6000	0	0

N. B. Some learned men compute each of these lower, and some higher. But this appears to be about the mean, between discordant opinions.

Roman Money mentioned in the New Testament.

	l.	*s.*	*d.*	*far.*
A Mite	0	0	0	0 3-4
A Farthing (about)	0	0	0	1 1-2
A Penny, or Denarius	0	0	7	0 1-2
A pound, Mina	3	2	6	0

A Table of Time.

Learned men state the names of the months, and their relation to the months into which we divide the year, as follows: but all the names mentioned are not found in scripture. Of those which are, a reference to some text, in which it is named, will be annexed.

1 Nisan, (*Neh.* ii. 1.) or, Abib (*Ex.* xiii. 4.)	March, April.
2 Zif, (1 *Kings* vi. 1.) or Jyar	April, May.
3 Sivan, (*Esth.* viii. 9.)	May, June.
4 Tamuz, or Thamuz	June, July.
5 Ab	July, August.
6 Elul, (*Neh.* vi. 15.)	August, September.
7 Ethanim, (1 *Kings* viii. 2.) or Tifri,	September, October.
8 Bul, (1 *Kings* vi. 38.) or Maicheswan	October, November.
9 Cisleu, or Chisleu (*Neh.* i. 1.)	November, December.
10 Tebeth, (*Esth.* ii. 16.)	December, January.
11 Shebar	January, February.
12 Adar, (*Ezra* vi. 15.)	February, March.
13 Ve adar, or the second Adar.	

This month was added, or *intercalated*, from time to time; when the twelve lunar months, falling considerably short of a solar year, introduced such an irregularity in the seasons, as was inconsistent with the observance of the sacred festivals at the proper time. This month being, on those occasions, added, between the end of Adar, the twelfth month, and the beginning of Nisan, the first month, brought back the computation of the year to some degree of regularity. It answered the purpose, in some measure, which the 29th of February, every fourth year, does in our days: viz. to preserve a coincidence between the twelve months which constitute the year, and the actual yearly revolution of the earth round the sun. But the intercalated month by no means settled the calculations of the Israelites, in that degree of exactness, to which astronomers have at present reduced it. The months of Israel, as here stated, are supposed to answer, each to the closing half of the former, and the first part of the latter of our months, as annexed to them: but these intercalatory months, and especially the absolute necessity which there was for them, must considerably deduct from accuracy in all these calculations. They are, however, sufficiently exact for all useful purposes.

The days of the week were numbered by the Israelites in their order, the first, the second, &c.; the seventh, or last day of the week being the sabbath; but it does not appear that they had any names affixed to them.

Their days were generally reckoned from the setting of the sun to the next setting of the sun, according to the original arrangement; "The evening and the morning were the first day."

Both the night, from sun-set to sun-rise, and the day, from sun-rise to sun-set, were divided into twelve hours; which must have been unequal in their length, at different seasons of the year. It should, however, be remembered, that the land of promise being situated much nearer the Equator, the difference in the length of the days, in summer and winter, and of the nights, during winter, in proportion to the days, was much less than in this country.—Some, however, think, with much probability, that the division of time into *hours* was introduced by the Romans. The word *hour*, as used in some places of the Old Testament, seems not to denote a measure of time, but merely the coincidence of events.

The night likewise, from sun-set to sun-rise, was, among the Israelites, divided into four watches.—Supposing the sun to set at six o'clock, according to our computation, the first watch reached from 6 to 9; the second, from 9 to 12; the third, from 12 to 3; and the fourth, from 3 to 6, or sun-rising.

A Table of some of the States, Offices, and Descriptions of Men, as mentioned in the Canonical Scriptures.

Patriarchs; fathers and heads of families, who eventually became renowned and celebrated in Israel; as the twelve sons of Jacob; and David the ancestor of the kings of Judah.

Judges. In the common use of the word, magistrates in general are intended, whether superior or inferior: but it frequently marks out those temporary supreme rulers, whom God raised up, to reform religion and deliver his people, before he placed kings in hereditary succession over them; that is, from the death of Joshua, to the nomination of Saul to be king, or rather of David, as substituted in Saul's place.

Elders. This word is used with great latitude in scripture; but it more especially denotes the seventy persons constituting the council, or sanhedrim, of Israel; and after the establishment of Christianity, the stated pastors and teachers of the Christian church.

Kings. The kings of David's race were especially appointed to that office, in hereditary succession, by God himself: but for Solomon's sin, ten tribes were taken from his family, and given to Jeroboam.—Thus the kings of Judah, of David's race, and the kings of Israel, or the ten tribes of several families, reigned separately, till the days of Hezekiah; when Israel or the kingdom of the ten tribes was finally carried captive.

Israelites. This is the proper name of the whole nation, as descended from Jacob or Israel; and became appropriate to the ten tribes only, after their revolt from David's family.

Jews, or Judeans. The decendants of Judah, with the Levites, Benjamites, and others, who joined themselves to Judah, after the division of the kingdom, are meant by this name.—It is therefore manifestly improper, though very common, to call the nation in general Jews, at any period of their history, till about the time of the Babylonish captivity; when the ten tribes being dispersed, all the remains of the nation gradually received this name, and are known by it to this day.

A Hebrew of the Hebrews. A lineal descendant from Heber and Abraham, and not one who had been proselyted, or whose ancestors had been proselyted.

A Proselyte. A person, from another nation, who was incorporated into the church of Israel, by receiving circumcision, and becoming obedient to the law of Moses. Learned men distinguished between different kinds of proselytes; but the scripture does not.

High Priest. The priest of Aaron's race, who was allowed to enter into the most holy place, constituted chief ruler of the church of Israel, and the special type of Christ.

Second Priest. He, as it is generally supposed, who was appointed to officiate for the high priest, in case he was disqualified.

Chief Priests. The principal persons of the twenty-four orders, into which the sons of Aaron were divided by David, that they might serve in rotation.

Levites. The descendants of Levi, by Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, who were not of Aaron's race; but, in many respects, servants to the priests; yet often teachers and magistrates in Israel.

Nethinims. Servants to the priests and Levites, for the meaner and more laborious offices; being the descendants of the Gibeonites, and of others, who were voluntarily devoted to these services.

Prophets, or Seers. Extraordinary ministers of religion, whom God raised up to reveal his will to mankind, to reform Israel; and to predict future events, especially the coming of the Messiah, his sufferings, and the glory that should follow.

Sons of the Prophets. Persons educated in the schools of the prophets, from the days of Samuel, who instituted them; from whom God frequently called men to the prophetical office; and who, on many occasions, were extraordinary teachers of true religion, when the priests and Levites neglected their duty.

Scribes. Learned men, whose professed object was to expound, and enforce, the law of God, from the days of Ezra, to those of our Lord.—The word *scribe* in the history of Israel, under regal government, generally means *secretary*; that is, to the king.

Rabbies, Doctors, Lawyers. Scribes, who had attained to certain degrees of eminency, or reputation, in their profession; and who were distinguished in a manner, not wholly unlike the academical honours conferred by modern universities.

Tirshatha. The governor of the Jews, appointed by the Persian kings, after the captivity.

Tetrarchs. Persons, each of whom were appointed by the Romans to govern a fourth part of that district, which had formed the kingdom of Herod the great; and which, at his death, was divided into four governments. (*Note, Luke* iii. 1.)

Centurions. Officers in the Roman army, commanding a hundred men.

Publicans. Tax-gatherers, under the Romans. The principal publicans farmed large districts, at an annual rent; and were aided by the Roman armies in exacting their demands from individuals; and the inferior publicans rented smaller tracts of them, or were their servants.

Pharisees. A sect among the Jews, in the days of Christ (having sprung up some time before,) which under the profession of extraordinary strictness and sanctity, was remarkable for hypocrisy, pride, censoriousness, and covetousness. They, however, maintained the true doctrine concerning the resurrection, and received all the books of the Old Testament, as divinely inspired, as the oracles of God.

Sadducees. A sect of infidels among the Jews, who, professing indeed some regard to certain parts of the scriptures, denied the resurrection, disbelieved a future state, and the existence of angels and spirits.

Herodians. Sadducees, who shaped their religion to outward circumstances, and specially paid court to Herod. Some say they professed to believe that king Herod was the Messiah.

Samaritans. The descendants of the nations whom the kings of Assyria settled in the country, from which they dispossessed the ten tribes; united with some Israelites, and apostate Jews, and Jewish priests; who established a schismatical religion in Samaria, which produced the most determined reciprocal enmity and antipathy between them and the Jews.

Nazarene. A name by which the Christians were at first distinguished; but afterwards applied to a heretical sect.

Stoics. A sect of heathen philosophers, who prided themselves in apathy, or an affected indifference to pleasure or pain; who considered virtue as its own reward; and who maintained that all events were determined by *fate*, as superior to the will of the gods, even of the supreme God.

Epicureans. A sect of heathen philosophers, who ascribed all things to chance; and considered pleasure as the chief good.

Apostles. Persons selected by Jesus Christ, to be the witnesses of his life, death, and resurrection, to mankind; the repositories of his holy doctrine, from whom it should be communicated to the nations, and to all future ages; and who, by their preaching and writings, should make known his holy religion; so that to the end of the world their doctrine must be appealed to, as the standard of truth and duty.

Evangelists. For many ages, this word has marked out the writers of the four narratives which have been transmitted to us, as of divine authority, concerning the miracles, life, death, and resurrection, of our blessed Saviour: but in the New Testament, it signifies simply *preachers of the gospel;* yet with a special designation of certain persons, who, under the authority and direction of the apostles, (the principal *missionaries* of Christ to mankind,) were sent forth to establish and regulate the churches planted by the apostles, and to plant new churches. They seem to have been distinguished from stated pastors, in nearly the same manner as modern missionaries are from resident ministers.

Bishops. The same persons are in many places called both *bishops* and *elders;* but it is generally, and with great probability, supposed, that after a time the *bishops* became the superintendants and overseers, not only of the churches, but of the pastors also, each in a limited district.

Deacons. Persons appointed, by the counsel and direction of the apostles, to take care of the poor, and the secular concerns of the churches; from whom, however, it seems evident that elders and evangelists were frequently chosen, and sent forth.

Nicolaitans. A corrupt company of heretics, answering in many respects to the Antinomians of modern times. There is, however, no proof that they were the disciples of Nicolas, one of the first deacons; indeed the supposition is, in the highest degree, improbable.

THE END.